



Nuneaton's Footballing Heritage

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2

# Contents

---

	Page No.
1975-1976 .....	<b>229</b>
1976-1977 .....	<b>273</b>
1977-1978 .....	<b>324</b>
1978-1979 .....	<b>379</b>
Acknowledgements .....	<b>424</b>

## Record Appearance Holder Alan Jones Leaves



Record appearance holder Alan Jones bade farewell to Manor Park after 13 years. Jones, who joined the club as a youngster in 1962, was not retained at the end of the season. But the fans were determined to show their appreciation for the service he has given to the club. Horace Breeds (left), chairman of the Supporters' Club, handed over a table lighter and John Wilson gave him a memento from the members of the Social Club.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Borough May Re-join Floodlit Cup

Nuneaton Borough may rejoin the Midland Floodlit – the competition they dropped out of last season. Club secretary John Evans today confirmed that they are interested. “We have asked for an invitation to the annual meeting,” he said.

## Southern League Soccer More Expensive

Southern League fans will have to dig deeper into their pockets for their soccer next season. Minimum prices in the Premier Division will be 45p – an increase of 10p or nearly 29 per cent.

## Lacey Turns Down Borough

Nuneaton Borough have failed in a bid to sign Port Vale midfielder player Tony Lacey, who has been with the Staffordshire side for six years. The player turned down Borough after talks with manager Geoff Coleman. “He has decided he wants to stay in the Football League and will probably sign for Rochdale,” said the Borough manager.

Coleman faces a busier close season than he planned. Originally he had hoped to sign two or three players, but Dietmar Bruck's move to Weymouth, Bobby Mackay's transfer to Worcester and Bill Baxter's decision to return to Scotland, have changed all that.

Speculation about the future of full-back Kirk Stephens could also leave him with another gap to fill. Stephens has already been linked with a number of clubs, with Luton Town still top of the list.

## Commercial Manager Resigns

Colin Keen has resigned as commercial manager of Nuneaton Borough after 15 months at Manor Park. He has already sent his resignation to the board and he leaves at the end of the week. “I cannot afford to stay,” he said. “And the club cannot afford to pay me any more money. That is basically what it is all about.” But he admitted that he has been disillusioned during his stay with the club.

“When I came I was assured there was an army of people who would help. I was told that all they needed was organising and co-ordinating. But when I got here I found there was no army.”

## Lewis And Goodwin Banned

Borough's hopes of a flying start to the new season have been dimmed by news of bans on two key players. Skipper Dave Lewis has been suspended for two weeks, and central defender Ian Goodwin is out for a week. Both players will miss the games against Weymouth, Telford and Tonbridge.

## Borough Ask About Stringfellow

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman has made an inquiry about Leicester City's Mike Stringfellow. Coleman confirmed he had asked about the player, given a free transfer by the Filbert Street club at the end of last season.

## Tearse Chooses Atherstone

Former Leicester City striker David Tearse has signed for Atherstone Town, after being given a free transfer by Torquay United. Tearse, who is 23, had been linked with Nuneaton Borough, but chose the Sheepy Road outfit after a recommendation by Torquay manager Malcolm Musgrove.

## Borough Sign Bennett And Cross

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman today signed two League defenders – Stan Bennett from Walsall and Roy Cross from Port Vale. Bennett's capture is a personal triumph for Coleman who had stiff opposition from Chester and Mansfield. The 30-year-old centre-half, who can play in midfield, had also been linked with Telford, who wanted him as a player-manager. Bennett played a prominent part in Walsall's FA Cup giant-killing run last season and was man of the match when Walsall knocked out Manchester United.

Cross, who is 27, was also given a free transfer. He had been at Port Vale for five seasons, making 150 first-team appearances. Before that he was at Walsall with Bennett, and played alongside him in the heart of defence.

## Bobby Vincent Plans Comeback

Bobby Vincent is planning a soccer comeback nine months after the car crash that threatened his career. The Nuneaton Borough centre-forward today predicted: “I shall be back before the end of the season.” His broken thigh has mended and he is making rapid progress.



## Stringfellow Signs Forms

Mike Stringfellow last night became Nuneaton Borough's third close season capture. And afterwards he joined his new team-mates in their first training session for the new season. The former Leicester City striker signed after two weeks of talks with Borough manager Geoff Coleman.

Stringfellow was given a free-transfer by Leicester in recognition of the service given to the Filbert Street club, which stretched to almost 300 first team appearances.

## Bob Newton Rejoins Borough

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman has recalled defender Bob Newton to solve his problem position. Coleman asked Newton to return after a fruitless search for a left back. And after the signing had been finalised, Coleman said: "Our squad is now complete. We are ready to start the new season."

## 1975-76

### Gainsborough Trinity v Nuneaton Boro' 02-08-1975

Borough made the journey to Northolme to take on Gainsborough Trinity in a pre-season friendly match.

Borough's duel in the sun with Gainsborough did little to enhance the reputation of either side. The game lacked any positive direction – possibly because of its friendly tag – and though the first half had a certain degree of skill and tenacity the longer the duration the less enthusiasm and interest was aroused. Borough's top close season signing Mike Stringfellow, showed several touches of class in the early stages, but faded badly through the attention of Trinity's new player-coach Terry Rose, the former Trowbridge manager.

In the back divisions Stan Bennett and Roy Cross brought a degree of steadiness and influence that augured well for Borough's defensive plans, with Stephens and Lewis giving them good support. Goalkeeper Steve Pomroy was troubled by the high crosses from Gainsborough's attack – but he certainly kept Borough in the game with two fine saves just before the interval to hold the home side to a one goal lead scored in the 19th minute by Wagstaffe.

Lewis's 48th minute equaliser came like a bolt out of the blue. His powerful angled shot from all of 30 yards caught Trinity's keeper Wilson Rose on the hop and he could only help the ball into the net. The scoreline was a fair reflection of the game for although Gainsborough looked more dangerous when attacking, their problem of last season in finding a goalscoring forward looks to be just as acute at this early stage.

### Northwich Victoria v Nuneaton Borough 04-08-1975

**Borough:** Pomroy, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Briscoe, Oakes, Stringfellow, Hawkins, Matthams. **Subs:** Ritchie and Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to the Drill Field to take on Northwich Victoria in a pre-season friendly game.

A win as clear cut as this, with a side not at maximum strength, must give Borough confidence in their bid for the Southern League championship. If one question was posed it was as to whether Mike Stringfellow would fill the bill as a striker. Playing in the number nine shirt he never threatened danger in front of goal. But to his credit he proved adept at decoying Vics' centre-half Hamlet out of the middle and this played a big part in the move which enabled Borough to take the lead for the first time.

But there could be no doubt in the effectiveness of the other new players in the side, Stan Bennett and Roy Cross were the stars of Borough's faultless back four and if there had been a man of the match award it must have gone to Bennett who was hardly ever beaten. Up front Dennis Hawkins and Dennis Oakes both did extremely well and there was no one more surprised than Oakes, when immediately after heading Borough's third goal from Frank Lomonaco's centre, he was substituted by Gordon Ritchie.

The move, was however, obviously designed to see what Ritchie could do and he obliged by slamming in Borough's fourth goal from 20 yards with four minutes to go. Northwich took the lead in 30 seconds through Rolland, Hawkins scored the equaliser from a penalty for hands in the 22nd minute and Borough's other goal was headed by Steve Briscoe from Dave Lewis's cross five minutes before half-time.

But it was never as one sided a game as the score would suggest. Shreeve shot against an upright for Northwich in the first half and later he and Rolland had powerful drives saved at full length by young Steve Pomroy, another of Borough's big successes.

### Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 07-08-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins (Ritchie), Fleet, Holbrooke, Oakes (Lomonaco), Matthams (Briscoe).

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play for the Jack Scamp Trophy.

Borough continued their impressive pre-season build up with a 2-0 win. And the handful of fans who turned out left feeling that Borough could well be challenging for the Southern League title this season. Dennis Oakes opened the scoring in the seventh minute after ex-Adders player Gerry Kavanagh pushed Dennis Hawkins off the ball in the Leamington half. Neil Matthams took the free-kick on the left, Gary Holbrooke headed back across goal and Oakes nipped in to sidefoot the ball past David Jones.

The second goal didn't come until the 75th minute – but it was worth waiting for. Holbrooke, whose place up front is threatened by Mike Stringfellow, was again the architect. He pushed the ball through to Gary Fleet, who hit an early shot which whizzed into the back of the net from 25 yards.

There was plenty of action at both ends in between and the Borough goal had an amazing let-off just before the

interval. Bob Knight fumbled a Mick Keeley cross, and the ball dropped right in front of Ivor Talbot. He blasted in a first-time shot – but Kirk Stephens was perfectly positioned to clear off the line. Former Borough keeper Jones denied his old club when he saved a Dave Lewis 30 yarder with his legs midway through the first half. And Jones pulled off an even better save from Lewis in the 70th minute when he finger tipped a curling shot to safety.

Gary Fleet missed a golden chance when he shot wide from six yards after Stan Bennett had nodded down a Matthams corner. Bennett, making his home debut, had a fine game at the back and was always willing to help out up front.

He was quick, strong in the tackle and good in the air for his height. The ex-Walsall skipper, who chose Borough in preference to a couple of League clubs, looks the ideal player to fill the defensive gap left by the departure of Bill Baxter.

## **Bangor City v Nuneaton Borough** 09-08-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Oakes, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Turpie, Ritchie, Matthams. **Subs:** Holbrooke and Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to North Wales to play Bangor City in a pre-season friendly.

Borough, undefeated in three pre-season friendlies came a real cropper against the Northern Premier League club. They were defeated 3-0 by a side superior in almost all facets of the game and apart from a few near misses and the energy shown by Gary Fleet, Nuneaton rarely offered much of a challenge. Nuneaton's trouble started a couple of hours before the kick-off when they became snarled up in tremendous holiday traffic in this popular tourist area.

The result was that they arrived late at the ground and the kick-off had to be delayed half-an-hour. It was an upset which had repercussions when play actually got going. For, with only three minutes on the clock and Nuneaton still unsettled, Roy Cross handled, under pressure and the referee spotted the slick infringement to award Bangor a penalty. Frank Corrigan made no mistake.

Nuneaton's problems intensified when Joe Flaherty slid home the next goal in the 11th minute as the visitors' defence hesitated, waiting for an offside decision which did not come. Then 30 seconds into the second period, again with Nuneaton off their guard, John McClelland drove in the third and Bangor were home and dry.

Francesco Lomonaco was unlucky with two good efforts which speared on to the crossbar late on. But they were only token responses really.

## **Bermuda v Nuneaton Borough** 11-08-1975

Borough visited local side Bermuda WMC for a pre-season friendly match.

Borough suffered another pre-season shock when they lost to Bermuda 2-1. The game, designed to get the Bangor defeat

out of their system, went wrong when Dennis Hawkins missed a penalty. Coleman experimented with Gary Holbrooke at centre-half and Steve Briscoe at left-back. But it did not come off and Muda won – thanks to a Lomanaco goal. He went on for Bermuda in the last 15 minutes and scored the winner.

## **Borough's Volunteer Army**



Groundsman Albert “Chippy” Millerchip leads out Nuneaton Borough's second line of defence. They are manager Geoff Coleman's volunteer “army” – who have helped to give the ground a facelift during the summer. All are volunteers working in their spare time to make sure everything is spick and span for the new season.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## **Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth** 16-08-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Oakes, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Stringfellow, Lomonaco, Matthams. **Sub:** Holbrooke.

**Weymouth:** Sheppard, Bruck, Lawrence, Miller, Hobson, Olson, Courtney, Brown, Astle, Verity, Owen. **Sub:** Tombs.

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

Borough were denied an opening day win by a last-minute penalty. But manager Geoff Coleman still wore a broad smile. “Our performance was good when you consider the players who were missing,” he insisted. Borough were without Dave Lewis and Ian Goodwin, both banned, and Bob Newton failed a fitness test.

Borough responded to the problems with the same spirit that carried the club into runners up spot last season. They plugged the gaps, disguised the deficiencies and turned in a good display even if the quality of the football left something to be desired. An untidy first half was followed by a second 45 minutes in which they should have wrapped up the points.

Neil Matthams had one shot kicked off the line and rattled the crossbar from 25 yards with Weymouth under pressure. And Dennis Oakes, who did well in midfield, missed a glorious chance from close in after he had helped to set up the opening. Man of the match Matthams, he turned in an inspired performance against Dietmar Bruck, eventually broke through with five minutes to go. He took a return pass from Gary Fleet, who should be more unselfish more often, and scored from 16 yards.

At that stage, justice was about to be done. Matthams had

earned his goal and Borough deserved to be in front. Then big Jeff Astle, subdued for most of the match, suddenly loomed large to wreck their hopes of a win. A left wing cross which should have been cut out found Brian Owen, who beat Briscoe and hit it back into the middle. Astle powered a header towards the net and full-back Kirk Stephens flung himself full length to push it out with a save that would have done credit to any goalkeeper. Derek Courtney stepped up to beat Bob Knight with the resultant penalty – and Weymouth escaped with a point. It was tough on Knight, who played well – and even tougher on Matthams, who always looked a potential match winner.



Neil Matthams' shot rockets into the roof of the net – and Borough are in front against Weymouth with five minutes to go.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 18-08-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Cross, Briscoe, Goodwin, Hawkins, Oakes, Fleet, Stringfellow, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

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

Mike Stringfellow exploded onto the Southern League goalscoring scene. He gunned down Telford with an 81st minute match winner that had class written all over it. And Borough emerged with two points from a win that suggests another successful season for Geoff Coleman's side. They had to wait until nine minutes from time for the goal that decided the game. But it was worth the wait.

Stringfellow started the move with a ball out to Neil Matthams on the left. He finished it with a full length diving header that powered the ball into the net. The goal rounded off a Borough performance that deserved to bring them both points. They always looked more likely to win than Telford, who were held in an iron grip by the Borough back four.

There was much that was good about a Nuneaton display that more than made up for the point they dropped at home on Saturday. No one did more than diminutive Dennis Hawkins, who had a lot to prove after being discarded by Telford last season. Hawkins ran himself to a standstill with a midfield performance that would have drained most players. Gary Fleet turned in the kind of display that made him a target for League

clubs when he was at Redditch. Steve Briscoe had another good game at left back – and Stan Bennett and Roy Cross were superb. They have already struck up an understanding in the heart of the back four that should remove all fears about the loss of Bill Baxter. Telford did not manage one worthwhile shot during the whole of the 90 minutes.

Stringfellow gave notice of his intentions as early as the 18th minute when Telford goalkeeper Phil Weir was fortunate to scramble a header around the post. A couple of powerful runs by Ian Goodwin, who added much needed strength to midfield almost panicked the home side. But the scoresheet stayed blank and the game was heading for a goalless draw. That was before Stringfellow thumbed through the pages of his goalscoring career – and came up with a gem.

His pass out to Matthams was beautifully played over the head of full-back Alan Harris by the outside left. Briscoe, who had broken for just such a pass, hit an inch perfect cross to the far post. And there was Stringfellow to finish it off in the style of a master. Hawkins almost got a second for Borough five minutes from the end, but was beaten by good goalkeeping from Weir. But by that time the game had been won.

## Tonbridge v Nuneaton Borough 23-08-1975

**Tonbridge:** Hughes, Evans, Prince, Smith, Keirs, Carr, Flood, Stonebridge, Walsh, Hancock, Arnold. **Sub:** Putman.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Goodwin, Bennett, Cross, Fleet, Hawkins, Stringfellow, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Ritchie.

Borough travelled to Kent to play Tonbridge in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough collected two points at Tonbridge on Saturday – on a pitch that is a disgrace to Southern League football. Potholes pitted the playing surface which had a wide bare patch down the middle. But Nuneaton adapted their style to the rugged condition in a sub-standard game.

Walsh threatened Borough in the opening minutes when he cleverly beat Goodwin, Briscoe and Hawkins and then had a shot pushed over the top by Knight. A free-kick from Matthams flew high and wide and goalkeeper Hughes had to race out to save a shot from Matthams with his legs.

Tonbridge forced the pace with a stream of right-wing attacks, but Bennett was dominant in the Borough back four. Borough had another scare when a free-kick flashed across the goalmouth. They survived pressure and took the lead through Dennis Oakes in the 41st minute. That knocked a lot of the heart out of the Kent club, who were plunged in to more trouble when full-back Bobby Evans headed an own goal 15 minutes from time.

Both teams struggled to put their game together on a pitch that looked as if it had been played on for a full season instead of just one match. Knight came to Borough's rescue when he left his line to block a shot from Stonebridge.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Keeper Bob Knight, Borough's most consistent player so far, saved a penalty in the closing stages. He dived to his left to keep out Bobby Keirs' spot kick after a foul by Stan Bennett.

## **Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 25-08-1975**

**Borough:** Knight, Newton, Goodwin, Cross, Briscoe, Hawkins, Lewis, Oakes, Turpie, Fleet, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Southern League Cup first round first leg match.

A flash of temper from centre-half Ian Goodwin upset Borough's Southern League Cup plans. Goodwin was sent off when he felled Burton forward Doug Hickton with a punch half an hour from the end. He now faces an automatic ban – only a week after ending a seven day suspension for a similar offence.

Until that incident Borough had done well and taken the honours in a goalless first hour. They had been cool and composed – had played within the context of the two legged tie and never looked in real trouble. But the sending off threw them out of gear and Burton were able to take full advantage. Borough were still trying to re-organise when Albion went ahead only five minutes later.

Hickton scored from a far post header after a corner from Brendan Phillips. And, four minutes later, Phillips made it 2-0 with a stunning goal from 25 yards. He struck the ball with ferocious power and Bob Knight had no chance as it dipped into the net. Nuneaton were in all kinds of trouble and Hickton almost netted Burton's third as the Manor Park side fought to stay in the tie.

But Knight, again in fine form, managed to block the shot and keep them in with a chance in the second leg. Manager Geoff Coleman made changes from the side that beat Tonbridge. Bob Newton replaced Kirk Stephens at right-back; Goodwin took over from Stan Bennett in the middle of the back four; Dave Lewis returned from suspension – and Bob Turpie made his comeback.

Turpie was back in Southern League football for the first time since his eye injury six months ago. He replaced Mike Stringfellow and almost made it a happy return when he hit the post in the 27th minute after Allcock had pushed out a shot from Gary Fleet. Both sides went close in an entertaining first-half that gave no indication of the explosion that was to follow.

Knight pushed a shot from Gavin Lang over the top and stopped a 25-yard piledriver from Trevor Thompson. And Dennis Hawkins headed against the bar after Fleet had set up the chance from a Neil Matthams pass. But Goodwin's sending off changed the whole face of the game – and Nuneaton now have to bridge that two goal gap in the second leg.

## **Football Alliance Optimism**

Five men will sit round a table in Lytham St Annes today for discussions that could change the face of non-league soccer. Football League secretary Alan Hardaker and two

representatives from the Northern and Southern Leagues are involved in the talks. The item on the agenda – the Football Alliance, scheduled to start next season.

The meeting is the first move towards the setting up of the new competition, virtually a fifth division of the Football League. The plan for the new league was announced by Lord Westwood at the Football League annual meeting in June. It followed months of behind the scenes moves, inspired by Nuneaton Borough and the top clubs in the north.

Lord Westwood's announcement caught, even them, by surprise and it was hailed as the biggest step forward in the history of the non-league game. Now the real work begins. The blueprint has to be laid down and the ground work done.

## **Vincent On The Way Back**

Bobby Vincent rang Nuneaton Borough last night to announce: "I am on my way back." His doctors have given him the go-ahead to start light training – and he could be playing in three months. Vincent will be back at Manor Park next week, only nine months after the car crash that threatened his career.

Said manager Geoff Coleman: "Bob has been told he can do some jogging and light exercises. He is due to have the plate removed from his thigh in six weeks when he can start full training." Vincent's recovery has surprised everyone. He was not expected to start any sort of training until Christmas.

## **Goodwin Fined**

Nuneaton Borough, determined to stamp out trouble on the field, have slapped a fine on defender Ian Goodwin, who was sent off in the Southern League Cup tie at Burton. He was told of the club's action last night.

Said manager Geoff Coleman: "Something had to be done for the sake of the rest of the people at the club."

## **Nuneaton Borough v Grantham Town 30-08-1975**

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Stringfellow, Goodwin, Matthams. **Sub:** Oakes.

**Grantham:** Gardiner, Capewell, Clapham, Taylor, Harrison, Chambers, Jackson, Norris, Dixon, Nixon, Bowers. **Sub:** Benskin.

Borough welcomed Grantham Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough climbed sheepishly back to the top of the Southern League on the strength of a goalless draw. They are now where they spent most of last season. But there was no cause for celebration after a game that was a sad reflection on the state of premier division football. The fans showed what they thought of it by drifting away in their hundreds. Most of them had gone long before referee David Jackson put those that were left out of their misery. No-one could blame them for the game died a slow, agonising death – strangled by its own mediocrity.

Brute force reigned supreme and skill played second fiddle to strength. Conditions were far from ideal – steady rain on a pitch baked hard by weeks of summer sunshine. Yet that was no excuse for the standard of football served up by two cynical sides. It lacked flair, imagination and skill and was totally predictable.



**Ian Goodwin dives in, but Grantham full-back Chris Capewell hooks the ball out of danger.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough had nothing up front and were soon under pressure from the visitors who shaded the second half. Both sides lacked drive in the middle of the park where the pattern of play is controlled. And the few chances that fell to the teams followed errors rather than inventive play. The Southern League table tells it all. Borough are top because of a solid, dour defence – not because of the goals they have scored.

Those average out at one a game – hardly the kind of record to excite the fans. Manager Geoff Coleman has to inject some life into his goal scoring department to relieve the apathy. Mike Stringfellow and Gary Fleet are still struggling to strike up an understanding. Stringfellow did little of note, Fleet was subdued and winger Neil Matthams again looked the pick of a poor front three. To be fair to them, the service they received from midfield was never good enough.

Even the back four, where the real strength lies, was strangely hesitant. And in the end a game that promised so much became a forgettable non-event.

## Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 01-09-1975

**Borough: Meredith, Stephens, Bennett, Cross, Briscoe, Hawkins, Lewis, Oakes, Fleet, Turpie, Matthams. Sub: Ritchie.**

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Borough breathed fresh air back into their season in a six goal feast at Manor Park. They hit back from behind in an exciting second half, bridged a three goal gap – and kept their Southern League Cup hopes alive. The tie ended all square

on aggregate and the sides now have to meet again to decide who goes into the second round. But few people would have given much for their chances as Burton, hit by suspensions, twice went ahead before half-time.

Two goals clear from the first leg, they increased their aggregate lead in the 17th minute. Centre-forward Doug Hickton lashed the ball into the net after Roy Cross had got his head to a long ball from Keith Mole. Dennis Hawkins then hit a shot across the face of the Albion goal before Borough scored in the 23rd minute. Bob Turpie and Neil Matthams set up the chance for Gary Fleet to round off a good move. Only five minutes after that, Burton went back in front after some superb play by skilful Brendan Phillips.

Phillips, wanted by Nuneaton last season, took a pass from Bobby Sykes and drifted past Dave Lewis to set up the chance for Gavin Lang. Hickton clashed with Cross who was helped off for treatment and Sykes went off with a gashed eye that needed stitches. At half-time Burton, with a 4-1 aggregate lead, were strong favourites to get through. But Nuneaton hit them with three goals inside 13 minutes and went desperately close to settling the tie.

Lewis sparked it off with a long right wing cross, Steve Briscoe hit the ball hard and low into the middle – and Matthams turned it into the net. That was in the 53rd minute and five minutes later the Manor Park side went ahead for the first time. Peter Shone brought down Dennis Oakes in the box and Dennis Hawkins made no mistake from the penalty spot.

Then came the goal that the fans had waited for since last February – Bob Turpie's first after his eye injury. The move was started when Hickton gave away the ball on the edge of the Borough 18 yard box. It went from Matthams to Briscoe, out to Hawkins and across to Turpie, who beat goalkeeper Alcock with a header. Turpie badly needed the boost to his confidence – and showed his delight as he almost disappeared among the fans at the back of the Cock and Bear goal.

Nuneaton then put Burton under pressure, but the play continued to flow from end to end. Any resemblance to the agonising goalless draw against Grantham two days earlier was purely coincidental. Borough could have won in the dying seconds. Lewis lifted one shot over the top from a few yards out and then shot wide from a much more difficult position.

## Peake Set For Debut

Local teenager Trevor Peake is set to make his first team debut in Nuneaton Borough's Birmingham Senior Cup tie against Oldbury United at Manor Park. Centre-half Peake gets his chance after some outstanding performances in the Borough Reserves.

The 19-year-old six-footer has developed through the youth team after two years at Manor Park. He follows goalkeeper David Meredith, who made his first team debut against Burton on Monday. "If he does as well as Meredith he will be all right," said manager Geoff Coleman.



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Nuneaton Borough v Oldbury United 04-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Hawkins, Lewis (Lomonaco), Ritchie, Fleet, Holbrooke (Briscoe), Matthams.

Borough welcomed Oldbury United to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup first round tie.

Borough added another match to their already overloaded fixture list after a depressing game, in which they failed to beat a Midland Combination team in a mediocre game. And they are now faced with a replay that is almost certain to cost them a Saturday Southern League game. Nuneaton make no bones about the fact that they consider the competition a complete waste of time. Their performance added weight to that belief – and it is clear that the supporters agree. Only 244 fans – one of the lowest attendances for a competitive match in years – turned up to see the tie.

It was hardly a crowd; more like a get-together – and they could have had more excitement in a greenhouse. A first half totally devoid of imagination was followed by another 45 minutes of boredom. Oldbury had little to offer but spirit and Borough toiled miserably to make an impression. They were nothing like the side that played such exciting soccer against Burton.

Borough could have won in the dying seconds after Oldbury goalkeeper Allard had failed to hold an effort from Frankie Lomonaco, who beat left back Dickens and whipped in a left foot shot. Turpie tried to follow up, but Allard recovered.

## Dunstable Town v Nuneaton Borough 06-09-1975

**Dunstable:** Fields, Davies, Minton, Scurr, Robinson, Iannone, Adams, Mortimer, Waters, Melisi, Cleary. **Sub:** Fry.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Lewis, Oakes, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Stringfellow, Turpie, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to face Dunstable Town in a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Re-shuffled Borough brought Dunstable's unbeaten run to an abrupt end. And they did it with a second half display that bore all the hallmarks of a top of the table side. Patient, composed and skilful, they had Dunstable chasing shadows as they wrapped up the points. Bob Turpie made sure of the win when he prodded the ball past goalkeeper Steel on the hour.

After that, Nuneaton could have had at least two more as they outclassed the home side. Dunstable, who had won their previous five games, struggled to stay alive. The scoreline hardly reflects Borough's superiority after half-time. They stopped trying to play football at 300 miles an hour and looked confident and assured. And no-one was more assured than full-back Kirk Stephens, who turned in a magnificent display. He was the undoubted star of a back four that broke the heart of the Dunstable attack.

Dennis Oakes, in at centre-half for the injured Stan Bennett, did a wonderful job alongside the dependable Roy Cross. Cross,

a more than adequate replacement for Bill Baxter, showed all of his experience. Steve Briscoe had his best game so far at left back and skipper Dave Lewis dominated midfield after the break. Lewis played with a groin injury but Dunstable never knew – they would never have believed it anyway.

But no-one could hold a candle to Stephens, who has got to be the best right back in premier division football. Borough played football from the back – the sign of a good side. But it was a different story before the break as they struggled to cope with their re-organisation. Oakes and Cross took time to settle and Mike Stringfellow was forced to play in midfield. But he used his experience well and fortunately, Dunstable missed chances.

Borough then made them pay – and Turpie's goal gave his growing confidence another great boost. He has now scored twice in three matches since his return – a great sign for the Manor Park club. Nuneaton could have had three more goals in the closing stages. Turpie had a shot kicked off the line by Jackie Scurr to Stringfellow whose effort was charged down.

And he hit Steel with a power packed header that the goalkeeper knew little about. Fleet also had a golden chance as Borough ended the game completely on top – and in style.

## Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 08-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Briscoe, Hawkins, Lewis, Oakes, Fleet, Turpie, Matthams. **Sub:** Ritchie.

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

Adaptable Dennis Oakes scored one goal and set up another as Borough powered to victory over Kettering last night. They brushed the Poppies aside in an exciting game – and are now one point clear at the top of the table. Oakes, who played centre-half in Saturday's win at Dunstable, moved forward into midfield to make room for Stan Bennett.

And his play-anywhere style paid off handsomely in a match that broke the disappointment barrier for the Manor Park fans. Nuneaton seldom manage to impress in front of their own supporters, but last night was different. They took the game to Kettering from the start, showed much more flair and imagination and kept the 2,000-plus crowd on their toes.

The game opened with a brilliant save by Bob Knight from Poppies striker Jim Conde in the second minute. Borough then put their game together, Bob Turpie and Oakes both had chances and Fleet was robbed after a five man move. Conde then shot wide with time to pick his spot and Turpie was off target with a miskick.

Nuneaton took the lead on the half-hour after Kettering goalkeeper Gordon Livsey had been stung by a shot from Dave Lewis. Lewis bent the ball into the keeper from outside the box and it went loose to Turpie. His shot went off Livsey, hit the bar – and rebounded to Oakes, who slid it home.

The linesman's flag went up for offside against Turpie, but



Kidderminster referee Mr Alan Elcock overruled him and the goal stood. Knight pulled off another superb save with the second half just four minutes old, this time from Geoff Vowden. The Kettering player-manager hit the ball hard and low through a ruck of players and Knight could not have seen it until the last second.

That was followed by a miss from Nuneaton when Stan Bennett had a free header and knocked it wide. The second half hung in the balance as the visitors plugged away in a bid to snatch an equaliser. But Borough were still on top and Steve Briscoe almost caught Livsey by surprise. Nuneaton then wrapped up the points with ten minutes left – and it was Oakes who made the running.

He collected a pass from Neil Matthams, beat one player, shrugged off a challenge from Kettering substitute Murray and flicked the ball inside to Fleet. It went in off the Borough number eight and Kettering's slender hopes of saving the game evaporated. Conde was booked four minutes from time when he threw the ball down in anger after claiming hand-ball against Bennett. The win stretched Borough's unbeaten premier division run to 11 games. They were undefeated in the final five matches of last season, and have taken ten points from six matches this term.

## Oldbury United v Nuneaton Borough 10-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Hawkins, Peake, Cross, Cutrera, Fleet (Lewis (Bennett)), Holbrooke, Ritchie, Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to play Oldbury United in a Birmingham Senior Cup first round replay.

Injury hit Borough made their exit from the Birmingham Senior Cup last night, after 210 gruelling minutes of negative football. Only a late goal in extra time saved them the misery of staging a second replay in a competition which they place little importance.

And a worried Geoff Coleman has injury problems for Saturday's FA Cup tie against Tamworth. "No-one wanted to jeopardise their chances of playing in Saturday's game," he said. But both his second half substitutes were injured in a tough tackling game. Dave Lewis limped off after 20 minutes and Stan Bennett left the field injured. In a physical duel that rarely produced even a spark of ingenuity, midfield build-ups were barged down and passes went sadly astray, as play drifted aimlessly from end to end.

And but for occasional flashes of skill from players of the calibre of Roy Cross and Kirk Stephens, there was little to remind a crowd of little more than 50 that Oldbury United and Nuneaton Borough were not in the same class – or league. Young Trevor Peake slotted in well alongside Cross. He played with an air of cool authority and may have won himself a place in Coleman's side for Saturday.

Newcomer Cutrera showed the odd burst of speed and enthusiasm, but was left stranded for most of the game.

Ritchie grafted in midfield and Stephens, captain for the day, and Briscoe were as efficient as ever. In a dull first half a fine save from Knight and a few tame shots at goal from Fleet were the only highlights. Oldbury, rising to the occasion in the second half, played their best football. O'Keeley their most impressive forward shot over the top and Nicholas came closest when he rattled the crossbar from the 18 yards line.

After 90 minutes deadlock Nuneaton were down to ten men and both sides played out the 30 minutes extra time in torrential rain and near darkness. Oldbury grabbed the winner five minutes into the second period. Cross made an uncharacteristic error. For no apparent reason he ladi the ball at the feet of the Oldbury forwards on the half-way line. They charged down field and before Nuneaton had time to recover the ball came to Smart out on the right. And his shot from 18 yards out was helped on its way by a deflection off Ritchie.

## Gary Holbrooke Breaks Leg

Borough manager Geoff Coleman was today hoping to sign a player on loan to help Nuneaton through their current injury crisis. The Manor Park squad has been slashed to a bare minimum. And the position worsened with the news that striker Gary Holbrooke broke his right leg in Saturday's reserve team game at Willenhall Social.

"That's all we needed," said Coleman. "It's been one of those weeks. I was going to draft Holbrooke into my squad for the Southern League Cup replay with Burton."

## Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 15-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Cooper, Briscoe, Ritchie, Peake, Cross, Fleet, Goodwin (Thomas), Turpie, Oakes, Matthams.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round replay.

Borough were bundled out of the Southern League Cup and there was little to cheer the Manor Park fans who turned out to see little more than a ghost squad take the field and die a slow agonising death. For shrouded around this cup tie play-off was the grim knowledge that Geoff Coleman's casualty list had now claimed seven first-team players. Kirk Stephens did not play and Mike Stringfellow was out of the reckoning. And manager Coleman brought in Steve Cooper from Racing Club Warwick in a desperate bid to bolster the crumbling ruins of his team. Of the players on the field, Gordon Ritchie, injured at work last week, played with a bandaged wrist.

Burton, still reeling from a 3-1 thrashing in the FA Cup on Saturday, took just 29 minutes to discover that Borough were capable of offering only token resistance. Gary Fleet worked bravely in midfield and he figured in one of Borough's few early attacks – setting up Matthams with a chance via Goodwin. Only Roy Cross stood out in a rocky defence and Burton came close to scoring when Peake and Cooper were involved in a goalmouth mix up.

Mick Fletcher shot over the top from 10 yards and at the other



end Fleet sent in a cracking 25 yarder that Allard tipped over the bar. Then Bobby Sykes failed to capitalise as he rushed in to pick up a free-kick from Annable. But inevitably Burton went ahead following a corner kick. Mick Fletcher sent over a slow curling flag-kick. Hickton made a good job of harrasing Knight, Goodwin took a swing at the ball and somehow it spun into the net. Before Borough had time to recover, Fletcher added a second goal, eight minutes later.

Lang sent over a troublesome corner and as the Nuneaton defence floundered in an attempt to clear Fletcher pounced. He found enough room to turn and lash the ball past Knight from six yards. Just before half-time Matthams made a chance for himself. He gathered the ball out on the right, turned inside and ran on before sending a shot that inched its way over the top left hand corner.

Two goals down at the interval Borough never looked like recovering. But in the 55th minute referee Lancaster awarded Borough a penalty after a confusing infringement in the Burton goalmouth. Sykes was penalised for holding Oakes after Turpie had sent a low left foot cross from the right wing. And the sight of Turpie ramming the spot kick home was probably the best tonic the Borough fans had all night.

Nuneaton looked a little more composed in the last 20 minutes and 12 minutes from time Goodwin was brought off to give Bedworth teenager Wayne Thomas his first taste of Southern League football. But Borough were well beaten.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dover

20-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Turpie, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

**Dover:** Gadsby, White, Keeley, Fursdon, Waite, Light, Hamshere, Coxhill, Housden, Rogers, Coupland. **Sub:** Smith.

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

Borough, troubled by injuries, knocked the daylights out of a struggling Dover side – and then lulled themselves into a false sense of superiority. They looked unbeatable, played open washbuckling soccer and watched bemused as Dover stole back three goals. Borough started in dazzling style. Within four minutes Dover were demoralised. Their defence was in desperate straits and Borough's aggressive front running had paid off handsomely with two goals. The first came from Gary Fleet, Nuneaton's chief buccaneer, inside two minutes.

Ian Goodwin took a long throw in from the right, Dennis Oakes nodded the ball on and set up Fleet, who galloped in to smack the ball past Gadsby. Two minutes later Hawkins grabbed the second. Lurking outside the packed goalmouth he picked up a short corner from Briscoe and before the Dover defence had time to regroup he hammered the ball home off the woodwork. Ecstatic Borough were in rampant mood. After 14 minutes they were three up and Goodwin claimed the goal. Hawkins' corner came over high and dangerously close to Gadsby's line and Goodwin soared

into the air to challenge. Gadsby floundered and Keeley desperately tried to clear the goal, but Goodwin was in position to shepherd the ball home.

The home crowd awaited an avalanche of goals – at least another three predicted some. And it looked on the cards. For Fleet and Matthams were carving up the Kent side's defence. But after three minutes Dover had pulled one back when Coupland lobbed the ball over Knight's head.

Three minutes later Peake brought down Hamshere in the box and Coxhill missed the penalty. Bob Knight heroically stopped the shot and smothered the ball as Coxhill ran in to pick up the rebound. Knight received a cut over his left eye, but played on and kept Nuneaton out of trouble until Coxhill headed in Dover's second, three minutes before half-time.

But in the 48th minute Rogers pounced, slotting home a left foot shot from a Waite back-heeler. With the scores level, Borough shrugged off the fact that Dover, still looking for a win in the Southern League, were now in contention. An Oakes header was cleared, Fleet hit the woodwork and he and Matthams both had shots blocked in a goalmouth scramble. But Dover gradually edged their way into the game. Light and Coxhill began to control midfield and Dover could easily have snatched a winner.

## Stringfellow Quits Football

Mike Stringfellow, Nuneaton Borough's major close season signing, has quit football. He announced his retirement at the weekend. "There is no alternative," he said. "Nuneaton cannot go on paying someone who is not playing."

The former Leicester City striker has been forced out of the game by recurring knee trouble.

## Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough

22-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Oakes, Sweeney, Hawkins, Ritchie, Lomonaco, Fleet, Briscoe, Matthams. **Sub:** Turpie, Thomas.

Borough made the journey to Kettlebrook to face Tamworth in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough struggled throughout the game and were lucky to be let off so lightly. Tamworth could easily have doubled their score in a game where nothing went right for Borough. Tamworth had plenty of chances, but Borough lost to one of the craziest goals of the season. Goalkeeper Bob Knight, undoubtedly Borough's most consistent player, reached up to take a centre from Steve Newell and stepped back over the line as he was challenged by Nigel Bunt. The referee was 35 yards away, but the linesman was on the spot and immediately flagged for a goal.

Tamworth had gone into the lead with a Brian Bates goal after only five minute. Nine minutes later, Frankie Lomonaco combined with Neil Matthams and grabbed an equaliser with a fierce shot that went across goalkeeper Peter King and into the far corner. Tamworth then scored their controversial

match winner – and went on to dominate the second half. Inspired by former Borough player John Flanagan, they took control and should have widened their winning margin. Flanagan set up a string of chances, including one for substitute Mick Wakelin that looked impossible to miss.

Lomonaco had a chance for Borough in the closing minutes, but they were never good enough to upset Tamworth.

## Borough Linked With Top Players

Nuneaton Borough, seeking new players, have been linked with two of the top forwards in Southern League football. Manager Geoff Coleman has admitted an interest in Kettering's transfer list striker Roy Clayton. And there is speculation about a possible move for Mickey Fudge, top scorer at Telford. But the main stumbling block in both cases is cash – or the lack of it.

### Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 27-09-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Goodwin, Peake, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Turpie, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Briscoe.

**Hillingdon:** Phillips, Hawley, Gelson, Ryan, Archer, McGovern, Bishop, Wagstaff, Reeve, Brown, Huxley. **Sub:** Smith.

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

Borough, chasing honours in the Southern League should be handing out medals today – to their fans. The fans who stayed to the bitter end of an appalling game in dreadful conditions. Their tolerance was rewarded by a good Gary Fleet goal that won the game two minutes from time. But even that could not wipe out the memory of what had gone before.

Nightmare conditions turned the match into a farce. Wind and rain lashed the ground in the first half and the wind increased to near gale force after half-time. But even conditions like that could not altogether excuse the standard of play. Taking everything into account, it was woeful – sheer agony for everyone concerned. Hillingdon, now at the foot of the table, looked the more competent side for long periods.



**Hillingdon keeper Gordon Phillips dives in vain as Gary Fleet's shot beats him for the match winner two minutes from time.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And the win cannot disguise the deficiencies that appeared in the Borough team. Many of the players appeared to

succumb to the conditions and it was this lack of professional approach that was inexcusable. Both sides tried to play 30 yard balls – disastrous in the conditions. Hillingdon did, at least, try to adapt themselves and the defeat was rough justice for the London side.

The game was only seconds away from the only result that would have been fair when Borough struck. And the goal itself was almost worth the agony the fans had suffered. Neil Matthams, who had been moved to left back when Bob Newton was injured 15 minutes from time, played the ball forward to Bob Turpie, who ran the ball at the Hillingdon defence before slipping a pass to Fleet, who controlled it well and scored with a shot on the turn.

A few minutes earlier Turpie had forced goalkeeper Gordon Phillips into a fine save to turn a goalbound header over the top. But they were the only moments of note in a forgettable afternoon. There is one consolation. It can never be as bad again – surely.

### Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 07-10-1975

**Atherstone:** Hall, Stockley, Beard, G. Smith, Preston, Hunt, R. Smith, Franklin, Tearse, Vincent, Jennings. **Sub:** Usher.

**Borough:** Knight, Evans, Newton, Oakes, Goodwin, Cross, Briscoe, Fleet, Lomonaco, Ritchie, Matthams. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to face Atherstone Town in the Midland Floodlit Cup.

Adders' bold attacking football finally wore down a dour Nuneaton side after they had taken a shock lead in the first minute. Goals from Johnny Vincent after 62 minutes and Dave Tearse after 84, finally floored a Borough side who had looked like holding on to their slender lead. Dennis Oakes put them in front when he headed home Neil Matthams' free kick after Steve Briscoe had been fouled on the edge of the box.

Adders were soon on the attack and Ernie Hunt shot just past the post. Minutes later Oakes was in action again when he somehow scooped a goalbound header from Mick Preston off the line, and Johnny Vincent blasted the rebound over the bar. Borough managed a rare attack and Frankie Lomonaco shot just over the top after being put through by Steve Briscoe. Adders had most of the play but were breaking down on the edge of the box as Ian Goodwin and Roy Cross kept a close watch on Tearse and Franklin.

Franklin had a chance in the 45th minute, but Knight blocked the shot with his body. Adders had another chance in the 50th minute, but Jennings' cross went straight across the box, inches away from Tearse, Franklin and Hunt. Knight produced another good save in the 60th minute when he pushed Tearse's shot round the post. But Atherstone finally equalised, with a goal that resulted in violent protests from Borough. Vincent looked offside when he took a return pass from Franklin to round Knight and score, but the ball took a slight deflection off Oakes.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Fleet and Gordon Ritchie both had shots cleared, and Knight made a great reflex save to deny Tearse. Briscoe missed a chance to restore Borough's lead, when he hammered the ball over the bar after Cross had a shot charged down, and then Matthams hit the side netting.

But Tearse finally got the goal that mattered. He rose above Goodwin to head home Vincent's corner and the 1,118 crowd – Atherstone's best of the season – went wild with delight. Nuneaton almost snatched an equaliser when Lomonaco shaved the bar with a shot from 15 yards a minute later.

## Dover v Nuneaton Borough 11-10-1975

**Dover:** Raine, Reynolds, Keeley, Breach, Waite, Light, Hamshire, Coxhill, Housden, Fursdon, Rogers. **Sub:** Wallace.

**Borough:** Knight, Cross, Newton, Hawkins, Goodwin, Bennett, Briscoe, Fleet, Turpie, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to play Dover in a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Stan Bennett heralded his return to the Borough side with the match winning goal – and then paid tribute to the fans. Nearly 70 made the 320-mile round trip to the Kent coast to cheer their side to victory. "They are the people you want to mention," said the ex-Walsall defender. "They make it easier for us. It's like playing at home and the lads really appreciate it."

Bennett made the trip worthwhile when he volleyed the ball into the net for the winner in the 64th minute. Bob Turpie headed the ball across the goalmouth from a corner. It came off the head of Dover centre-half Dave Waite and dropped for Bennett to score. The goal stretched Borough's unbeaten run to 14 matches – just three short of the club record. It also maintained their one hundred per cent away record and moved them back into second place behind champions Wimbledon. They are the only unbeaten side in the premier division – a proud record.

At times their play was as impressive as the statistics. They were always one step ahead of Dover who drew 3-3 at Manor Park three weeks ago. That result must have given the Kent club pre-match confidence, but they found Nuneaton in determined mood. Geoff Coleman's side took a grip on the game early on and were rarely in any serious trouble.

Their one bad moment came in the dying seconds when Dover full-back Andy Keeley hit a shot out of a goalmouth scramble. It looked an equaliser all of the way, but Bob Knight clutched it on the line to prevent what would have been an injustice. Borough owed a lot to the performance of Gary Fleet, who took the man of the match honours in midfield. Skilful, unselfish and hungry for work, Fleet made the team tick. Bennett and Ian Goodwin coped with everything that Dover could throw at them.

Dennis Hawkins and Dennis Oakes complemented Fleet in midfield and Steve Briscoe did well up front. But it was another good all-round performance from Borough.

## Nuneaton Borough v Cambridge City 13-10-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Cross, Goodwin, Bennett, Newton, Hawkins, Fleet, Oakes, Briscoe, Turpie, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

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

Borough dropped their fourth home point of the season after winning all of their away matches. Spillane's goal cancelled out one from Dennis Oakes, scored seconds after half-time. Oakes rifled the ball into the net after goalkeeper Pat Murray had pushed out a left-wing cross.

For 20 minutes Borough threatened to tear cautious Cambridge apart with some of their best soccer of the season. Prompted by the skills of Gary Fleet from midfield and with Bob Turpie in form up front, they pushed forward in search of a goal. Turpie almost got one after 14 minutes when he controlled a Roy Cross free-kick on his chest and hit a superb volley that Murray did well to stop.

Bob Knight then pushed out a shot from Ricky George and Briscoe completed the clearance. It was all Nuneaton as Cambridge pulled players back to block the way to goal. They strung five men across their penalty area and slowly suffocated Borough's attacks as the game wore on. A goal at that stage would surely have pushed the visitors to the verge of a collapse. Even with their defence in depth they struggled to turn the tide as Nuneaton played some exciting football.

Frustration began to creep into Nuneaton's play and their fire died – only to be revived by the Oakes goal just 40 seconds after half-time. Turpie had a header cleared off the line by Graham Sawyer and Fleet beat two players to set up a chance for Briscoe. He was tackled as he shaped up to shoot and then Neil Matthams drove a shot across the face of goal.

City then launched their final assault on a Nuneaton defence in which Ian Goodwin was again outstanding. Goodwin cleared from Spillane as the visitors searched for an equaliser in the closing stages. It came when Borough failed to clear a right wing cross which went through for Spillane to score at the far post. Briscoe had a snapshot saved by Murray and Oakes had a shot charged down.

Then, only seconds from time, Knight cut out a cross from Martin Murray. He managed to smother the ball as it bobbed with both George and Peter Martin waiting to cash in.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wealdstone 25-10-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Niven, Hawkins, Goodwin, Cross, Briscoe, Fleet, Lomonaco, Newton, Matthams. **Sub:** Peake.

**Wealdstone:** Morton, Kinnear, O'Kane, Fairclough, Godfrey, Lewis, Watson, Moss, Byrne, Duck, Henderson. **Sub:** Fulton.

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

Borough dropped another home point on Saturday – their



fifth so far – in a game that was ruined before it had chance to start. Wealdstone stifled it with blanket defensive tactics and it dragged itself out into a grim, goalless draw. The North Londoners made their intentions clear from the first seconds.

They strung five players across their defence, packed the middle of the park and sat back. And, sadly, they achieved their aim – because Borough, try as they might, did not have the flair and ideas to make it otherwise. Geoff Coleman's side ran into a brick wall of defenders and missed the handful of chances that came their way. They became more and more frustrated, particularly when Wealdstone went even more defensive twenty minutes from time.

Off went centre-forward Byrne to be replaced by midfield player Fulton. That move blocked even more avenues to goal – not difficult against an attack as weak as Nuneaton's. Their stereotyped build-ups played into the hands of the visitors, although they had three chances. Frankie Lomonaco volleyed over from close range and Neil Matthams had two headers saved in quick succession by John Morton. But the best chance of the match fell to Wealdstone centre-forward George Duck in the dying minutes.

He was put clear, shot too soon and Bob Knight, almost redundant in the Borough goal, pulled off a fine save. A goal would have been a grave injustice because the tactics the visitors employed should never succeed. When a side sets out to do as they did on Saturday they forget the people who matter – the fans. What they want, and deserve, is value for money. But the creed in soccer at the moment for most away sides appears to be "Stop them playing at all costs."

It reflects in the attendances at a time when clubs are struggling desperately to make ends meet. What it has done is stopped people paying – and will continue to do so.

## Borough Bid For Compton Edwards

Nuneaton Borough have made a bid for Worcester City's Jamaican-born striker Compton Edwards. Manager Geoff Coleman contacted Worcester at the weekend and the offer is being discussed by the City board.

## European Football For Top Teams

A place in Europe could be the prize at stake for the top two teams in the Southern League this season. For plans have been drawn up for an Anglo-Italian tournament between semi-professional clubs. Representatives of the Southern and Northern Leagues and the Isthmian League have already agreed on the idea in principle.

## Warom Signs Southern League Forms

Racing Club Warwick striker Micky Warom has signed Southern League forms for Nuneaton Borough. He has joined the club on a non-contract basis to see if he can make the grade in the premier division. Warom is 21 and one of the leading scorers in the Midland Combination. He has netted ten goals – including a hat-trick.

## Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 27-10-1975

**Tamworth:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Niven, Hawkins, Newton, Trevor, Briscoe, Turpie, Matthams. **Sub:** Lomonaco.

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

Kirk Stephens took over the captain's role for Nuneaton Borough – and rescued their pride. The full-back netted a second-half equaliser to save them from defeat. He won a challenge on Tamworth goalkeeper Peter King in the 66th minute and slid the ball home. But even that failed to inspire Borough, who showed all of their old failings in front of goal. And the message is now clearer than it has ever been – manager Geoff Coleman has to improve his attack.

Despite the changes and permutations the evidence of the past few weeks must make his search for a striker top priority. Tamworth went into a shock lead in the fifth minute when Derek Watts beat Bob Knight from close in following a corner.

The Kettlebrook outfit often looked the better side as Borough's confidence fell away. Skipper Len Harris spurred them from midfield and they put their passes together better than Nuneaton. But they survived a heavy spell of pressure late in the game when Borough burst into life. Bob Turpie almost won a penalty after 60 minutes when he was brought down by West on the edge of the box.

The second half then became a grim struggle and even Stephens' equaliser failed to bring it to life. Tamworth faced further Borough attacks late in the game and goalkeeper King was booked when he raced out of his box and felled Hawkins. He was lucky not to have been sent off. But Borough are so weak in front of goal these days that they always give their opponents a chance. And Tamworth almost took it in the dying minutes when Ian Hall played a superb pass forward to Watts. The ex-Leicester player failed to control it and Knight was able to save.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 03-11-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Newton, Goodwin, Fleet, Oakes, Lomonaco, Turpie, Matthams. **Subs:** Briscoe, Ritchie.

**Atherstone:** Allen, Stockley, Reardon, Preston, Beard, R. Smith, Vincent, Kiernan, Franklin, Tearnse, Jennings. **Subs:** Usher, G. Smith.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough recaptured their goal touch with a performance that overpowered Atherstone. They always looked a better side than disappointing Adders, who struggled to put their game together. And they cruised home with goals from Gary Fleet, Dennis Oakes and Frankie Lomonaco. Fleet masterminded their win with an inspired performance from midfield, which none of the Atherstone players could match.

Back to his best, he showed all of the skills that make him

one of the most exciting players in the Southern League Premier Division. It was Fleet who shot Nuneaton in front with a superb 29th minute goal from a Neil Matthams pass. He stunned the Adders defence with a 20 yard shot from the edge of the box that left triallist goalkeeper Bruce Allen with no chance. Four minutes earlier, Allen had made a magnificent save to clutch a header from Matthams on the line. But the young goalkeeper was at fault when Nuneaton went 2-0 up on the stroke of half-time.

He failed to cope with a long Matthams' centre that seemed to take an age to reach the goalmouth. The ball slipped through his hands and went to Oakes who drove it into the net from the far post. There was nothing he could do about the third goal, set up by Fleet eleven minutes into the second half. He beat Joe Kiernan and Bob Stockley in a dazzling run and ran at the Adders' defence before releasing a pass to Oakes. Oakes played it first time to Lomonaco, who took on Alan Reardon and cracked a shot past Allen on the turn.

That knocked the rest of the fight out of the Sheepy Road side, who were strangely subdued. Only Roger Smith showed the spirit, fire and determination Adders needed – but the rest of the side failed to respond. Johnny Vincent and Joe Kiernan were ineffective alongside him in the middle of the park and front runners Kirk Jennings, David Tearse and Barry Franklin rarely troubled the Borough defence.

Borough are beginning to look like a side that could win the Southern League championship. They were certainly too good for sixth in the table Atherstone – even if there were no premier division points at stake.

## Euro Invite For Borough

Nuneaton Borough are among six clubs who will go into Europe next season as ambassadors abroad for non league football. They and Wimbledon have been invited to represent the Southern League in an Anglo-Italian tournament for semi-professional sides.

“Needless to say we have accepted,” said Borough chairman Ken Peal. “It will be worth it for the national coverage we will get.” Borough and Wimbledon will be joined by two teams from the Northern Premier League and the Isthmian League.

### Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 08-11-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Oakes, Matthams. Sub: Turpie.

**Stourbridge:** Moore, Barton, Rumjahn, Pridgeon, Green, Lynch, Booth, Hogg, Cooper, Smith, Owen. Sub: Dyer.

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

A few angry words have almost certainly cost Ian Goodwin his place in Borough's FA Cup tie against Wimbledon. Sent off against Stourbridge, he faces another three match ban. And that will leave manager Geoff Coleman with a massive gap

to fill in midfield for the First Round tie a week on Saturday. Goodwin received his marching orders in the 60th minute in an incident that stunned the crowd. Borough were waiting to take a corner when the referee called Goodwin over and words were exchanged. Goodwin obviously lost the argument and walked slowly to the dressing rooms – sent off for the second time this season.



**Stourbridge goalkeeper Mick Moore is stranded on the edge of the six-yard box as Steve Briscoe's header flies goalwards to put Borough 2-0 up in the 40th minute.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

At that stage Nuneaton were 2-1 up, and the incident let in Stourbridge for a late rally that took them to the brink of a point. Joey Owen hit the bar and Dave Hogg had a shot blocked in a crowded goalmouth, but Nuneaton held out. They had gone ahead with two goals in six minutes just before half-time before Stourbridge cut the arrears.

The first was an own goal – headed past his own goalkeeper by Stourbridge full-back Jeff Rumjahn in the 34th minute. Six minutes later Steve Briscoe's bravery earned him a goal after Stourbridge keeper Mick Moore had failed to take a Dennis Hawkins corner. Centre-forward Paul Cooper pulled one back for the Amblecote side almost on half-time. But the scoreline was hardly a true reflection on the play at that stage.

Stourbridge had hustled Borough out of their stride in midfield and fought for every ball. Goodwin's sending off then upset the second half and the scrappy goals were in keeping with the general standard of the game. Neither goalkeeper had a shot to save in the first half an hour and the pattern was similar after the break.

But Nuneaton emerged with both points – and equalled a club record. It was their 17th premier division game without defeat, a run which began in March. And they maintained their relentless chase of top club Wimbledon, who must be wondering what they have to do to pull away. Borough's performance fell a long way short of their display against Atherstone, but they keep picking up the points, which is supposed to be what it is all about.



## Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 10-11-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Goodwin, Niven, Hawkins, Fleet, Oakes, Lomonaco, Turpie, Taylor.

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

Burton Albion, the only team to win at Manor Park this season put in a repeat performance, and virtually wrecked Borough's hopes of qualifying for the semi-finals. Borough hit back from the penalty spot after Burton had taken an early lead. But Albion settled the points with a match winner from Neil Perry 15 minutes from the end. Both Burton goals carved huge holes in casual Nuneaton's defence.

The first, after only eight minutes, came when Alan Niven missed a tackle on Dough Hickton from a left wing throw. Hickton ran on and steered a shot wide of Bob Knight. Borough, with newcomer Mick Taylor, busy up front, equalised from the penalty spot twelve minutes later. Bob Turpie was put clear by Frankie Lomonaco and sent sprawling in the box by Peter Shone. Dennis Hawkins made no mistake with his spot kick to even up the game.

Both sides had chances after that. Lomonaco swerved a shot wide, Gary Fleet went close from a Taylor pass and Knight had to race to the edge of his box to boot clear from Hickton. Bob Turpie then had an overhead kick saved by Harry Allcock and shaved the far post a few minutes later with a shot across the face of the goal. But Albion restored their lead in the 75th minute when Kilkelly played Perry clear with a ball that split the Borough defence. Nuneaton tried to save the game in the closing minutes but their ninth home match in a row ended in their second defeat at Manor Park this season.

## Cambridge City v Nuneaton Borough 15-11-1975

**Cambridge:** P. Murray, Rule, Flanagan, Guild, Grane, Sawyer, Newell, George, Moden, M. Murray, Martin. **Sub:** Coe.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Goodwin, Bennett, Cross, Briscoe, Fleet, Taylor, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Peake.

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

Borough, the hardest side to beat in Southern League football, rewrote their record book. They took a point at bleak, rain-swept Milton Road to stretch their unbeaten run to 18 premier division games. Unfortunately the chroniclers will have to devote a page to Ian Goodwin, sent off for the second time in a week. Goodwin was ordered off in the closing stages for a heavy tackle on Cambridge winger Peter Martin. The tackle was certainly a bookable offence – but it hardly warranted the extreme measure the referee took.

If Goodwin is a marked man, so is midfielder player Gary Fleet – for a different reason. Fleet was kicked out of the game by cynical City and had to go off with a knee injury. The Cambridge players literally queued up to kick Fleet, who

must be doubtful for the Wimbledon FA Cup tie. Fleet's injury and Goodwin's sending off upset the rhythm of a Borough side who outclassed City in the first half.

Borough made Cambridge look like a bottom of the table side after the first 20 minutes and took the lead through Steve Briscoe. He forgot his knee trouble to score from the narrowest of angles after beating City centre-half Crane and goalkeeper Murray. Newcomer Mick Taylor, who had a busy debut up front, played a part in the goal. He almost got one himself a few minutes later after Neil Matthams had a shot blocked from a Briscoe pass.

Cambridge desperate for points after going to the bottom of the table, pulled themselves together at half-time. They started to compete in midfield and ruthlessly singled out Fleet as their number one target. Nuneaton fell away and their defence, superbly held together by centre-half Stan Bennett had to bear the brunt. Bennett was magnificent after Cambridge had equalised in the 55th minute. Bob Knight failed to hold a shot from City winger Martin Murray and centre-forward Trevor Moden forced the ball over the line.

Nuneaton gradually pulled themselves together as rain began to sweep the ground. Trevor Peake went on for Fleet and almost won the match and Bob Newton made a goal-line clearance to prevent a Cambridge goal. But Borough went on to set a new club record which must be close to the best run of any side in the history of the Southern League.

## Wimbledon To Bring 500 Fans To Nuneaton

Wimbledon will bring at least 500 fans to Nuneaton for Saturday's FA Cup tie at Manor Park. Five coaches have been filled and more will be laid on if needed. The club has also booked three carriages on a train for the fans who want to travel by rail.

## Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone United 24-11-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Newton, Hawkins, Goodwin, Oakes, Briscoe, Taylor, Fleet. **Sub:** Warom.

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

Borough managed to hang on to their unbeaten record. But they were fortunate to survive several near misses from Maidstone in a poor game. It never lived up to its top of the table label and fizzled out long before the end. Early on Nuneaton threatened to blow away the cobwebs with some bright attacking play, looking as if they were determined to bury the memory of their FA Cup defeat. But the old failings were still there – good build-ups and no finish.

And their promise soon faded as the Kent club hit back and had them under pressure. Maidstone goalkeeper Derek Belotti, who had spread confidence to his defence with his safe handling in the early stages, prevented an own goal. He reacted superbly to save a back header from his own striker Dave Lucas in the 43rd minute.





But Peter Tough should have put the Stones in front almost on the stroke of half-time. He lashed a shot high and wide after a right wing corner had caused a goalmouth scramble. Tough missed a better chance four minutes into the second half when he had time and space. And he then hit a stanchion as he cut in along the line. Nuneaton almost won the game when Dennis Oakes turned a Steve Briscoe centre towards the net. Bellotti managed to get to it and smothered it on the line as it threatened to go under his body.

That was Borough's best chance and the last one the fans saw in the final 20 minutes. Maidstone settled for a point and the Manor Park side lacked the thrust and firepower to get through. Newcomer Micky Warom went on ten minutes from time for Gary Fleet for his Southern League debut. By that time though, it was too late and a game that had opened with promise ended in disappointment again.

## Malcolm Allen Quits Manor Park

Malcolm Allen has left Nuneaton Borough after 18 months as chief coach. "I have been thinking about it for some time," said Allen, whose connections with the club go back 15 seasons. During that time he has served Borough as a player, player-manager and chief coach.

"I will miss it," he said. "It will be a wrench for me to leave – there is no doubt about that." But he explained: "My business is taking more of my time. I have a job as well and I don't feel I can give one hundred per cent to the football any more. It is not a decision I have taken lightly. Things have gone well over the last 18 months and I have enjoyed it."

## Borough Chase Cleary

Nuneaton Borough are among three clubs chasing Dunstable Town striker George Cleary. They stepped in when financially crippled Dunstable told all of their players they were free to leave. But they face opposition from Weymouth and Fourth Division Cambridge United. Cleary favours Cambridge United where one of his former managers, Ron Atkinson, is in charge.

## Inglis Turns Down Borough

Worcester City striker John Inglis has turned down a move to Nuneaton Borough. Manager Geoff Coleman was given permission to talk to Inglis, who would have been available for a moderate fee. But Inglis, a prolific scorer in the Southern League first division north, was not interested.

### Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 06-12-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Newton, Fleet, Thompson, Oakes, Lomonaco, O'Brien, Briscoe. **Sub:** Peake.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to play Burton Albion in a Southern League Premier Division game.

The day of reckoning arrived for Borough. They were outplayed and finally crushed by a Burton side that romped home. And their 19 match unbeaten run disappeared under the weight of their heaviest Southern League defeat for more than two years.

But it had been on the cards for weeks. Injury problems and lack of goal power have taken their toll of team spirit.

The writing was on the wall as soon as Albion hit their first goal after 25 minutes. There was no way Borough were going to pull it back. They had little to offer in midfield where Longford born Brendan Phillips ran the game for the home side. And they had even less up front and failed to set up one clear cut chance in the whole of the game.

Borough had no-one to match the skills of Phillips or the class of Ian Moore. The former Manchester United winger had a field day as Albion piled on the agony after half-time. He had a hand in two of the goals and showed the qualities that made him a £250,000 player before an ankle injury forced him out of the Football League.

Borough's best spell came when Trevor Peake replaced centre-forward Bill O'Brien early in the second half. Burton had to face pressure for the first time – but it was pressure without any real hope of a goal. There was an air of inevitability about the result as soon as Les Wright headed Albion in front after 25 minutes. And Phillips, who had a magnificent match, killed off Borough's revival chances with a superb second. He took the ball across the Nuneaton defence and hit a left foot shot inside the post.

Bob Knight managed to get a hand to the ball, but had no chance of keeping it out. Borough's rally raised only a faint glimmer of hope before Burton went on to complete the humiliation. Moore made it 3-0 after more skill from Phillips in the 74th minute. And Wright grabbed the fourth five minutes later with the Nuneaton defence in a shambles.

That completed the rout and left Borough manager Geoff Coleman with a load of problems. He has a side that has forgotten how to score goals and has troubles in midfield. The defence, arguably the best in the Southern League, can only stand so much – Saturday proved that.

### Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 13-12-1975

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Thompson, Fleet, Peake, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Briscoe.

**Atherstone:** Hall, Stockley, Beard, G. Smith, Preston, Kernan, R. Smith, Franklin, Tearse, Vincent, Jennings. **Sub:** Hunt.

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

Atherstone left Manor Park still complaining they should have had a last minute penalty. Striker Barry Franklin was sent sprawling by a challenge from Bob Knight with seconds to go. Franklin protested he should have had a spot kick and Borough manager Geoff Coleman agreed it was close. But a hard-fought local derby ended all square.

Adders picked up a precious away point and Borough restored some of their confidence with a battling second half display. They still struggled to set up chances – but no player could be faulted for lack of effort.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Adders took the honours early on after being presented with a goal in the first minute. Knight left his line and totally misjudged a 35-yard free-kick from full back Bob Stockley. The ball sailed over his head into the net. Franklin and David Tearse then both missed chances for the Adders, who could have been at least three goals up inside half an hour.



**Borough defender Roy Cross and Adders' winger Kirk Jennings clash in a thigh high battle in the first half.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But the Sheepy Road side made the mistake of falling back on defence. And Atherstone schoolteacher Neil Matthams taught them a lesson when he grabbed Borough's 41st minute equaliser. Dennis Oakes headed a Bob Newton cross back into the middle and Matthams drilled the ball into the net. The goal transformed Borough and they attacked with determination in the second half, despite a team reshuffle at half time. Oakes, his thigh heavily strapped from the start, had to go off during the interval.

Borough pushed forward at the start of the second half and Adders were forced to pull players back. But Atherstone still looked dangerous when they broke out of defence and the game hung in the balance. Dave Lewis brought a competitive edge back to the side in midfield. And goalscorer Matthams made a massive contribution when he had to drop back after Oakes was forced to go off. The problems were still there up front, but Athersone's packed defence would have denied most sides a goal. So both clubs emerged with credit from a hard fought, but never vicious local derby.

## **Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 20-12-1975**

**Chelmsford:** Taylor, Coakley, Tomkins, Shore, Loughton, Walker, Rowe, Lee, Kellock, Gregory, Price. **Sub:** Dilsworth.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Thompson, Matthams. **Sub:** Hawkins.

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

Borough restored some of their shattered pride. They lifted themselves off the floor after their disastrous defeat at Corby. And their effort, skill and determination carried them to

within eight minutes of victory. Ex-Colchester winger Terry Price denied them a win with City's 82nd minute equaliser. But Nuneaton left the field with the heads held high – and with the applause of the crowd ringing in their ears.

For the long suffering Chelmsford fans appreciated the effort both sides put into the game. It was fast, often tense and contained near misses at both ends – a good advert for Southern League soccer. City held the upper hand early on and Bob Knight kept Borough in the game in the opening stages. Knight atoned for two shaky performances with a display that put him back among the top keepers in the premier division.

Dave Lewis, Ian Goodwin and Phil Thompson then gave Nuneaton control in midfield. Lewis inspired, Goodwin dominated – and Thompson was able to show his delicate skills. By half-time Borough were the better side. They had grown in assurance and confidence. And Stan Bennett almost put them in front with a header that brought out a spectacular save from Laurie Taylor.

Bennett covered a groin injury with the grit and courage that carried him through 15 years at Walsall. Borough needed his experience at the back so he decided to risk the injury – an action that summed up the spirit of the Borough side. They maintained their form into the second half and Neil Matthams shot them ahead in the 56th minute. Matthams, another hard worker, beat Taylor with a power-packed left foot shot from 25 yards after a cleverly worked free-kick. City tried to hit back, but Borough defended well and then pushed forward again.

But Chelmsford, without a manager following the dismissal of Bill Leivers, were just as determined. And a burst down the right-hand side by Bobby Kellock led to their equaliser. Bennett reached the cross but his header fell to Price at the edge of the box. He slammed it past Bob Knight – and the game finished all square.

## **Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 26-12-1975**

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Goodwin, Cross, Newton, Lewis, Thompson, Hawkins, Briscoe, Fleet, Matthams. **Sub:** Warom.

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

Gary Fleet brought a touch of tinsel to a colourless Boxing Day game. Borough's diminutive front runner saved a point with a well-taken 66th minute equaliser. Steve Briscoe made the running when he took on two defenders and pulled the ball back for Fleet to add the final touch. But it was one of the few moments worth remembering in a drab game.

Bedford went ahead with a 55th minute penalty that Borough disputed. Pete Hawkins beat Bob Newton and was brought down by Ian Goodwin as he cut into the box. Trevor Gould slammed home the spot kick amid protests from Nuneaton that Hawkins had fouled Newton before being brought down.

Much of the match was a hard slog in front of a 1,200-plus holiday crowd. Fleet raised Borough's hopes with a 32nd minute shot against the foot of a post. But Nuneaton suffered from the same old problems – their build ups were good and their finishing woeful.

Bedford looked far more menacing. They had the best forward on the field in number nine Gary Sargent and should have been in front at half-time. Borough had periods of pressure, but never inspired any great confidence when they reached the 18 yard box. And they dropped another precious home point in their sixth draw in eight games. Their away performances have helped to cover up the deficiencies because they are better equipped to defend than attack.

## Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 27-12-1975

**Grantham:** Gardiner, Shaw, G. Capewell, M. Capewell, Harrison, Clapham, Bower, Taylor, Nixon, Norris, Benskin. **Sub:** Fleming.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Hawkins, Matthams. **Sub:** Thompson.

Borough made the journey to London Road to play Grantham Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough set what must surely be another club record. They managed just two shots on target throughout the whole of the 90 minutes. One of them came from a defender – centre-half Stan Bennett. And a year that began with so much promise ended with a heap of problems for manager Geoff Coleman. His side has not won in twelve matches, seven of them in the Southern League. And its spirit is beginning to sag.

Unless he signs a striker things will get worse. For the problem is no longer urgent – it is critical. The warning signs have been there for a year, but the danger has been disguised by hard work and effort. That is no longer enough as Saturday proved beyond any shadow of a doubt.

For Borough again worked hard. They had more of the attacking play than Grantham. Yet they gift wrapped two Christmas points for the Gingerbread because they cannot score goals. The problem was never more obvious than on the London Road slope. And it is beginning to erode the spirit of the side. The back four players and midfield men can no longer bear the brunt. As soon as their opponents score the writing is on the wall. The players know it.

So do the fans who have had to suffer the heartbreak of grim, goalless soccer for too long. Manager Coleman will find no clearer mirror for his problems than Saturday's clash. For Borough carried the game to the home side, failed to convert their pressure into goals – and then fell behind. Dennis Benskin shot Grantham into the lead ten minutes from half-time with a weak shot that stranded Bob Knight.

Steve Briscoe had a chance to change the match when he forced his way clear, only for goalkeeper Chris Gardiner to save. That was the best – and only real chance the Manor Park side set up all afternoon. Grantham's second goal came

14 minutes from the end with a diving header from Ernie Nixon. Borough had pushed forward in a desperate search for an equaliser and were stretched at the back.

So Nuneaton travelled home pointless – with nothing to show for a lot of effort. And they are now in danger of losing contact with the Southern League leaders. Something has to be done – and quickly.

## Tearse Bid Turned Down By Atherstone

Nuneaton Borough have had a bid for Atherstone striker David Tearse turned down. They wanted to set up a player exchange deal for the ex-Leicester and Torquay forward. But the Sheepy Road club were not interested.

Manager Gil Merrick explained: "He is an important part of our team. Had the circumstances been different it would have been a fair enough offer."

## Borough Sign Sandy Allan

Nuneaton Borough have signed former Cardiff and Bristol Rovers forward Sandy Allan. But Allan is hoping to return to League football. He has joined Borough on a month's contract after two years in South African soccer.

"It eases our problem," said manager Geoff Coleman, who travelled to Bristol yesterday to make the signing.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 03-01-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Allan, Thompson, Goodwin. **Sub:** Briscoe.

**Wimbledon:** Guy, Tilley, Bryant, Donaldson, Edwards, Vansittart, Aitken, Cooke, Connell, Holmes, Mahon. **Sub:** Lesley.

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



Borough launched 1976 in style with a win over Southern League champions Wimbledon.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Battling Borough emerged from a rugged, incident packed top of the table clash with two precious points. And they are now back on course for the Southern League championship. After seven games without a win they scooped the biggest prize of all – victory against title holders Wimbledon.

But both sides paid a high price in a clash that underlined the fierce rivalry that has simmered between the two clubs for nearly two years. Two players were sent off, three booked – and one taken to hospital. And St Neots referee Mr Peter Willett had to add on ten minutes for stoppages. The most sensational incident came in injury time when Borough newcomer Sandy Allan clashed with Dons' defender Kevin Tilley and both were dismissed.

Allan, who had done well on his debut, was unfortunate. He tackled Tilley, who flung a punch in retaliation. By that time, though, Mr Willett's patience was exhausted and both had to go. The referee had earlier booked Borough skipper Dave Lewis and Wimbledon forwards Roger Connell and Mick Mahon. And the Londoners' substitute John Lesley was taken to hospital with a back injury.

The incidents almost stole the limelight from Nuneaton full-back Kirk Stephens, whose 31st minute goal won the game. Stephens ran on to the ball and hit a 25 yard piledriver that Dicke Guy parried. He pushed it into the air – only to see it drop over the line as he fell backwards into the net. Allan, a determined front runner, gave Nuneaton confidence as they took the game to the Dons from the start.

Wimbledon defended well and it looked as if Borough's efforts were again doomed to failure until Stephens made the vital break-through. Dons' skipper Ian Cooke had a goal disallowed for offside five minutes from half-time and they went desperately close to an equaliser early in the second half. Full back Jeff Bryant and number five Billy Edwards both missed chances that should have been put away.

But Nuneaton survived and Wimbledon were made to struggle against the best defence in the premier division. What the Dons had done before half-time, Borough did better after the break. And they denied the visitors control in midfield where Dave Lewis and Ian Goodwin fought for everything. Youngster Phil Thompson showed a maturity that belied his tender years in between the two big fellows.

Up front, too Borough showed more ideas. Gary Fleet supplied skills that the other players struggled to match.

## Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro' 10-01-1976

Gravesend: Cowen, Finch, Hall, Pearce, Embery, Burrett, Brown, Norman, Angel, Thurgood, Woolfe. Sub: Binks.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Allan, Thompson, Goodwin. Sub: Matthams.

Borough made the journey to face Gravesend and Northfleet in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Solid, determined and workmanlike, Borough picked up a

hard-earned point. And they nearly made it two in the dying seconds of a game affected by a gale. Phil Thompson had a shot pushed out by goalkeeper John Cowen and Dave Lewis hit the side netting. It was a typical away performance from the Manor Park side, who soaked up fierce pressure before half-time. Forced to defend against the swirling wind, they restricted the Kent club to one chance.

That was after two minutes when Colin Norman put a header wide with Bob Knight helpless. Nuneaton then had the wind in their favour after the break, but neither side really mastered the conditions. Gravesend, unbeaten at home in 22 games, found before the interval that Borough are the most difficult side in the Southern League to break down. The back four pulled out all of the stops to curb the Kent club's wind assisted raids.

Borough owed a great debt to the midfield trio of Dave Lewis, Ian Goodwin and Phil Thompson. They battled away to take some of the pressure off the beleaguered defenders. At half-time the odds had swung heavily in favour of Nuneaton who had done their work well. But Borough still lack the decisiveness up front that turns title contenders into champions. Gary Fleet must learn to be more unselfish and Sandy Allan battled away without getting a chance.

The pick of the front three was Dennis Hawkins, always willing to work. He never stopped running. Bob Knight did his job well in the Borough goal and his safe handling spread confidence. He pulled off a breath-taking save to deny Norman what looked a certain goal towards the end. Knight flung himself across the line to push out a header from the Gravesend striker. He then blocked a shot from Brian Woolfe, as the home side's leading scorer tried to follow up.

Borough have made a bright start to the New Year after a bad patch. They have a difficult time ahead – but have proved time and again they fear no-one away. What they badly need is an improvement in the home form.

## Peter Barratt Quits Borough Board

Peter Barratt has resigned from the board of Nuneaton Borough Football Club for "private and confidential" reasons. He confirmed that he has left the club – but declined to comment further.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dunstable Town 17-01-1976

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Allan, Thompson, Goodwin. Sub: Matthams.

Dunstable: Steel, Minton, Collard, Millett, Robinson, Davies, Adams, Iannone, Mortimer, Lawson, Spillane. Sub: Melisi.

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

Geoff Coleman, who has had to fight a constant battle against his critics, since he took over, could not have planned a better answer. For no-one could complain about the entertainment

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



value. There have been few better or more exciting matches in Coleman's two year reign. Both sides were always prepared to attack. They cut through the drabness of defensive play that has threatened to stifle Southern League soccer. And newcomer Sandy Allan made it a double celebration with his first goals for the club. He shot Borough in front after only four minutes and headed a superb goal in the 80th minute.

Dunstable, doomed to drop out of the premier division at the end of the season because of financial problems, went home pointless – but won many friends. Their adventurous, cavalier approach helped to make it the game it was – and Borough responded to the challenge. Too many teams have come to Manor Park, packed their defence, and made everyone suffer. Not Dunstable. They made their intentions clear from the outset and never swayed.

Allan gave Borough the start they needed when he hit a left foot shot on the turn to open his goalscoring account. Both sides then battled away before Dunstable grabbed an equaliser through Terry Spillane fifteen minutes from time. They had Nuneaton in trouble and the excitement mounted before Allan hit the winner. And it was a goal worth waiting for. Gary Fleet, Borough's best player, set it up.



**Dunstable's defence is in a tangle as Sandy Allan shoots Borough in front after four minutes for his first goal for the club.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

He beat Dunstable defender Ian Lawson for the umpteenth time and curled a centre away from the goalkeeper. Allan darted in, beat centre half Peter Robinson to the ball and netted with a spectacular header. Fleet, who has such an influence on the Nuneaton side, was run close for the man of the match honours by Dunstable number eight Anniello Iannone, who dominated midfield for the visitors and was always in the thick of the action.

He brought out a super save from Bob Knight after a free-kick and almost set up a dramatic match saver in the last seconds. Roy Cross headed off the line from centre-forward Terry Mortimer as Dunstable launched their last ditch effort to save a point. But Nuneaton held out to clinch a precious win in a game to remember.

## Geoff Coleman's Record

Geoff Coleman has chalked up a record at Manor Park that would make any club proud. Since he took over, the side has

played 100 Southern League games, won 45, drawn 35 and lost only 20. Yet Coleman is still under fire from the fans.

"I don't think they will ever accept me," he said. "It's something I have had to learn to live with. Perhaps it is because I am local. They know me, what I have done and where I come from." He can even smile about it now. "I put it down to the fact that I come from Bedworth – over the other side of the canal," he joked.

## Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 21-01-1976

**Borough:** Taylor, Stephens, Newton, Oakes, Peake, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Betts, Matthams. **Subs:** Thompson and Knight.

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

Nuneaton failed to qualify for the semi-finals and finished bottom of their section after a 1-1 draw. Needing to win by three clear goals to come runners-up behind Atherstone, Borough never seemed interested in going after their target and have now beaten their bogey side in only one of six outings this season.

In an uninspiring scrappy game, neither side managed to produce anything resembling their Southern League form. But when they broke out of a grim midfield struggle, both teams showed brief glimpses of skill and flair which neither could sustain for any length of time. Borough took a 19th minute lead when Burton centre-half Phil Annable, trying to be too clever, lost the ball to Neil Matthams and Dennis Hawkins easily beat Richard Bradwell in the Albion goal.

Two minutes later Borough newcomer Tony Betts was booked for his second foul on Brendan Phillips, Burton's classiest midfielder man, and the subject of a transfer bid by Borough last season. Borough missed a golden chance to go two up when Bradwell's short goal kick to Peter Shone was intercepted by Hawkins, but he shot wide of an open goal.

Albion gradually got on top in the second half and equalised in the 62nd minute with one of the few good moves of the game. Bob Sykes and Neil Perry linked well to set up the chance for Phillips to ram the ball under the body of debut-making keeper John Taylor. The game deteriorated from then on and the 344 spectators had little to enthuse about as the wind made constructive football virtually impossible.

## Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 24-01-1976

**Atherstone:** Withers, Stockley, R. Smith, G. Smith, Preston, Kiernan, Hunt, Franklin, Tearse, Vincent, Jennings. **Sub:** Butler.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Peake, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Allan, Thompson, Oakes. **Sub:** Matthams.

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

Borough and Adders concealed an exciting local derby behind a blank scoreline. There were no goals, but there was

no shortage of thrills and tension for the 2,000-plus crowd. Both sides missed chances. Both had narrow escapes – and neither could complain at the result. In the final reckoning though, it was a point gained by Borough and one dropped by Atherstone. But both clubs are still in with a chance of bringing the Southern League title to North Warwickshire for the first time.

Borough had a lot of the play. Their approach work was much smoother than the Adders, who were more direct. They always denied Atherstone control in the middle of the park – yet Bob Knight had more to do in the Borough goal than Colin Withers at the other end. Knight made two superb saves in the second half following a John Vincent free-kick. Vincent found Mick Preston at the far post. Knight stopped the centre-half's shot and then denied Kirk Jennings a goal from the rebound.



**A panoramic view of a packed Atherstone goalmouth as Ian Goodwin gets to the ball first – but heads wide.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Knight also saved a header from Preston and prevented an opportunist goal from Barry Franklin. Yet it was Withers who pulled off the save of the match with just a few minutes left. He left his line to fall at the feet of Dennis Hawkins, who had been played clear by a superb through ball from Kirk Stephens. And in the first-half, Withers was beaten by a Gary Fleet header that hit the woodwork and was cleared by Bob Stockley. Fleet had a superb first-half for Nuneaton on the left hand side of the front three. He was always in the thick of the action and gave Adders' defence a testing time.

But it was the defenders who took the honours as the tension built to a nail biting climax. Ian Goodwin had a magnificent match in the heart of the Borough back four to curb the aerial power of David Tearse. Mick Preston was superb for Adders at centre-half against Sandy Allan, always a difficult player to mark. But the player who deserved the highest praise was a raw teenager who was drafted into the Nuneaton side at the last minute – Trevor Peake.

Peake, not 19 until February 10 took over when centre-half Stan Bennett had to pull out. And he played like a veteran. Cool, composed and mature. He must surely be the best local find since Kirk Stephens did the same two years ago. It was Peake who rescued Borough in the dying seconds when Atherstone, always more dangerous than Nuneaton from dead ball kicks, almost scored. Jennings again found Preston at the far post. The defender headed goalwards, Peake cleared off the line – and the whistle went a few seconds later.

## Gary Holbrooke Breaks Leg Again

Gary Holbrooke, Nuneaton Borough's 21-year-old striker has had a shadow cast over his soccer career. He has a double break in the leg he broke only four months ago. Holbrooke was carried off in the reserve team match against Willenhall at Manor Park. He had played 70 minutes of the second game in his comeback when tragically struck.

## Ken Storer In Charge Of Social Club



Ken Storer is to take over one of the most important jobs at Manor Park – filling the Borough Social Club. He will be in charge of all the functions and entertainment in the new £20,000 extensions. "My job is to make the place a viable proposition," says Ken, who lives at Howard Road, Nuneaton.

"A lot of money has been spent on the club and I have to make sure it comes back."

## Phelps Joins On Months' Loan

Nuneaton Borough manager Geoff Coleman, with a growing injury problem, last night signed striker Malcolm Phelps on a month's loan from Alvechurch. Phelps, who scored 30 goals for the West Midlands League champions last season will ease the injury problems that the Borough manager faces as the season enters its crucial stages.

## Nuneaton Boro' v Gravesend & Northfleet 31-01-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Peake, Goodwin, Hawkins, Allan, Phelps, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Cross.

**Gravesend:** Cowan, Cunningham, Evans, Embery, Pearce, Finch, Brown, Burrett, Norman, Thurgood, Woolfe. **Sub:** Angel.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough shortened the odds against them winning the Southern League title in a game that became a lottery. Every move was a gamble on a frost bound pitch and in the teeth of an icy wind. But Borough emerged with both points thanks to a second half penalty. Dennis Hawkins coolly tucked away the spot kick in the 65th minute after a goalbound overhead kick from Dave Lewis had been handled under the bar.

Nuneaton have now taken eight points from ten in a championship start to the New Year. And few people will



argue with their claims for the premier division title. They are professional enough to beat the teams below them, disciplined enough to avoid defeat against the sides above them – and determined enough to shake off injuries that would have crushed most outfits.

Adventurous football was out of the question against Gravesend. Everything the players tried was a risk. Several players wore pumps and others changed studs at half-time in a bid to combat the conditions. But at the end of it all Jack Frost was still man of the match. Borough opened the game with four forwards, but they re-organised at half-time to give themselves more security in midfield. Goalmouth incidents were few and far between before the break as the 1000-plus faithful fans shivered on the Manor Park steps.

But they had a chance to warm their hands after the interval when both sides went close. Bob Newton fired a shot over the top and Gravesend striker Colin Norman slipped the ball wide of the far post with Nuneaton in trouble. Those incidents were followed by the match-winning penalty which came from a Matthams corner on the right. Bobby Evans almost equalised for the Kent club and substitute Micky Angel nearly scored from his first kick.

He went on when skipper Ben Embery was carried off in the closing minutes and had a shot bravely saved by track suited Bob Knight. But Nuneaton stayed in front to end Gravesend's run of seven games without defeat. Ian Goodwin again did a magnificent job for Borough in the heart of the back four. Trevor Peake again played well alongside him and Dave Lewis was always dominant in the middle of the park. And Malcolm Phelps made a debut full of promise up front. Phelps, on loan from Alvechurch, did a lot of unselfish running and could be a great asset when the side adapts to his style.

## Vincent And Turpie Back

Bobby Vincent and Bob Turpie are back in business at Manor Park. The forwards, whose partnership helped Borough to the top of the Southern League table, have linked up again – in training. They played alongside each other for the first time in 15 months in a practice match this week. And they are now both back on the recovery trail from injuries that threatened to put them out of football.

## Tony Jacques Back At Borough

Tony Jacques will re-sign for Nuneaton Borough tonight – and set his sights on a Southern League championship medal. Borough have agreed a small fee for the striker who once cost them £3,000. And Jacques will return to Southern League Premier Division soccer at Hillingdon on Saturday.

“I am obviously delighted,” said Jacques, who left Borough in 1971 after scoring 108 goals in three seasons. Jacques has been one of the most prolific goalscorers in the Southern League and is bang on form. He has scored four goals in three games after being out with a broken collar bone. Jacques scored 30 goals for Banbury last season.

## Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 07-02-1976

**Hillingdon:** Phillips, Mace, Ryan, Gelson, Hawley, Smith, Wagstaff, McGovern, Reeve, Bishop, Huxley. **Sub:** Smee.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Matthams, Lewis, Goodwin, Peake, Hawkins, Allan, Jacques, Phelps, Oakes. **Sub:** Cross.

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

Third from bottom Hillingdon turned the premier division table upside down to beat third from top Nuneaton. The home side played like title contenders rather than a side struggling against relegation, in an action packed game. Borough made a massive contribution. They went to Middlesex willing to attack – and the crowd loved it. There was rarely a dull moment and the game was not decided until the closing minutes.

Hillingdon striker Eddie Reeve settled it in the 77th minute when he got the slightest of touches to a left wing cross from Gary Huxley. Three minutes later Lewis had a header stopped on the line that might have made all of the difference. But Nuneaton could never match Hillingdon's attacking skills and the home side stretched their unbeaten run, in all competitions, to 12 games. It was Borough's first defeat in seven games – which is still championship form.

They travelled back from the Leas Stadium knowing they had taken part in a magnificent clash. Hillingdon promised goals from the start with their bold brand of attacking football. Inspired by the skills of Mick McGovern from midfield and tricky Huxley at outside left, they put Nuneaton under pressure. Borough had chances. Dennis Hawkins volleyed the best one over the bar. Sandy Allan had two – and Tony Jacques had a header headed off the line.

Hillingdon eventually broke through in the 58th minute when full-back Tommy Ryan scored from a half-cleared corner with a shot from just inside the box. The game then hung in the balance before Reeve's second goal gave the Londoners both points. Nuneaton never gave up, although they always struggled to make an impression in midfield where they never got to grips with the game.

## Maidstone United v Nuneaton Borough 14-02-1976

**Maidstone:** Bellotti, McVeigh, Street, Glozier, Fraser, Wallace, Crush, Fusco, Brown, Lucas, Sparks. **Sub:** Basey.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Peake, Goodwin, Fleet, Jacques, Oakes, Cross. **Sub:** Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Kent to play Maidstone United in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough turned in a performance packed with effort to frustrate top of the table Maidstone. Magnificently defiant, they staged a rearguard action to defend their title hopes. Down to ten fit professionals for a game he dared not lose, manager Geoff Coleman reshuffled his side.



He gave dependable Roy Cross the job of sweeper, played three players in midfield, two up front – and asked for every ounce of effort. And that was exactly what they gave in a display that dug deep into the character of the side. Borough have battled against disheartening odds more than once this season. But they have never given more than they gave on Saturday – and Coleman has never been more proud.

Coleman defended his decision to play five players at the back, as Borough unashamedly went for a point. Despite Nuneaton's defensive attitude the game was never dull. The steel and determination of Ian Goodwin and Dave Lewis in midfield and the skills of Gary Fleet up front always kept Borough in with a chance of a goal. Fleet did a superb job. He and Tony Jacques carried a heavy burden up front and did it well. Consequently the Kent club had to fight for every ball and every chance.

When Maidstone did break through they found Bob Knight in brilliant form. He stretched up to push a header from Jimmy McVeigh over the top. He flung himself full length to stop a shot from Dave Lucas. He stopped another from Barry Brown from six yards with his legs when the forward looked certain to score. And he generally dominated a defence that is surely the best in the premier division.

The battle hung on a knife edge and Borough could have won it in the dying minutes. By that time Maidstone's frustration was complete and Bob Newton broke on to a return pass from Fleet. He hared towards the Kent club's goal, but ran out of steam and was tackled for a corner. Newton, like the rest of the side had given too much earlier to have made use of the chance. Two minutes later, the whistle went and Coleman praised his side for their effort, courage and determination.

But the words he had used 24 hours earlier really summed it up. Discussing his injury problems and the set-backs the club has overcome, he said: "Nobody is going to make this lot lie down." He has never been more right.

## **Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 21-02-1976**

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Peake, Goodwin, Allan, Jacques, Oakes, Fleet. **Sub:** Phelps.

**Yeovil:** Clarke, Thompson, Cottle, Jones, Cotton, Harrison, McMahon, Brown, Hickton, Harland, Clancy. **Sub:** Adams.

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

Yeovil dealt a damaging blow to Borough's championship pride in an ill-tempered free-kick strewn game. The Somerset side collected both points with two second half goals. But it was a victory for determination and aggression rather than football skill.

Yeovil won with a brand of professionalism that Nuneaton could not match. They weighed up the Borough side, cut them down to size – and won with ease. Three players were booked and others fortunate to survive a game that almost

got out of control. Birmingham referee Mr J. H. Rees was never on top of his job, although the bookings did help to calm things down. Yeovil made their intentions clear from the first tackle. They chased, harried and fought for every ball.

Their performance, in fact, was similar to Borough's display at Maidstone a week earlier – only better. Better because they had the players up front with the skill to take on defenders. Borough's front runners hardly made an impression and Yeovil could have won by a much wider margin. Before half-time, there was hardly any football to watch. The players seemed more intent on kicking each other than the ball.

It was more like a title fight than a Southern League championship clash. But no-one could deny Yeovil their win. They were the better side in the end. And no-one did more towards it than their player-manager Stan Harland, the ex-Birmingham defender. Harland was magnificent. He coaxed, urged, often bullied his side and drew on every ounce of his vast experience. Few players have made such an impression on a game at Manor Park. He ran the show – and almost ran the referee as well.

The goals that won the game came 13 minutes into the second half and thirteen minutes from the end. John Clancy scored the first and set up the second for ex-Burton striker Doug Hickton. By that time, Borough's frustration was complete and Ken Brown was denied the goal of the season in the dying minutes by a last ditch clearance from Trevor Peake.

## **Vincent And Turpie Return**

Nearly 1,000 fans turned up at Manor Park to witness the return of Bobby Vincent and Bob Turpie. They were not disappointed – for Turpie scored a spectacular equaliser against Worcester City Reserves. And Vincent showed some of his old touches in his first game since his car crash 15 months ago.

## **Stourbridge v Nuneaton Borough 28-02-1976**

**Stourbridge:** M. Moore, T. Moore, Rumjahn, Pridgeon, Taylor, Barlow, McGrath, Green, Cooper, Owen, Dyer. **Sub:** Lisseman.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Lewis, Bennett, Cross, Fleet, Allan, Jacques, Oakes, Matthams. **Sub:** Hawkins.

Borough travelled to Amblecote to face Stourbridge in a Southern League Premier Division game.

This shabby victory over lowly Stourbridge did little to strengthen Nuneaton's championship hopes. Both sides served up a plain diet of desperately dull football which gave the sparse crowd little to cheer. It was a humdrum game saved only by a 15th minute match winner from Stan Bennett, who prevented yet another goalless catastrophe.

Stourbridge, already doomed to relegation, were capable of mere token resistance. But luckily for them, Nuneaton barely showed the form to emphasise the yawning gap between the two teams. Borough ought to have won by a barrow load and torn apart their flimsy opposition. Except for ex-Borough





striker Joey Owen, who has snapped up a sackful of goals this season, and Paul Pridgeon, a promising young defender, Stourbridge were strictly non-starters. Neil Matthams was allowed to roam free on the left while Gary Fleet baited two and even three defenders at a time on the right flank.

But too often the game progressed up and down the touchline with the ball constantly running out of play. Stan Bennett worked non-stop throughout and Roy Cross calmly blotted out any semblance of attack that the Worcestershire side could muster. Sandy Allan was easily Borough's keenest forward, but as he plays on a match to match basis, manager Geoff Coleman must have worries about adding punch to his forward line, with Tony Jacques still struggling to reach top form. In the first 20 minutes Borough were at their best. Dave Lewis controlled midfield, Allan had a header blocked and Moore stopped a Jacques volley.

Then in the 15th minute Nuneaton won a corner. Fleet sent it short for Matthams who clipped over a useful looking cross. Jacques lunged at the ball and a Stourbridge defender attempting to play the ball back laid it at Bennett's feet. And Bennett pounced in a flash to ram the ball past the helpless Moore. At this stage Nuneaton looked capable of netting five more, but they sat back on their slender lead and the game quickly deteriorated.

Stourbridge fared slightly better after half-time and Knight did well to stop a tricky overhead kick from Owen. Allan made a perfect chance for Matthams in the 80th minute, but with all the time in the world the winger cut the ball well wide of the gaping goal. Eight minutes before the end Fleet rattled in a sizzling 30 yarder, but Moore managed to turn his shot past the post for a corner.

Gradually the game fizzled out and mercifully died with neither side looking remotely like scoring.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bath City

01-03-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Newton, Hawkins, Oakes, Fleet, Allan, Turpie, Matthams. **Sub:** Jacques.

Borough welcomed Bath City to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division match.

Bath won the game with a 29th minute scrambled goal from centre-forward Kevin Griffin. He applied the finishing touch after Bob Knight had pushed a shot from Brian Evans across the goal. But Borough beat themselves with a fumbling, shambles of a performance in front of a 1,300-plus crowd. They lacked effort, skill, imagination and, in the end, pride. Key players were missing because of injuries and Coleman had to reshuffle his line. That, however, was no excuse for such an inept display.

Nothing could possibly justify the way they tackled their job. And unless there is a dramatic improvement they can forget any hopes they might still hold of the Southern League Championship. Bath, a mediocre, bottom half of the table

side, had six players on the injured list. But they covered the deficiencies with organisation and determination – and were prepared to fight for everything.

Knight almost let in John McInch in the eighth minute when he casually parried the forward's shot and had to repair the damage with a brave save. Borough then put City under pressure and Bob Turpie almost cashed in on a rebound from a Neil Matthams shot. Sandy Allan had a good chance with a header and Bath goalkeeper Keith Allen pushed a shot from Matthams around the post.

Bath had two chances before Griffin scored the goal that was to win the game. Woodward hit a post and Knight flung himself full length to push a Griffin shot around the post. Then came Griffin's goal and the writing was on the wall for the Manor Park side. Their plan to play attacking soccer with only two midfield players and Matthams and Gary Fleet wide on the wings fell flat. Dennis Oakes and Dennis Hawkins never got a grip in the middle of the park which Bath filled with four players.

And Fleet and Matthams failed to provide the crosses the front runners required. The second half dragged. Bath had no intention of losing their lead – and Borough no idea how to cut it back. Tony Jacques came on for Dennis Oakes after 70 minutes, as Borough made a last ditch attempt to save the game. Jacques challenged Allen for one through ball – the first time the goalkeeper had any real threat offered to him. He had very little else to do, so poor were Nuneaton up front.

## Coleman Sacked As Commercial Manager

Geoff Coleman has been sacked as commercial manager of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. He is to stay at Manor Park as team manager – on a part-time basis. Coleman was told of the decision after an emergency board meeting during last night's game. The three club directors left their box twenty minutes from the end of the match against Bath.

## Sandy Allan Bids Borough Adieu

Striker Sandy Allan has played his last game for Nuneaton Borough. He flies out to South Africa on Friday to sign a new contract with Capetown City. The ex-Bristol Rovers and Cardiff forward played for Capetown for two years before returning home before Christmas.

## Borough Slash Wages

Nuneaton Borough have slashed nearly £200 from the weekly wage bill in a bid to ease their growing financial problems. All of the players have agreed to take a voluntary wage cut to keep the side together. They were told by manager Geoff Coleman last night: "We must reduce wages – or some of you will have to go."

Coleman, dismissed this week as commercial manager and soon to run the team part-time, was ordered to cut his costs. His instructions were to ask all but seven of the players to take a fifty per cent reduction. But when he explained the situation to them they decided they would all take a drop.

## Nuneaton Borough v Margate

06-03-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Jacques.

**Margate:** Bowtell, Byford, Thornley, Baber, Dean, Clewlow, Pain, Summers, Brown, Gregory, Tough. **Sub:** Gilbert.

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

Borough fought to shrug off their behind the scenes problems against feeble Margate. Devalued by wage cuts, the players battled for a win to balance up their morale. And they were just five minutes away from success when the Kent club grabbed an equaliser they hardly deserved. A free-kick by full-back Barrie Thornley caught them off guard and Mick Gregory scored with a header. That cancelled out a goal 16 minutes earlier from Malcolm Phelps, Borough's best forward.



Malcolm Phelps meets a Neil Matthams' corner and the ball loops towards the Margate net for Borough's 71st minute goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Phelps, who made a surprise return to the side at centre-forward, headed in a right wing corner from Neil Matthams. Margate goalkeeper Steve Bowtell, caught off his line, managed to reach the ball, but it slipped through his grasp. Phelps, who played without pay, did nearly everything worth mentioning for Borough up front. He had what looked a perfectly good goal disallowed early on, grazed the bar – and always made the Kent club struggle in the air.

Borough also owed a great debt to another player whose name does not appear on the wage bill – Trevor Peake. The Tuttle Hill teenager showed his versatility with a fine performance in midfield. Moved forward to allow Ian Goodwin and Stan Bennett to operate alongside each other in the back four, he turned in a man of the match display.

The two youngsters made a massive contribution to what was another poor game. Margate looked what they are – a struggling bottom half of the table team. Borough showed effort and looked a vastly different side from the one beaten at home by Bath six days earlier. But much of their play lacked conviction. Their spirit was, somehow, not the same.

## Chairman Denies Borough On Verge Of Collapse

Chairman Ken Peal today dismissed rumours that Nuneaton Borough Football Club is on the verge of financial collapse as “absolute nonsense.” Rumours are rife that the club is £46,000 in debt and will have to fold. “The position is bad,” admitted Mr Peal. “But it is not irretrievable.”

“I don't know where the figure of £46,000 comes from. It is absolute nonsense.”

## John Evans Resigns As Company Secretary

John Evans has resigned as company secretary of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. But he stressed today that his decision had nothing to do with finance. Mr Evans, who is to continue as club secretary, said: “I have felt during the past 18 months that I have often not been able to carry out some of the responsibilities that go with the job.

“In the past Borough always had a company secretary who was a voting member of the board – and I feel that the club should restore that situation. My decision has nothing to do with finance.”

## Tinney: Financial Position Will Improve

Borough Director David Tinney has predicted that Borough's finances will improve. He admitted that the club has debts. “There is a constant battle,” he said. But he forecast: “By this time next season we shall be in the ‘pink’ instead of the ‘red’”

Speculation about Borough's cash problems have cast a shadow over the club this week. Stories have been rife about lists of creditors three pages long and bailiffs knocking on the door. But Mr Tinney, financial director at Manor Park until five months ago, was adamant. “The story that we are £46,000 in debt is a myth,” he said. “We are paying bills.”

## Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough

10-03-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Cross.

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

Borough blasted Weymouth with three goals in three minutes to lift themselves back into the championship hunt. Two goals from Dave Lewis and one from Dennis Hawkins and another from Malcolm Phelps stunned the Terras. It was Borough's biggest win of the season.

Borough put all of their scoring problems behind them to chalk up their biggest win in nearly two seasons – and their best away victory in Geoff Coleman's reign. Borough fired their three goal salvo between the 17th and 20th minutes to leave Weymouth gasping. They were never in any danger of losing after that and could have gone four goals up before half-time when Malcolm Phelps hit the bar and a post.

Astle, back in the Weymouth side after a month hit back with a penalty in the second half – but Nuneaton romped it in.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



the first ten minutes when Weymouth tried to attack, they showed all their old weaknesses, mainly in lack of shooting power. But Bob Knight had to push a drive from Dave Verity one handed over his bar early on. This, however, was the only real menace shown by a disappointing Weymouth. After Weymouth's brief flurry of attacks they were upset by a quick throw-in on the left and Lewis pounced to shoot Nuneaton into the lead. In the next minute Stan Bennett, the Nuneaton centre-half, headed into the goalmouth and Dennis Hawkins broke through to steer Borough into a 2-0 lead.

Then Jim Olsen failed to effectively clear following a corner and Lewis stepped in to shoot into an open goal from five yards. It was all over bar the shouting! And there was plenty of that from the upset home fans. The Terras were jeered from the field at the interval. Rubbish was the word that came through loud and clear.

The Astle penalty which came in the 59th minute after new player Jerry Owen had been tripped by Bennett was well-taken but there was little else for the home fans to enthuse over. It was no surprise when an unhappy looking Weymouth failed to cut out a Gary Fleet cross from the right and Phelps was left unmarked to head Nuneaton's fourth goal.

## Offers Of Help Pour In

Offers of help have started to come in for cash troubled Nuneaton Borough. One group of fans have told the club: "We are prepared to do any job for nothing." Businessman Mr Joe DeMulder has said: "I will dig into my pockets – if other do the same." And the printers at Newdegate Press have said they will bring out the club's programme for the next two games without pay.

### Wealdstone v Nuneaton Borough 13-03-1976

**Wealdstone:** Morton, Kinnear, Dyson, Light, McHale, Edmundson, Lewis, Moss, Eglite, Duck, Henderson. **Sub:** Byrne.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Cross.

Borough made the journey to The Lower Mead stadium to face Wealdstone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Magnificent Borough hammered Wealdstone into submission with a display that switched the spotlight from the balance sheet to their goal average. Two 4-1 wins in four days – both away – have changed the mood of the club. And there is the promise of more to come. There is a new spirit among the players – a determination to do well, despite the problems off the field. It was forged a week and a half ago when the players took wage cuts and made their: "We stick together pledge."

And the Southern League championship is now back in the sights of the side that once forgot how to score. Borough bore no resemblance to the team that has put the fans on the rack so many times this season. Gone is the dour, defensive football that drove the spectators away from

Manor Park. Eight goals in two games have seen to that and their confidence has climbed to a new peak. Weymouth and Wealdstone will bear witness to that – to their cost.

Borough survived the first 20 minutes, vital to any away team, and then began to show their class. They took over in midfield with some cool, composed and cultured football and went ahead in the 40th minute. Skipper Dave Lewis scored with a glancing header at the near post from a Neil Matthams corner. The second half was packed with incident, sparked off by a sad blow for Wealdstone. They lost striker George Duck, their most dangerous player, when he crashed into a post and was stretchered off.

Matthams then hit the finest goal he has ever scored. He hammered in a left-foot shot from 45 yards that never lifted more than two feet off the ground. It screamed into the net – only to be disallowed for offside against Dennis Hawkins. But Hawkins increased Borough's lead with a superbly taken penalty before Wealdstone had their best spell. Centre-half Sammy McHale cut Nuneaton's lead with a free-header from a right-wing corner by Adrian Eglite.

Eglite and Bill Byrne both missed chances before Nuneaton wrapped up the points with two goals in three minutes. Hawkins made it 3-1 with the best one of the five. Trevor Peake, again superb for Borough in midfield, played the ball inside to Matthams, who pushed it across to Hawkins and the number seven unleashed a half-volley that Morton never saw. Hawkins set up the fourth for Malcolm Phelps, who has made such a great difference to the side. Phelps has added a new dimension with his power in the air up front and has now scored in the last three games.

### Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 15-03-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Goodwin, Newton, Peake, Fleet, Lewis, Hawkins, Phelps, Matthams. **Sub:** Smithers.

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

Goal-a-game Malcolm Phelps saved Borough from defeat with a late equaliser. There were only seconds left when Phelps turned and drove the ball past Phil Weir for his fourth goal in as many games. The potential of Phelps and the promise of goals kept the game alive after Telford had taken a 59th minute lead. Maurice Head crashed in a shot off the underside of the bar from the narrowest of angles.

That looked enough to beat Borough, who again frustrated their fans. They missed chances – Phelps could have had a hat-trick – and others went begging. But the goals never materialised and Nuneaton stared defeat in the face. Borough forced Telford to defend for long periods and there was a vast improvement on their last appearance at Manor Park.

Two successive 4-1 away wins had lifted their morale – but they often tried too hard. Telford, though, were a better side than Weymouth and Wealdstone. Competent, workmanlike

and solid in midfield, they refused to be rattled. Stan Bennett went close after 16 minutes in a refreshing start by Nuneaton. He moved forward and hit a shot from 35 yards that spun out of Weir's grasp and almost went in. Dave Lewis then had a fierce shot pushed around the post by the goalkeeper. Phelps headed outside and Weir saved from Gary Fleet before Head shot the visitors ahead. The goal rocked Borough, but they soon had Telford back on the defensive. Phelps sent an overhead kick over the top – and then glanced a header wide in the six yards box with Weir in all kinds of trouble.

Defenders Kirk Stephens and Stan Bennett then decided to take a hand. Determined Stephens twice burst forward, once on a 50 yard run which ended in another save by Weir. Then Bennett ran at the Telford defence, but failed to force his way through. Stephens eventually set up the goal with time running out for Borough. He lobbed the ball forward for Phelps to turn and score just when it seemed that Nuneaton's problems at home had again beaten them.

## Borough Soccer Surgery

Nuneaton Borough chairman Ken Peal was confronted by the club's critics last night and then confessed: "I was pleasantly surprised." Mr Peal expected some harsh words at Borough's first soccer "surgery" – instead he was inundated with offers of help.

"It was tremendous," he said. "I did not realise there were so many people who wanted to help. Most of the ideas we got were sensible and constructive and I was impressed at the amount of feeling people have for the club," said the chairman. "I must admit, I thought that the town was apathetic towards Nuneaton Borough, but we now know that this is not true."

### Bath City v Nuneaton Borough 20-03-1976

**Bath:** Allen, Blackmore, Taverner, Smart, Bourne, Evans, Rogers, McInch, Coombs, Griffin, Woodward. **Sub:** Owen.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. **Sub:** Oakes.

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

Trevor Peake added another dimension to his talents with his first Southern League goal. The teenager who has made such a big impact on the Borough side, popped up with a 36th minute equaliser. And it changed the whole face of the game. Borough had fallen behind to a fifth minute stunner from Terry Woodward and were in trouble. The woodwork and good goalkeeping by Bob Knight had prevented them from falling further behind. But Peake's goal changed all that. They pulled themselves together, tightened up their play and cut City down to size.

Bath, who took the honours in the first-half, suddenly found themselves struggling to stay in the game. Borough took control in midfield where they had been unimpressive – and

they went desperately close to their fourth away win in succession. Gary Fleet should have won the game just two minutes from time with a move that carved open the Bath defence. He played a one-two off Malcolm Phelps that put him clear and had only goalkeeper Keith Allen to beat. But he fluffed the chance. Allen managed to block his slip-shot – and Fleet flung himself to the ground in despair.



**Borough are a second away from an equaliser as Bath keeper Allen stretches for the ball. He failed to hold it and Trevor Peake grabbed his first Southern League goal.** Photo: Joe Gibson/Nuneaton Evening Tribune

That would have added the finishing touch to another Borough display studded with character and determination. Whatever the problems they face at home, there can be no better away side in the premier division. Their record proves that – Saturday's point was the 20th they have collected from their travels this season.

Five players were booked – three for Bath and Dave Lewis and Kirk Stephens for Borough. Lewis collected his after a challenge on the goalkeeper, and now faces a ban. But the game never got out of hand, despite some poor refereeing by Mr Len Burden of Dorset. He was never on top of his job, although the incidents that led to the bookings were isolated rather than the result of any long standing vendettas between the players.

## Borough To Go Ahead With Anglo-Italian Cup

Nuneaton Borough are to go ahead with their Anglo-Italian Cup plans, despite the rumours about their financial problems. They have been drawn in Group C, along with Benevento, Siracusa and Wimbledon.

## Joe Lloyd Accuses Borough Board Of Pettiness

Coach firm proprietor Mr Joe Lloyd today accused the Nuneaton Borough board of “pettiness” – and penalising the supporters. Mr Lloyd, head of Lloyd’s Coaches, claims the fans have been banned from booking seats for away trips at the Manor Park Social Club. “We have had this arrangement for some time,” he said. “Frank Parker, the Social Club steward has a sheet on the bar and collects the money. It saves the supporters having to make a special trip to the coach station.”

## Borough Players Back On Full Wages

Nuneaton Borough’s players are to go back on to full wages from this week. They all took a £5 drop three weeks ago when the club was forced into drastic economy measures. But director David Tinney said last night: “We now feel that the necessary sacrifices have been made. We can now afford to do it and the players are back on full pay as from Monday.”

### Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 24-03-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. Sub: Oakes.**

Borough travelled to the Huish to play Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Malcolm Phelps hit his fifth goal in six games to earn Borough a magnificent win. He struck 20 minutes from time with a first time shot from the edge of the box that beat goalkeeper Mike Franklin all ends up. The win gave Borough their ninth point from their last five away matches, kept their championship hopes alive – and virtually put paid to Yeovil’s chances. But the triumph was tinged with tragedy. For Gary Fleet was stretchered off ten minutes before half-time with a suspected broken ankle. He fell awkwardly and the game was held up for several minutes before he was taken to a nearby hospital.

Substitute Dennis Oakes went on, the side was reorganised and they soaked up everything Yeovil threw at them. Roy Cross, in for Ian Goodwin in the back four did a magnificent job. All of his coolness and experience showed through. He and Stan Bennett plugged the middle as Yeovil searched for goals before half time. The rest of the side played their part and the nearest Yeovil came to scoring was when Dick Plumb hit the woodwork in the 16th minute. Borough relied on quick breaks from defence as Yeovil pushed forward.

And they scored from just such a move when Yeovil were caught with too many players up. The goal stunned the near 2,000 crowd at the Huish, graveyard of Borough’s hopes in the past. Few teams win on the Somerset side’s infamous sloping pitch. But Borough battled against the odds for what must

rank among their best victories of the season. they almost scored a second in the dying minutes when Dennis Hawkins broke clear. He lifted the ball over goalkeeper Franklin – only to see it sail wide.

By that time though, the points were in the bag – and Borough have now collected 22 away from home. But the celebrations were tempered by the news that Wimbledon had won by the same margin at Weymouth – and the injury to Fleet.

## Borough Reject Offer For Knight

Nuneaton Borough have turned down a four figure bid from Weymouth for goalkeeper Bob Knight. The Dorset side offered £1,000 for Knight, rated among the top goalkeepers in the Southern League. But Borough felt that the bid fell far short of what he is worth to them.

### Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 27-03-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Cross, Goodwin, Hawkins, Oakes, Phelps, Lewis, Matthams. Sub: Tidman.**

**Burton: Allcock, Gregg, Hailsworth, Sykes, Annable, Fletcher, Spinner, Goodwin, Perry, Phillips, Moore. Sub: Mole.**

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Ian Moore dealt the coup de grace to Borough’s championship hopes and then admitted: “It was a fluke.” The former Manchester United and England star scored Burton’s winner with just five minutes to go. He scooped the ball into the air from a narrow angle and it looped over Bob Knight and into the net. Moore confessed afterwards: “I meant it as a cross,” and then added. “But we deserved to win. We missed a couple of sitters.”



**Malcolm Phelps rises to meet a left wing cross during Borough’s second half pressure – but he put the ball wide.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The goal was a cruel blow to Nuneaton who had clawed their way back into the title race. But the side that can play like champions away from home, again let down their own fans. They never played well enough, despite a second half improvement that put Albion under pressure. Burton, solid,



skilful and workmanlike, easily took the honours before half-time. Brendan Phillips inspired them in midfield where Borough were unblanced and often weak.

Superb Phillips started and ended a move that should have given Burton a goal in the seventh minute. He missed in front of an empty net after Bob Knight had made a magnificent one-handed save from Neil Perry. Nuneaton struggled, but Dennis Hawkins should have scored just before half-time. He volleyed over the bar from point blank range. The second half was the opposite to the first – as Borough stormed back into the game.

Trevor Peake had a shot cleared off the line and Malcolm Phelps had two openings. He was thwarted by a brave save from Barry Allcock and then failed to cash in on a free header. But Paul Goodwin and Perry both had chances for Albion and the game could have gone either way.

Then came Moore's goal and a desperate late rally by Borough in a bid to save the game. Dave Lewis had a shot touched over the bar by Allcock and Albion weathered the storm. Borough knew that they had to win to keep their title hopes alive – a draw was not good enough. But the damage had already been done and they dropped their 16th home point of the season. Wimbledon, 6-0 winners at Stourbridge, will keep the title – and Borough may struggle for second place.

## Peal Defends Anglo-Italian Decision

Nuneaton Borough chairman Ken Peal has defended the decision to go ahead with plans to play in the Anglo-Italian Cup this summer. The competition will cost the cash strapped club upwards of £3,000. But Mr Peal last night insisted: "We owe it to the players. It is their reward for what they did last season and we feel we have to keep faith with them."

## Geoff Coleman Resigns

Geoff Coleman has resigned as manager of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. And Ken Peal has stepped down as chairman of the Manor Park club. Coleman announced his resignation this afternoon and Peal followed suit. "We have always been a team," said Peal: "I always said that if Geoff went I would go too."

Coleman, manager for two and a half years, quit because he said he was completely disillusioned with the attitude of most of the people in Nuneaton. He said: "I feel I have been persecuted and have never been accepted by the fans. We have had success but there has been a lot of criticism and I feel it is pointless me carrying on."

## Bobby Vincent To Play In Special Boots

Bobby Vincent returns to first team football for Nuneaton Borough tomorrow in special boots. He has had a pair tailor made with a slightly raised heel to help his balance.

Vincent plays in the Manor Park friendly against second division Portsmouth.

## Nuneaton Borough v Portsmouth

02-04-1976

Borough welcomed second division Portsmouth to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Bobby Vincent and Bob Turpie teamed up again last night to bring back memories for the Manor Park fans. Vincent scored his first goal since his car crash nearly two years ago. And Turpie netted a spectacular match-winner that stunned Pompey, with five minutes to go. But the goal that stole the show was Vincent's ten minutes into the second half.

It was a penalty – but that did not matter. For it was the major milestone on his road to recovery. The delight on Vincent's face as the ball hit the back of the net told it all.

Portsmouth had taken the lead from the penalty spot after Ian Goodwin has felled Mellows. Kamara scored from the spot. Ten minutes later Vincent equalised after Hawkins had been brought down.

Turpie then turned on a moment of magic that turned back the clock. He recovered a ball that was going out, left ex-Coventry defender Paul Cahill helpless – and scored from the narrowest of angles.

Bob Knight made a wonderful save from McGuinness in the dying seconds, but Borough, who worked hard deserved their win. And Vincent and Turpie made it a night to remember.

## Coleman Takes Over At Wealdstone

Geoff Coleman is back in Southern League soccer – only six days after leaving Nuneaton Borough. He has been appointed manager of struggling premier division side Wealdstone. The North London club offered him the job after he quit Manor Park and he accepted last night.

"It all came out of the blue," he said. "But it was too good to refuse."

## Margate v Nuneaton Borough

06-04-1976

**Margate:** Bowtell, Byford, Thornley, Fusco, Dean, Clewlow, Pain, Summers, Turner (Tough), Gregory, Baber.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Goodwin, Bennett, Hawkins, Cross, Phelps, Oakes, Smithers. **Sub:** Tidman.

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

Timmy Smithers in a dream Southern League debut blasted two goals to take Nuneaton Borough into second spot in the league table. Winger Smithers – Borough's latest signing from Coventry junior club Sphinx – scored twice in the opening 45 minutes to hoist the Manor Park side one point above neighbours Atherstone.

Nuneaton with coach Alan Fogarty in charge following the shock resignation of manager Geoff Coleman gave an outstanding display and were always in command. They were two up at the break and although Margate had more of the

play in the second half they did not open their account until right on the final whistle through wing-half Norman Fusco.

Eight minutes earlier he had blasted a penalty yards wide after Bennett had rather unluckily handled a Graham Byford shot just inside the area. Nuneaton's strength was essentially in midfield where burly Ian Goodwin stamped his authority right from the outset. For such a big man he showed surprising nimbleness and watching Luton manager Harry Haslam would surely have given him the man of the match award. Opening brightly with left-winger Smithers and centre-forward Malcolm Phelps constantly menacing, Nuneaton eventually went ahead in the 32nd minute.

Smithers, standing a good 30 yards from goal out on the left flank gained possession from a long clearance and tried a speculative shot which sailed into the far corner of the net.

Spurred on by Goodwin and Oakes, Nuneaton continued to call the tune and they increased their advantage on the stroke of half time. A neat four man move on the right ended with Peake cleverly chipping square for the unmarked Smithers who volleyed past the static Steven Bowtell from ten yards. Early in the second half John Baber struck the Nuneaton bar with a snap drive, but this was the nearest Margate were to come to scoring until Fusco's last gasp consolation goal.

## Tinney Appointed Acting Chairman

David Tinney has been appointed acting chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club – just five days after offering to step down from the board. He took over the Manor Park hot seat today and tonight he is meeting local businessmen in a bid to put the Borough back on a more stable financial footing. Said Mr Tinney: "I think it is in the best interest of the club that I take over the chairmanship as a temporary measure."

"In the next couple of days I will be meeting several businessmen who I believe are interested in joining the board."

### Nuneaton Borough v Tonbridge 10-04-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Newton, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Oakes, Smithers. **Sub:** Turpie.

**Tonbridge:** Hughes, Prince, Cooper, Keirs, Nickey, Smith, O'Brien, Hancock, Walsh, Stonebridge, Putman. **Sub:** O'Sullivan.

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

Borough, their chances of the Southern League championship already gone, could now lose out on second place. For they crammed all of their problems into another 90 minutes of frustration for the Manor Park fans. And they tossed away their 17th home point in a game that summed up their season. They can argue that they were always a better footballing side than fifth from bottom Tonbridge. They can insist that they should have had the points wrapped up before half-time. And they can point to a crucial penalty miss that changed the face of the game. In the end though, it was the same sad tale of woe from a side that play like champions away from home.

The answer is clear. They are better equipped to go away and defend than to break down tight defences at home. How else can a side pick up a club record of 24 points from away trips and drop so many at home? Caretaker manager Alan Fogarty insisted: "We played particularly well, particularly before half-time – but we didn't put our chances away."



**Malcolm Phelps is hauled down by Tonbridge goalkeeper Brian Hughes for Borough's 60th minute penalty.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough could have been in front at the interval. Both Timmy Smithers and Malcolm Phelps had chances. Smithers had a volley touched on to the bar by Tonbridge goalkeeper Brian Hughes. Phelps shot over from eight yards after a Dennis Hawkins effort had rebounded from the woodwork. Phelps then forced the ball into the net to put Nuneaton in front in the 58th minute.

But the incident that turned the game was a penalty miss by Hawkins two minutes later. He hit the bar and although Phelps headed in the rebound Hawkins was offside. Five minutes later Gordon Hancock equalised for Tonbridge with a shot that beat Bob Knight after taking a slight deflection off Kirk Stephens. The goal was a result of lack of discipline by Borough who had thrown players forward and left themselves without cover.

Ian Goodwin, who turned in another superb performance in the back four, had a goal ruled out for a foul on the Tonbridge keeper, Hughes, as Nuneaton tried to force a win. And Gary Fleet tried to prompt Nuneaton with his skilful play in the middle of the park. The result left Borough without a win from their six home games since the end of January. During that time they have picked up 12 points away and this will go down as the season Nuneaton "won" the title away from home – but lost it at Manor Park.

## Seven Players Released

Seven players have been released by Nuneaton Borough in a massive end of season clear out. They have retained ten professionals – four of whom are already on contract for next season. Bob Turpie, Roy Cross, Neil Matthams, Dennis Oakes and Bob Newton are among the players given free transfers. The other two are youngsters Phil Thompson and Gary Holbrooke, who have both had serious injuries this season.



## Borough Already Received Twenty Enquiries

Nuneaton Borough have already received 20 enquiries about the vacant manager's job. The board are expected to draw up a short list early next week. But an announcement is not expected for about a fortnight. "We do not intend to rush things," said acting chairman David Tinney.

### Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 16-04-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Smithers. **Sub:** Oakes.

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

Nuneaton came away with a point despite never having a direct attempt at goal. They managed just two shots and a header, and all were wide of the mark. But Bedford could not complain, they had more of the play. But their finishing was poor. It was a game where a draw was always likely.

Most of the game was fought out in midfield stalemate, where both sides played with four men. Borough's Dennis Hawkins in midfield was playing against his brother Peter. Dennis had a quiet game, but Peter was outstanding for Bedford. He constantly teased full back Kirk Stephens. On one occasion he carried the ball half the length of the field before beating Stephens and firing in a shot which keeper Bob Knight did well to palm over the bar.

Knight had an outstanding game, and was kept busy cutting out a steady stream of crosses from Peter Hawkins. But when Knight wasn't there, centre back Stan Bennett was well in command in the middle. Malcolm Phelps could have won the game for Borough five minutes into the second half. He had only keeper Dave Hill to beat when he collected a short ball from Lewis. It was the best chance anyone had all night. But Phelps fluffed it and sent a tame shot yards wide of the post.

### Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 17-04-1976

**Kettering:** Livsey, Lucas, Myton, Wardrop, Suddards, Ashby, Faulkner, Gray, Doughan, Clayton, Harris. **Sub:** Smith.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Bennett, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps, Lewis, Smithers. **Sub:** Oakes.

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

Former Wolves and Northern Ireland star Derek Dougan tarnished Borough's magnificent away record with a 46th minute match winner for Kettering. The Poppies' player-manager snapped up a simple chance which dealt a blow to Nuneaton's hopes of finishing second in the Southern League.

Again, the Manor Park side defended well, but they rarely threatened the Kettering defence. Borough were unchanged. Kettering had player-manager Derek Dougan at centre-forward. Nuneaton spent a lot of time in their own half, but defended well. Kettering full-back Myton was booked after

28 minutes for time wasting. A minute later, Livsey saved a shot from Hawkins after Phelps had set up the chance with an early ball. Borough began to develop their game and Phelps was denied by a magnificent save by Livsey. Smithers pulled the ball back from the line, Phelps connected with a header – only to see the goalkeeper fling himself across the line and push it round the post.

The first-half ended with the score line still blank, although Nuneaton had taken what appeared to be Kettering's best attacks and were still in a comfortable position.

The start to the second half was delayed for five minutes when the referee had to be changed after Mr Rodell had to retire with a groin injury. Kettering went in front only a minute after the re-start with a goal from Dougan. Slack play by Phelps presented Wardrop with the ball. His cross found Dougan and the Poppies' player manager easily beat Knight.

Stephens raised Nuneaton's hopes with a 35 yard drive that Livsey pushed over the top, but Nuneaton were forced to defend and Kettering ran out comfortable winners.

## Bennet Named As Borough Manager

Stan Bennett today took over as Nuneaton Borough player-manager and declared: "It's like a new lease of life." He said: "I feel the same as I did when I played my first game for Walsall." Bennett greeted the news that he had landed the job with a mixture of surprise, delight – and determination.

Bennett has earned himself a reputation as a tough, uncompromising defender in his 15 years at Walsall. He brought the same qualities to the Borough team when he joined them last summer. "I shall insist on a more professional attitude from everyone at the club," he said.

## Vincent Notches Hat-Trick For Reserves

Bobby Vincent passed another milestone on his road to recovery with a second-half hat-trick. The goals helped to crush a poor Oxley side who could have conceded double figures. They arrived late, managed to survive until half-time thanks to the benevolence of the Borough forwards – and were then taken apart. Vincent scored with a header and a penalty before crowning his display with a spectacular diving header.

### Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 19-04-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Goodwin, Cross, Lewis, Peake, Oakes, Hawkins, Fleet, Smither. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough welcomed Chelmsford City to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough kept alive their hopes of retaining the runners-up spot with a second half improvement. They took control after a ragged first half to beat City out of sight for their first win in eight home games – a statistic that tells it all. Borough were always better than feeble Chelmsford, who filled their team with youngsters.





City packed midfield to stifle the game – strange tactics for a side with nothing to lose. Borough made the breakthrough in first half injury time when they turned a City attack into a goal. Kirk Stephens coolly cleared under pressure and played the ball out to Dave Lewis. Lewis powered forward and hit the bar from 35 yards. Gary Fleet snapped up the rebound. Fleet and Lewis, the two best players on the field, also combined to set up Nuneaton's second goal in the 60th minute. Skilful Fleet bewildered City defenders Mick Loughton and Len Tomkins and found Lewis.

Lewis crossed and youngster Timmy Smithers raced in to beat City's teenage goalkeeper Nigel Spink with a superb header for his third Southern League goal. Spink has saved Chelmsford in a dreary first half which clearly showed why the fans have deserted Southern League football. There was little excitement for the 1,000 fans – one of the lowest Bank Holiday crowds at Manor Park on record.

The injury time goal then brought some life into the game and Nuneaton went on to prove how much better they are than most premier division sides. Despite their problems, they are still one of the most powerful outfits in the Southern League. Certainly, they were in a different class to Chelmsford and could have doubled their score in the dying minutes.

Trevor Peake and Smithers both had chances which could have led to a more realistic scoreline. Borough now have to beat champions Wimbledon at Plough Lane on Thursday to stay in with a chance of staying second.

## Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough 22-04-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Goodwin, Cross, Lewis, Peake, Oakes, Hawkins, Fleet, Smithers. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough travelled to Plough Lane to play Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough promised a lot, but achieved nothing and were sunk without trace. For twenty minutes they played like a team inspired against the champions. But the Dons then hit them with two stunning goals inside the space of twelve minutes. And their flickering hopes of retaining second place faded and died. Borough pegged Wimbledon back in their own half at the start with some confident soccer.

But their play lacked menace. Goalkeeper Dickie Guy had only two shots to handle. He saved one effort from Kirk Stephens and watched a long range shot from Stan Bennett dip over the bar. The Dons then changed the face of the game with a superb goal that carried the hallmark of a championship side. Gary Fleet tried – and failed – to sell full back Jeff Bryant a dummy on the half-way line and Bill Edwards evaded a tackle from Dave Lewis.

Normally, there would have been no danger, but Nuneaton suddenly found themselves in dire trouble. Edwards and Glen Aitken worked the ball down the left wing with a succession of one-two's. Edwards pulled it back from the line and John

Leslie darted in to beat Bob Knight with a header. The goal summed up the Londoners' style of play.

They rarely panic, wait patiently to make things happen and are superbly organised to punish the slightest error. Leslie's goal came in the 23rd minute and 12 minutes later he grabbed a second. Ian Goodwin failed to clear with an overhead kick, Leslie played it inside to Billy Holmes and then scored as Holmes' shot was deflected off a defender with Borough all at sea.

Dennis Hawkins almost put Nuneaton back into the game two minutes from half-time. He put Bryant under pressure as the full-back tried to clear, won the ball – and lifted it over the top as Guy came out. Nuneaton offered little threat to Wimbledon's two goal lead in the second half. They continued to defend well, their strongest point, but failed to create chances.

And a game that badly needed a Borough goal to bring it back to life, slowly died. In the end the Manor Park side were well beaten – and still in the shadow of the team they have chased for two years. But the scoreline put the difference between the two teams into perspective. Despite their dismal home record, Nuneaton cannot complain that the championship is staying at Plough Lane. Wimbledon deserve it – and Borough still have a lot of catching up to do.

## Fogarty Joins Wealdstone

Alan Fogarty, caretaker manager of Nuneaton Borough for six games, is to join Geoff Coleman at Wealdstone. He is to become chief coach of the North London club – and renew a partnership with Coleman that began three years ago. Fogarty made his decision after talks with new Borough manager Stan Bennett.

"I have had three great years at Nuneaton," he said. "It has been a wonderful experience. But Wealdstone made me an offer I could not refuse – it's as simple as that." Fogarty managed Borough for the last six matches of the season after Coleman resigned as manager.

## Bennett Expected To Make Changes

Stan Bennett is expected to announce changes in his Manor Park staff shortly. And one figure who could emerge with an important role is Stan Marshall. Bennett makes no secret of his respect for the club trainer. Marshall played for Borough and has served under a succession of managers. He could soon be leaving his place in the trainer's hut for another position.

"Stan is a tremendous character," says Bennett. "He is one of the shrewdest men I have every met."

## Borough Players Sponsored For Anglo-Italian Trip

Two Nuneaton Borough players will be sponsored by local firms for the Anglo-Italian Cup trip to Italy in June. And the club is hoping that more firms and businessmen will come forward to help out.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Nuneaton Borough v Siracusa

04-05-1976

**Borough: Knight, Peake, Bennett, Oakes, Stephens, Lewis, Goodwin, Hawkins, Fleet, Phelps (Vincent), Smithers.**

Borough welcomed Siracusa to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Cup game.

Stan Bennett and Stan Marshall forged the first link in their new managerial partnership. And they made it a night to remember as Borough swept to a historic victory in the Anglo-Italian tournament. Player-manager Bennett's influence on the field was obvious as Nuneaton battled to break down the Italians.

But it was assistant manager Marshall who made the second-half substitution that helped to change the face of the game. He sent on Bobby Vincent for Malcolm Phelps a few minutes after half-time. And the centre-forward celebrated his return to first-team football with a 56th minute penalty that paved the way for the win. Vincent's presence changed the mood of the match and the atmosphere of the crowd after Nuneaton had struggled for nearly an hour to break down the Siracusa defence.

Vincent's penalty came after Siracusa goalkeeper Giorgio Bissoli had pushed Timmy Smithers off the ball. It was the breakthrough Borough so desperately needed. They had been frustrated by the defensive tactics of the Italians, who turned the penalty box into no-man's land. But the penalty changed all that and another by Dennis Hawkins 15 minutes later crushed Siracusa. Hawkins scored from the spot after Vincent had been kicked in an off the ball incident involving defender Brogatto.

Borough's performance was then crowned by a superb goal from skipper Dave Lewis in the closing stages. He bent a shot over Bissoli from the edge of the box in the 76th minute. Bissoli, who had a superb match, was helpless as the ball went over his head and hit the inside of the far post and rolled over the line.

Bennett altered Borough's line-up and changed their style of play in his first game as manager. He switched Kirk Stephens across to left back, pulled Trevor Peake to the number two position, played Ian Goodwin and Dave Lewis in midfield, and had four players up front. But the Italians, masters of defensive football, barred the path to goal before half-time. But they rarely attacked, Bob Knight had only one shot to save in the whole game. Siracusa simply set out to frustrate Nuneaton and stifle the game.

But they came unstuck when Vincent scored and were a well-beaten side at the end. Witney referee Mr David Hutchinson had the most difficult job on the field, coping with the excitable Italians, none of whom spoke a word of English. He booked Filippino for persistent misconduct and Paulo Lombardo, the Italians' best player for ungentlemanly conduct, and Ian Goodwin also went into the book.

Bennett celebrated the success afterwards by paying tribute to his team. "I was proud of them," he said. "I have seen a lot of league sides and hundreds of professionals who would not have gone into the box tonight."



**Borough striker Gary Fleet tussles with an Italian defender in an aerial battle during the Anglo-Italian game with Siracusa.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Looms Made Trainer

Nuneaton Borough manager Stan Bennett has appointed David Looms as the club's first team trainer. Looms takes over the position from the new assistant manager Stan Marshall after three years with the Southern League side.

## Trevor Peake Offered Contract

Trevor Peake is to start a new career with Nuneaton Borough – after two seasons at Manor Park. He has been offered a

contract by player-manager Stan Bennett who says: “I honestly believe we can help him into the Football League.”

Teenager Peake has graduated through the youth team and the reserve side into Southern League soccer. He was a regular in the premier division side last season, but Bennett says: “This is where it all starts for Trevor. He must realise that. I have seen too many players turn pro and think they have made it.”



**Trevor Peake signs professional forms with Nuneaton Borough as Stan Bennett looks on.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Nuneaton Borough v Benevento

19-05-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Peake, Oakes, Lewis, Goodwin, Fleet, Vincent, Turpie, Hawkins (Beresford).**

Borough welcomed Benevento to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Cup match.

Stan Bennett kept his side on course for the Anglo-Italian Cup with the goal that beat Benevento. Player-manager Bennett struck the 58th minute match winner that broke the Italians. And Borough now go to Italy for the return games with

premier points and a healthy goal difference. But they may be left to curse the chances they missed against Benevento. For the scoreline flattered the visitors who gave the fans another taste of the brand of soccer that threatened to strangle Europe. Benevento did exactly what everyone expected them to do. Their style was totally geared to defence – the only way they know. But Borough should have been at least three goals clear at the end of a drab game.



**Benevento goalkeeper Orazi watches a header from Vincent go past the post in the first half.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Bobby Vincent headed straight at the goalkeeper with time and space to do better. Goalkeeper Orazi saved from Bennett from five yards. And newcomer Brian Beresford, a second half substitute, missed when it would have been easier to score. Other chances went begging and Orazi emerged as the man of the match for the Italians whose soccer was as drab as the weather. Wind and rain made it miserable for the 1,800 fans – and the play did nothing to help.

Benevento looked a better side than Siracusa, beaten 3-0 at Manor Park two weeks ago. They were without ex-Manchester United player Carlo Sartori and left nearly half of their first team at home in Sorrento. That, and the fact that they are top of their own league with only four games to go, made them even more determined to stifle Nuneaton.

Borough often had them in trouble, particularly with crosses that searched out flaws in the middle of their back four. Borough again played four players up front while Benevento packed their penalty area. They kept their heads and frustrated Nuneaton without making much effort to attack.

Bob Knight hardly had a worthwhile shot to save in the whole of the game. Borough went after another goal in the dying minutes and twice went close. Bennett shot into the side netting and Ian Goodwin had another shot by Orazi with his legs. Taking everything into account, though, Borough must be confident of success in Italy. Of all the English clubs in the competition they are surely the best equipped to take on the Italians at their own game. They can go and defend – with the best defensive record in the Southern League to back up their argument.

## Newton To Join Worcester

Bob Newton, Nuneaton Borough's experienced defender, is set to join Worcester City. Newton has agreed terms with the First Division North outfit, and manager Nobby Clark could complete the signing by the end of the week.

## Bob Knight Player Of The Year



**Bob Knight receives the Nuneaton Borough “Player of the Year” award from Evening Tribune sports reporter Mort Birch before the game against Benevento.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Redrobe To Join Italian Squad

Eric Redrobe, freed by Hereford United at the end of the season, will travel with Nuneaton Borough to play in the Anglo-Italian Cup games in Italy. The striker has been asked to make the trip after talks with the Manor Park club.

Stan Bennett, Borough manager, finalised details with Redrobe and said afterwards: “Nothing has been decided but Eric is the type of striker I am looking for at Nuneaton and there will be further talks.”

## Dennis Oakes Sacked As Reserve Team Boss

Dennis Oakes has been sacked by Nuneaton Borough from his job as second team manager. Oakes, who was only appointed player-manager of the reserves two weeks ago, was told of his dismissal after long talks with Borough player-manager Stan Bennett.

And today Bennett spoke about his decision to axe the former Borough midfielder player. “Dennis has let me down very badly in regard to the Italian trip on Friday, and any member of my staff has got to be reliable,” said Bennett. “I was only told a fortnight ago by Dennis that he would not be travelling with the party, and that is very short notice indeed when you are planning a foreign tour,” he added.

## Peake Sits Exams In Italy

Trevor Peake’s text books will be as important as he soccer kit when Nuneaton Borough fly out to Italy on Friday. For the teenage defender is due to take his engineering exams next

week – in Sorrento. Arrangement have been made for him to sit the exams during the club’s two match trip in the Anglo-Italian Tournament.



**Spelling out the news that Borough are on their way. Chairman David Tinney and director Keith Johnson display the banner that will be with Nuneaton on their Italian trip before the club left for Heathrow today in Lloyds super coach.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Siracusa v Nuneaton Borough

13-06-1976

Borough visited the home of Siracusa to play an Anglo-Italian Cup match.

Borough carved out a new chapter in the club’s history last night. They stepped cautiously into the unknown in Sicily – and emerged with pride. Cool, composed and always in control of the situation they played the Italians at their own game. Instead of trying to play at 100 mph, the Borough slowed down to walking pace to play possession football.

Siracusa were stifled in midfield and shut out at the back and almost totally frustrated. In the end Nuneaton collected a point from the thoroughly professional performance that kept them on course for a place in the final on Sunday.

Everything was against the Manor Park side. The heat was stifling, so humid that it was difficult to breathe in a sweatbox of a stadium. The crowd was hostile. The referee apparently operated from a different set of rules. But Nuneaton refused to let that upset them. They held their heads high and player-manager Stan Bennett summed up their performance when he said afterwards: “They made me proud – and Nuneaton should be proud of them as well. I told them to keep their heads, asked them to give me everything – and they did just that.”

Borough solved their problems with courage, character – and commonsense. Youngsters like Kirk Stephens, Trevor Peake and Timmy Smithers gave everything. Peake had a magnificent match alongside Bill Baxter at centre-half. The 19-year-old signed professional only three weeks ago, but played with the maturity that makes him a youngster to watch out for.

The experienced players like Bennett, Baxter, Eric Redrobe and Bob Knight completed the blend. Knight had the Italian fans in raptures with four superb saves. He touched a deceptive shot from Manigiane over the bar and he made second-half saves from Bozzi (twice) and Rappa which



brought the crowd to its feet. Most of the time Siracusa were made to shoot from outside the box. Borough's football was disciplined, sensible and determined. Even the partisan Sicilians respected it and their applause at the end was warm and generous.

## Catania Make Offer For Knight

Bob Knight, Nuneaton Borough's goalkeeper has turned down an offer from Sicilian soccer officials most people would not have refused. Officials of second division club Catania were waiting for Knight after he had starred in Nuneaton Borough's goalless draw with Siracusa on Sunday. They said they wanted to sign Knight, who joined Borough for nothing two years ago, and asked "how much?" The reply: a staggering 200 million lira – more than £100,000.

Said Knight: "I asked their coach to write it down and he put 200 and six noughts after it." His wages would have been something like £150 a week, but Knight was not interested. "I was flattered, but I don't want to leave England."

## Benevento v Nuneaton Borough 16-06-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Baxter, Peake, Bennett, Taylor, Cooper (Evans), Redrobe, Phelps, Smithers (Thomas).

Borough turned 45 minutes of hope into a second half nightmare for Borough in Italy. In sweltering heat and on a pitch totally devoid of grass, they completely destroyed the Manor Park side. Any hopes Borough had of a place in the final of the Anglo-Italian Tournament disappeared and Benevento in general, and two men in particular, ran riot.

The two men who did the damage were Guiseppe Fichera and Paolo Incarelli. Incarelli set up the chances and Fichera grabbed the goals. Fichera grabbed four goals with an exhibition of stunning finishing, but it was the brilliant Incarelli who made the team tick.

Incredibly, Nuneaton were the better side for much of the first-half. They fought back from the shock of an early goal and were boosted by a superb equaliser from player-manager Stan Bennett. Fichera had given Benevento a fifth minute lead, but Bennett cancelled that out 10 minutes later. Kirk Stephens played the ball forward to Eric Redrobe. He laid it back to Bennett who scored with a ferocious volley.

Disaster then struck Borough with the second half barely a minute old. Fichera netted Benevento's second goal and Nuneaton, who had performed so bravely before half-time, began to sag. Their heads went down and the Italians cashed in to deliver three more knockout blows.

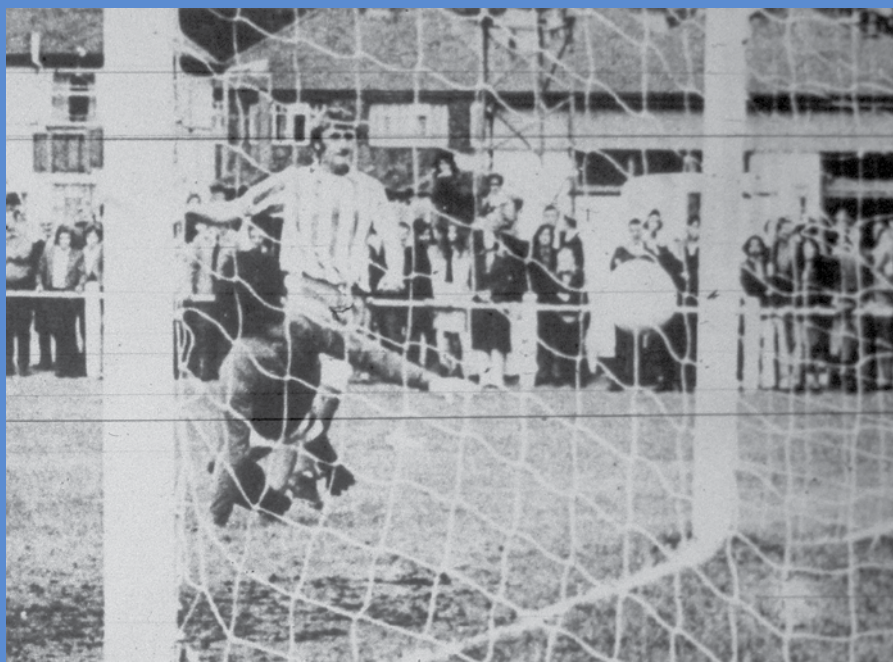
Fichera completed a hat-trick and then scored his fourth in the 69th minute. Exhaustion began to show on the faces of the Borough players. Tired and beaten – and they were – they still tried to play football but to no avail. And Benevento centre-forward Riccardo Binetti completed Borough's destruction nine minutes from the end.

The goal summed up the phenomenal finishing power of the skilful Italians. Binetti struck his shot with such ferocity and power that Bob Knight in the Borough goal never had a chance. And with that Borough, who had to win to stand a chance of catching Wimbledon in the English clubs table, slumped out of the competition.

The young players who did so well in Sicily last Sunday could not stand the pace. Their inexperience showed and the seasoned professionals of the side could not cover up for them. But they learned a lot and their courage won the admiration of the happy Italians, who played soccer in the sunshine with a smile.

## Southern League Premier Division 1975-76

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wimbledon	42	26	10	6	74	29	62
Yeovil Town	42	21	12	9	68	35	54
Atherstone Town	42	18	15	9	56	55	51
Maidstone United	42	17	16	9	52	39	50
Nuneaton Borough	42	16	18	8	41	33	50
Gravesend & Northfleet	42	16	18	8	49	47	50
Grantham	42	15	14	13	56	47	44
Dunstable Town	42	17	9	16	55	43	43
Bedford Town	42	13	17	12	52	51	43
Burton Albion	42	17	9	16	52	53	43
Margate	42	15	12	15	62	60	42
Hillingdon Borough	42	13	14	15	61	54	40
Telford United	42	14	12	16	54	51	40
Chelmsford City	42	13	14	15	52	57	40
Kettering Town	42	11	17	14	48	52	39
Bath City	42	11	16	15	62	57	38
Weymouth	42	13	9	20	51	67	35
Dover	42	8	18	16	51	60	34
Wealdstone	42	12	9	21	61	82	33
Tonbridge AFC	42	11	11	20	45	70	33
Cambridge City	42	8	15	19	41	67	31
Stourbridge	42	10	9	23	38	72	29



**Just the start Borough were looking for – Dennis Oakes slams in a perfect shot to put Borough ahead in the first minute. Tamworth keeper, King, dives in vain.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But up front Dennis Hawkins and Kirk Stephens both sent shots thundering past and Oakes had a chance to add a second goal.

After the interval Tamworth came out fighting and substitute Wakelin made a spectacular diving header and was unlucky to see the ball flashing past the post. But the highlight of the game was Ian Goodwin's superb match winner in the 49th minute.

Matthams corner kick came high and deep into the crowded goalmouth, and Goodwin climbed like a rocket to power his header into the net. Borough immediately looked more confident and much of the anxiety that haunted them in the first-half disappeared.

At last Borough showed a few glimpses of superior football. An intelligent attacking move involving Gary Fleet, Goodwin and Hawkins left the Tamworth defence flat footed. And they were lucky not to lose another goal when Oakes had a header cleared off the line by Hall.

Tamworth never rested and were still fighting gamely as time ran out. But Knight was magnificent in the air and he pulled off a series of finger-tip saves, including an 18-yarder from Hall. Tamworth won a consolation goal in the last minute when Newell scored from the penalty spot.

## Dudley Town – 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough travelled to Dudley Town for a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Dudley: Leyland, Day, Abbey, Sneyd, Fellows, Stanley, Shinton, Parker, Price, Molyneaux, Wyatt. Sub: Phillips.

Nuneaton: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Goodwin, Cross, Briscoe, Fleet, Turpie, Oakes, Matthams. Sub: Peake.

Borough responded to Geoff Coleman's pre-match call for all-out effort. And they cut the unbeaten West Midland Leaguers down to size with a display of power, skill and commonsense. But the Manor Park side paid a high price

## Tamworth – 1st Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park to play a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Cross, Hawkins, Fleet, Turpie, Oakes, Matthams. Sub: Ritchie.

Tamworth: King, Barnes, Dixon, Hall, West, Seedhouse, Hewell, Harris, Watts, Flannagan, Bunt. Sub: Wakelin.

Cup tie nerves hit Manor Park as Nuneaton Borough gradually edged out Tamworth in a tensely fought derby. Make no mistake Borough deserved their victory. Two goals snapped up early in each half were sufficient to seal Tamworth's fate. But it was an anxious display from a sadly under-strength Nuneaton side.

Clearly the injury bombshells that rocked Borough in midweek had badly shaken their confidence. And not surprisingly manager Geoff Coleman breathed a sigh of relief at the end of what had been a worrying week.

He had fielded a makeshift team that drew most of its strength from skipper Ian Goodwin and relied heavily on

the fine goalkeeping of Bob Knight.

Tamworth did not make life any easier for Borough. They are not an attractive side to watch, but what they lacked in skill they more than made up for with determination.

Their finishing, however, was poor, and that was the key to Nuneaton's success. For Borough had the keener edge in attack, as Dennis Oakes proved with a sensational goal in 50 seconds. Neil Matthams, making his first break down the right, sent over a cross that Fleet might have touched in, but the ball came through to Oakes who smartly slotted the ball between King and his near post. But the stunning opening failed to settle Nuneaton.

Steve Briscoe had an unhappy game. He had his hands full with Tamworth's speedy winger, Steve Newell and his worst moment came when he handled the ball to give away the penalty in the last minute.

Even ice-cool Roy Cross looked ruffled at times. Twice he gave away corners needlessly – a clear indication that all was not well in the Borough back four.

when they lost full-back Kirk Stephens just before half-time. He clashed with Dudley defender John Day and was taken to hospital where 12 stitches were put in a gash below his left knee.

Borough's latest injury blow happened seven minutes after Steve Briscoe had shot them in front with a well-taken goal. Briscoe netted after Neil Matthams had cleverly steered a Stephens free-kick across the goalmouth.

The goal was richly deserved by Nuneaton who were always a class above Dudley in everything they did. Dudley struggled in vain to bridge the gap between the two sides – and no-one did more than goalkeeper Mick Leyland. He pulled off a series of spectacular saves including one from Gary Fleet that topped the lot.

Fleet, who had his best game for some time, unleashed a snap shot from all of 35 yards. It headed towards the top corner, but Leyland flung himself across his goal to push it over the top. No wonder Fleet thumped the air in frustration.

Leyland was challenged for the man of the match honours by Dennis Hawkins and Ian Goodwin. Goodwin, moved back to centre-half in place of inexperienced Trevor Peake, dominated the back four. Borough were fortunate to have him around, particularly in the second half when it was their turn to face a difficult wind.

Hawkins never stopped working in midfield – always busy, always willing and always available. Winger Neil Matthams also did well in a Nuneaton dominated first-half, but faded in the last half-hour. Another player who deserved praise was Trevor Peake, who went on at right back when Stephens was hurt.

The youngster slotted in well, always looked confident and helped the side to recover from the psychological blow of Stephens' injury. Dudley tried to hit back in the second half when the wind made it difficult for Borough to clear

their lines. But the home side never showed enough skill to put Nuneaton under any intense pressure.

There was one scare for Borough when Dudley centre-half Bob Fellows ballooned a shot over from inside the box. Generally though, Borough did well in what was a difficult tie. They still struggled to put their game together up front. But the effort was there, they showed more skill than the home side – and the result was the right one.

## Gornal Athletic — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Gornal Athletic to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Goodwin, Cross, Briscoe, Fleet, Lomonaco, Matthams, Turpie. Sub: Peake.

Stourbridge: Phillips, Shaw, Farmer, Stevens, Cooksey, Derrick, Orme, Wilkinson, Lockley, Vincent, Smith. Sub: Sheffield.

Paul Wilkinson, rejected by Nuneaton Borough Reserves last season, almost missed the goal that made a dream come true. The teenage striker stunned

Manor Park with an 87th minute equaliser that gave Gornal a shock FA Cup replay.

His shot angled into the net past a helpless Bob Knight: "It carried just the right weight to beat him," said Wilkinson, who had nine months with Borough before going back to Gornal.

"I could not see myself getting into the Nuneaton first team so I went back," he said. "But I didn't expect anything like this. I have been dreaming about it since we knew the draw, and I still cannot believe it." Neither could the Gornal officials, who had seen their side of no-hopers earn a second chance.

Club secretary Alan Howe was moved to tears: "I don't care what happens now," he said. "This was our greatest moment." Gornal deserved their celebration. They earned it the hard way with courage, guts and determination. And Wilkinson, the best forward on the field, deserved his goal. But without taking anything away from the Black Country side, Borough were poor.

They never looked like a Southern



Gornal goalkeeper Alan Phillips misses a corner in a crowded goalmouth and Neil Matthams (far right) shapes up for the diving header that put Nuneaton in front.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

League top of the table side and were guilty of the same old failing – missed chances. Bob Turpie should have had a hat-trick and he and Frankie Lomonaco both hit the woodwork before Neil Matthams scored.

Borough put Gornal under a spell of intense pressure and an error by goalkeeper Alan Phillips, who struggled in the air, let in Matthams to score in the 69th minute. He flung himself at a right wing corner from Turpie which Phillips missed and planted a full length header into the net.

That should have signalled the end of gallant Gornal, who expected to be beaten. They even went ahead with the club's annual trip to Blackpool, which some of the players interrupted so that they could play. Even with their injury problems Nuneaton should have been too good for them.

But that is what the FA Cup is all about and Wilkinson supplied the moment of instant drama that turns no-hopers into giant killers. Nuneaton could still have settled it after his goal when Lomonaco went along the by-line and set up a chance which three players managed to miss.

## Gornal Athletic — 3rd Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Gornal Athletic to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Goodwin, Newton, Hawkins, Fleet, Matthams, Lomonaco, Briscoe, Turpie. Sub: Peake.

Gornal, who gave up their right to stage the tie at home, put up a battling performance, but Borough broke the heart of the Black Country side with two goals inside a minute. But Borough struggled for long periods against the gallant West Midland Leaguers, who gave them the fright of their lives.

Brave Gornal almost died on their feet with a display that earned the respect of the Manor Park fans. They played out the last 25 minutes with ten men



**Neil Matthams turns in triumph after scoring Borough's third two minutes from time to complete a scoreline that flattered the Manor Park club.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

when Alan Phillips was injured and Paul Wilkinson, their goal hero on Saturday, went in goal. Even then, Nuneaton struggled to find a way through and it was not until the dying minutes that Gornal's resistance was broken.

Borough went ahead in the 25th minute after a fast and furious start. They started as if they meant business and laid siege to the Gornal defence. And when they scored it looked all over for the visitors.

Gary Fleet netted a superbly taken goal when he steered a shot into the net from 25 yards after a cross from Frankie Lomonaco and a challenge on the goalkeeper by Bob Turpie. The ball rebounded to Fleet who ran in, picked his spot and gave Phillips no chance.

But Nuneaton failed to cash in and, incredibly, Gornal hit back. They picked themselves off the floor and hit Borough with waves of attacks before half-time. Almost on the break, Wilkinson had Gornal's best chance when he put a header over the top from a Keith Vincent cross.

The second half deteriorated as the pace died. Borough struggled to consolidate their lead and Gornal had taken a lot out of themselves. And they suffered a hammer blow in the 65th minute when goalkeeper Phillips went off with a head injury.

He clashed with Briscoe in a challenge for the ball and left the field clutching a blood soaked sponge. Gornal had earlier used their substitute, Wilkinson

went in goal – and they were down to ten men.

But they still posed a threat – until Steve Briscoe and Neil Matthams spared Nuneaton's blushes in the dying minutes. Briscoe scored with three minutes left and, in the next attack, Matthams got the third. He took a return back heel from Turpie and beat Wilkinson with a left foot shot.

Borough now face Oxford City or Cheltenham in the next round. But they will remember Gornal, the team of no-hopers who made them fight every inch of the way.

## Cheltenham Town — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Cheltenham Town to Manor Park for a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie..

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Oakes, Matthams. Sub: Turpie.

Cheltenham: Miles, Skeen, Lalley, McLaughlin, Carroll, Hall, Dangerfield, Lewis, Davies, Hehir, Casey. Sub: Ayers.

Much improved Borough added spice to a season that had lost some of its flavour. They battled through a closely fought, rain-swept, FA Cup tie. And they now face a head-on confrontation with Wimbledon in the First Round.

Borough earned the right to face Wimbledon after a two goal start against Cheltenham. Neil Matthams shot them in front after just four minutes and set up the second for Steve





**Steve Briscoe slides the ball into the net with the Cheltenham defence in ruins – and Borough are 2-0 up after only ten minutes.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Briscoe six minutes later. He moved on to a ball from Dennis Hawkins down the right wing, drew goalkeeper Jeff Miles and presented Briscoe with an empty net. Miles went on to become man of the match with a series of spectacular saves. His performance inspired Cheltenham after they had reduced the arrears just before half-time.



**Dennis Oakes beats two Cheltenham players in the air and heads goalwards – only for Cheltenham goalkeeper Jeff Miles to pull off one of a string of superb saves.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Nuneaton were caught with too many players forward, a quick break by Pat Casey left them threadbare in defence and Dave Lewis scored. Cheltenham, skilful, but not too well organised made a gallant bid to save the tie.

Borough lost some of their discipline after the early goals and slack play in midfield gave the visitors hope. But it

was Miles more than anyone who kept the game in the balance after half-time. He made saves from Hawkins, Dennis Oakes and two from Gary Fleet which would have beaten a lesser goalkeeper.

Nuneaton had their anxious moments – the worst when Cheltenham centre-forward John Davies turned past Roy Cross and Stan Bennett and set up a chance for Lewis. His shot beat Bob Knight but Kirk Stephens was there to clear off the line.

Borough though, deserved their victory in a Cup tie that was always interesting, despite miserable conditions in the second half. Cheltenham, to their credit, played the ball throughout and there was hardly a foul in the 90 minutes. And the game helped to make up for some of the dour, defensive soccer witnessed at Manor Park this season. But the FA Cup has a glamour of its own and the win could prove to be a turning point in a season that has flagged, despite Borough's success.

## Wimbledon – 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Wimbledon to Manor Park for a 1st Round Proper FA Cup tie..

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, Fleet, Briscoe, Oakes, Matthams. Sub: Taylor.

Wimbledon: Guy, Tilley, Bryant, Donaldson, Edwards, Bassett, Rice, Cooke, Connell, Holmes, Mahan. Sub: Vansittart.

Wimbledon stepped back into the FA

Cup spotlight on Saturday – and cast a long shadow over Manor Park. They overpowered Borough in an exciting First Round tie in front of a 4,000-plus crowd. And not one of those fans could have begrudged the Dons their victory.

They were the better side and there can be no arguments about the result. Borough should have done better. They piled on pressure just before half-time, but were not good enough up front. Wimbledon made their intentions clear from the start and carried the game to Nuneaton.



**Wimbledon keeper Dickie Guy just beats Dennis Hawkins to a through ball from Kirk Stephens.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough were anxious and apprehensive while the Dons were positive, determined and direct. Only two points separate the clubs in the Southern League table and they have been chasing each other for more than a year. But during that first half hour those two points turned into a gulf. Strong, competitive and totally committed, they made Nuneaton struggle to survive.

And they had what looked a good goal disallowed after 20 minutes before Borough pulled themselves round. They began to compete in midfield and powered forward with some skilful football that could have changed the game. Yet the pressure served only to underline their biggest problem – scoring goals.



Steve Briscoe waits alone in the Wimbledon goalmouth for a corner – but nothing came of it.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Wimbledon were able to hold out – and then struck with a 49th minute goal. Roger Connell, who netted six goals in their cup run last season scored with a left foot shot through a crowded goalmouth.

After that, the result was inevitable. Everyone at Manor Park knew it. Steve Briscoe had a chance and Borough had penalty appeals turned down when

Gary Fleet was sandwiched. Fleet came in for more rough treatment – but there can be no arguments from Nuneaton.

All Borough had left was a final, last ditch assault on the Dons' defence in the closing stages. Stan Bennett was desperately unlucky with a shot that hit Neil Matthams in a goalmouth scramble. But so too were Wimbledon

strikers Connell and Billy Holmes, who both went close.

Bearded Connell won almost everything in the air up front and Holmes showed why Wimbledon paid £4,000 to Barnet for him. Wimbledon held all the aces and sadly Borough had no-one to match them. They missed the fire and commitment of skipper Dave Lewis and the skills of a forward with flair. And they now have to pick up the pieces and restore their shattered confidence.

The difference is they now know the size of their task. Wimbledon are top of the Southern League and through to the second round of the cup because they deserve to be there. Borough? They still have a long way to go.

## Hooligans Run Riot

Soccer hooligans ran riot in Nuneaton when fighting and gang rivalry erupted around the Nuneaton-Wimbledon match.

Hooliganism broke out at half-time in the social club bar. With no score so far, two factions of fans assembled in the clubhouse chanting. An eye-witness said that the gangs collected on opposite sides in the bar. A glass was thrown across the room, smashing near fans. Another glass was thrown back and scuffling broke out as bottles and chairs were hurled around the room.



Wimbledon breathe a sigh of relief as a shot from Gary Fleet goes outside with Guy in trouble.

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: Walters, Mackin, Cook, Hall, McGowan, McIlwain, Russell, Fox, Gough, Kane, Clark. Sub: Roberts.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Newton, Hawkins, Bennett, Cross, Goodwin, O'Brien, Briscoe, Oakes, Taylor. Sub: Lomonaco.

Injury ravaged Borough clung grimly to their last hope of Cup glory at Corby – but only just. All of their old failings were there as they struggled to wipe out the home side's early lead.

But Steve Briscoe drove a shaft of hope through the gathering November gloom with a superb solo goal.

Briscoe moved on to a ball played out of defence and ran 35 yards before beating the goalkeeper. The fact that he had to go it alone summed up Nuneaton's performance.

Until that moment it looked as if the Manor Park side were out of the competition. There had been nothing in their play to suggest they would wipe out Corby's eleventh minute goal.

Down to only ten fit professionals, they had struggled to make an impression. It was not a case of missed chances – there were none created until Briscoe took a hand.

After his equaliser Nuneaton exposed the Steelmen for what they are – a struggling Southern League first division side. Beforehand, it had been difficult to imagine the wide gulf there is between the two clubs in Southern League football.

Corby had fought hard, bridged the gap and gone ahead with a shock goal from centre-forward Jimmy Gough. The injury problems clearly upset the balance of the Nuneaton side. They missed Neil Matthams up front and Gary Fleet's absence left them with hardly any creative ability in midfield.

Consequently, much of the match was as cheerless as the bleak surroundings of Occupation Road. There can be few more depressing places to watch football than Corby in November.

Nuneaton survived some near misses before half-time after Gough's goal had inspired the Steelmen. But Briscoe's equaliser lifted some of the gloom, Borough began to compete – and Corby had to fight to stay in the tie.

Nuneaton must now be favourites to win tonight's replay. Victory will buy them time for the injuries to clear – and they need a confidence booster. But it was another performance that served to underline their goalscoring problems – if any more evidence was needed.

## Corby Town — 3rd Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Corby Town to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Newton, Hawkins, Fleet, Oakes, Briscoe, Peake, Matthams. Sub: Lewis.

Trevor Peake shot Borough into a first minute lead at a fog shrouded Manor Park. But even that failed to solve their problems in a grim Non League Cup replay. And two hours later, they had still not forced a result.

Corby hit back to equalise in the second half and the tie dragged on into an extra-time draw. One of the lowest crowds in living memory for an important game, saw Borough battle for a place in the first round. An hour before the match the ground was blanketed by fog and less than 500 fans turned up.

Those who stayed away missed nothing. The tie was as colourless as the grey ghostly conditions. The fog, which threatened the game in extra time, failed to disguise the stark facts about Geoff Coleman's troubled side.

They are just not good enough in midfield and up front – it is as simple as that. And unless the manager can do

something about it – and quickly – they will continue to slide.

No supporters will continue to suffer the sort of football they saw last night and have seen for some time. Corby, second from bottom in the Southern League first division north are a poor side, yet they managed to come back from Peake's early goal and give Borough some mighty scares in the second half.

Peake, who has played at right back and centre-half for the first team, was given a chance to lead the attack. He scored in the early seconds when he controlled a through ball from Steve Briscoe and beat keeper Pete Walters for a well taken goal.

That should have been the signal for Nuneaton to open up the Steelmen's suspect defence. Neil Matthams sent over a stream of left wing crosses and they had them under pressure.

But poor finishing and some fine saves from Walters denied Borough a second goal and their confidence just evaporated. Walters pulled off good saves from Briscoe and Peake that could have brought goals. But Corby realised their task was not as hard as they thought and fought their way back after half-time.

Early in the second half Corby grabbed the goal that gives them another chance of progressing in the competition. Rob Clarke sent in a right wing cross and Gordon Hall went down on his knees to glide a header wide of Bob Knight.

Dave Lewis, coming back from injury, replaced Dennis Hawkins 15 minutes from the end of normal time. But there was no further score after 90 minutes as the fog began to thicken and come down. Extra time was fought out in eerie conditions. At times it was difficult to see across the pitch.

Players started to go down with cramp, the fans had trouble in following the play – and the final whistle was a merciful release.

## Corby Town — 3rd Qualifying Round 2nd Replay

Borough made the journey to George Street, Enderby to play Corby Town in a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy Second Replay.

Borough: Knight, Evans, Cross, Bennett, Newton, Stephens, Lewis, Matthams, Fleet, Peake, Briscoe. Sub: Taylor.

Borough's ill fated Non League Cup battle with Corby came to a bizarre end last night. They crashed out of the competition to an own goal, a defensive blunder and a deflection. And that was after Corby had lost goalkeeper Pete Walters, taken to hospital with concussion after 18 minutes.

The Manor Park side's dreams of Wembley turned into a nightmare in front of a sparse crowd at Enderby Town. Two goals inside five minutes knocked the heart out of the side – and ended their last hope of cup glory.

The first, in the 28th minute was a tragedy for teenage full-back Keith Evans. He had made a good start in only his second first team game when

fate played its first cruel trick.

Corby striker Alan Fox pulled the ball across the middle and it came off Evans for an own goal. Goalkeeper Bob Knight was not entirely blameless. He should have had the cross and he and Evans finished up in a heap as the ball went into the net.

Five minutes later, Knight played an appalling goal-kick out to Evans who did well to stop it going for a corner. But the young full-back panicked and hit it back across his own goal. Knight was beaten – and Rob Clark ran on to sidefoot it into an empty net.

The goals shattered Borough and astonished Corby, second from bottom in the Southern League first division north. They could hardly believe their luck – neither could the 200-odd witnesses on the terraces.

From then on, it was all over and the Steelmen, inspired by player-manager John Mackin went into the first round.

Mackin went in goal when Walters was injured and pulled off a series of superb

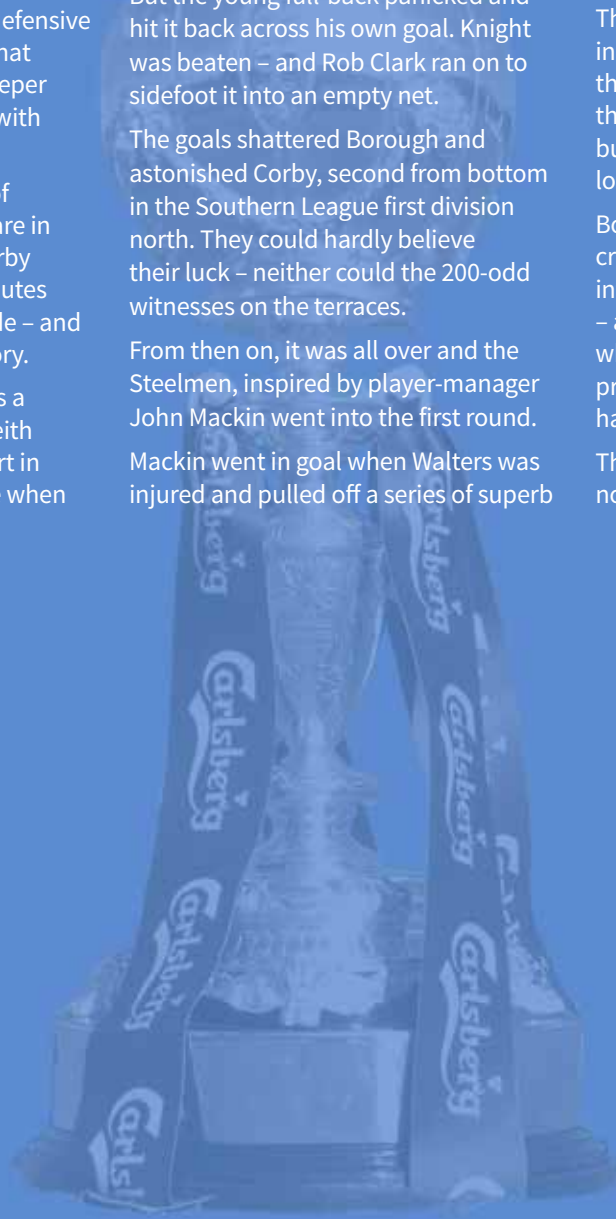
saves. He pushed a free-kick from Neil Matthams over the top, stopped a point blank range effort from Stan Bennett, and pushed a Trevor Peake header off the line.

But Nuneaton never looked like saving the game and fate again turned on Keith Evans with 20 minutes to go. He got in the way of a shot from Jimmy Kane – and the ball deflected off his body and left Knight stranded for Corby's third goal.

That was the final straw for Nuneaton in a night that knocked a huge hole in their season. They have had more than their fair share of injury problems – but they have not played well for a long time.

Borough can argue that Corby crammed all the luck that was going into one game. But they worked hard – and Nuneaton did not. They fought while Borough flagged; overcame problems of their own and made things happen while Nuneaton sat back.

The Manor Park side's confidence must now be at rock bottom.





## Nuneaton Borough 1975-76

Back: Dennis Oakes, Roy Cross, Bob Newton, Bob Knight, Neil Matthams, Stan Bennett, Mike Stringfellow, Gary Holbrook, Stan Marshall (trainer).

Front: Steve Briscoe, Bob Turpie, Frankie Lomanaco, Kirk Stephens, Geoff Coleman (manager), Dave Lewis, Dennis Hawkins, Gordon Richie, Gary Fleet.

### Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1975-76

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.02	Gainsborough Trinity	A	PSF	1-1	Lewis	
08.04	Northwich Victoria	A	PSF	4-1	Hawkins (pen), Briscoe, Oakes, Ritchie	
08.07	A.P.Leamington	H	PSF	2-0	Oakes, Fleet	
08.09	Bangor City	A	PSF	0-3		
08.11	Bermuda	A	PSF	1-2		
08.16	Weymouth	H	L	1-1	Matthams	1780
08.18	Telford United	A	L	1-0	Stringfellow	1123
08.23	Tonbridge	A	L	2-0	Oakes, Evans (o.g.)	561
08.25	Burton Albion	A	SLC1-1L	0-2		767
08.30	Grantham Town	H	L	0-0		1580
09.01	Burton Albion	H	SLC1-2L	4-2	Fleet, Matthams, Hawkins, Turpie	1072
09.04	Oldbury United	H	BSC1	0-0		294
09.06	Dunstable Town	A	L	1-0	Turpie	571
09.08	Kettering Town	H	L	2-0	Oakes, Fleet	2028
09.10	Oldbury United	A	BSC1r	0-1aet		
09.13	Tamworth	H	FAC1Q	2-1	Oakes, Goodwin	1729
09.15	Burton Albion	H	SLC1r	1-2	Turpie (pen)	1222
09.20	Dover	H	L	3-3	Fleet, Hawkins, Goodwin	1398
09.22	Tamworth	A	MFC	1-2	Lomanaco	598
09.27	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	1-0	Fleet	1330
10.04	Dudley Town	A	FAC2Q	1-0	Briscoe	

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1975-76

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
10.07	Atherstone Town	A	MFC	1-2	Oakes	1118
10.11	Dover	A	L	1-0	Bennett	377
10.13	Cambridge City	H	L	1-1	Oakes	1653
10.18	Gornal Athletic	H	FAC3Q	1-1	Matthams	1296
10.20	Gornal Athletic	A*	FAC3Qr	3-0	Fleet, Briscoe, Matthams	1183
10.25	Wealdstone	H	L	0-0		1684
10.27	Tamworth	H	MFC	1-1	Stephens	894
11.01	Cheltenham Town	H	FAC4Q	2-1	Matthams, Briscoe	1669
11.03	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	3-0	Fleet, Oakes, Lomanaco	1247
11.08	Stourbridge	H	L	2-1	Rumjahn (o.g.), Briscoe	1663
11.10	Burton Albion	H	MFC	1-2	Hawkins	813
11.15	Cambridge City	A	L	1-1	Briscoe	661
11.22	Wimbledon	H	FAC1	0-1		4435
11.24	Maidstone United	H	L	0-0		1157
11.29	Corby Town	A	FAT3Q	1-1	Briscoe	445
12.06	Burton Albion	A	L	0-4		1111
12.09	Corby Town	H	FAT3Qr	1-1aet	Peake	480
12.13	Atherstone Town	H	L	1-1	Matthams	1478
12.15	Corby Town	At Enderby	FAT3Qr2	0-3		228
12.20	Chelmsford City	A	L	1-1	Matthams	761
12.26	Bedford Town	H	L	1-1	Fleet	1268
12.27	Grantham Town	A	L	0-2		1436
01.03	Wimbledon	H	L	1-0	Stephens	1526
01.10	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	L	0-0		818
01.17	Dunstable Town	H	L	2-1	Allan (2)	1040
01.21	Burton Albion	A	MFC	1-1	Hawkins	344
01.24	Atherstone Town	A	L	0-0		2020
01.31	Gravesend & Northfleet	H	L	1-1	Hawkins (pen)	1096
02.07	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-2		550
02.14	Maidstone United	A	L	0-0		1239
02.21	Yeovil Town	H	L	0-2		1571
02.28	Stourbridge	A	L	1-0	Bennett	458
03.01	Bath City	H	L	0-1		1340
03.06	Margate	H	L	1-1	Phelps	939
03.10	Weymouth	A	L	4-1	Lewis (2), Hawkins, Phelps	601
03.13	Wealdstone	A	L	4-1	Lewis, Hawkins (2), Phelps	915
03.15	Telford United	H	L	1-1	Phelps	1342
03.20	Bath City	A	L	1-1	Peake	810
03.24	Yeovil Town	A	L	1-0	Phelps	1925
03.27	Burton Albion	H	L	0-1		1452
04.02	Portsmouth	H	F	2-1	Vincent, Turpie	
04.06	Margate	A	L	2-1	Smithers (2)	305
04.10	Tonbridge	H	L	1-1	Phelps	1183
04.16	Bedford Town	A	L	0-0		
04.17	Kettering Town	A	L	0-1		1441
04.19	Chelmsford City	H	L	2-0	Fleet, Smithers	1058
04.22	Wimbledon	A	L	0-2		2140
05.04	Siracusa	H	AIT	3-0	Vincent, Hawkins, Lewis	1980
05.19	Benevento	H	AIT	1-0	Bennett	1807
06.13	Siracusa	A	AIT	0-0		3000+
06.16	Benevento	A	AIT	1-5	Bennett	

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC= FA Cup, FAT= FA Trophy, SLC= Southern League Cup, BSC= Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, AIT = Anglo Italian Tournament, PSF = Pre season friendly, F= Friendly



## Borough Very Interested In Cleary

Nuneaton Borough are hoping to sign George Cleary, one of the most prolific goalscorers in Southern League soccer. Manager Stan Bennett has already had talks with the ex-Kettering Town and Dunstable forward.

“He is very interested,” said Bennett, who intends to put the accent on entertaining football.

## Borough Bargain Offer On Season Tickets

Nuneaton Borough are to offer “early bird” bargains to their fans for next season. All season ticket prices at Manor Park are to stay the same for 1976-77. But supporters can save money if they buy them within the next two weeks.

Vice presidents have the biggest bargain. They can save £2.50 if they renew their places before July 16. Said Borough official Ken Peal: “We want to be fair to our real supporters. We must stop trying to squeeze the same orange all of the time.”

Ground season tickets stay at £10 and £4.40 for OAP’s and children. Stand tickets are £16 and £8 and vice-presidents pay £22.50 and £12.50 each for up to two “family” tickets.

## Bennett Wants Roy Cross Back

Roy Cross may be back with Nuneaton Borough next season after being released by the Manor Park club. Player-manager Stan Bennett has already had talks with the ex-Walsall and Port Vale defender.

“He wants to play for Nuneaton,” said Bennett, who sees Cross as the player who could solve his problem at left back.

## Borough Forced To Start In Preliminary Round

Nuneaton Borough will be forced to start their bid for FA Cup fame next season – from the preliminary round. They have been drawn at home to Midland Combination club Racing Warwick and face four more ties if they are to reach the first round proper.

## Redrobe Joins Bath

Striker Eric Redrobe has stunned Nuneaton Borough – by signing for another club. He has joined Southern League premier division rivals Bath City after agreeing terms with Nuneaton. The news came as a bombshell for Borough player-manager Stan Bennett.

“I am absolutely dumbfounded – and disgusted,” said an angry Bennett today. “He did not have the decency to get in touch with me.”

## Turpie And Cross Agree Terms

Bob Turpie and Roy Cross are to stay with Nuneaton Borough after being released at the end of last season. Forward Turpie has already re-signed for the Manor Park club. He was offered a new contract and signed at the weekend.

And ex-Port Vale and Walsall defender Cross has agreed terms with player-manager Stan Bennett.

## New Director: Noel Kelly

Coventry businessman Mr Noel Kelly has joined the board of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. Mr Kelly, managing director of Coventry Pipework, will be in charge of the facilities at Manor Park. Married to a Nuneaton woman, he has lived in the area for nearly 25 years. He has already taken charge of the squad of volunteers who have been working on the ground. His appointment to the board was confirmed today: “I was asked some time ago and have attended several meetings,” he said.

“I am confident this club can do well. We have to forget about the past. It’s where we go from here that matters.” His first move as a director was to ask for more volunteers to help on the ground. “We have been working on Sundays and two nights a week,” he said. “Anyone who can help will be more than welcome to bring along a shovel this Sunday morning.

“There are a lot of jobs to be done and we owe it to the supporters to put them right. What’s nicer for them to turn up at the start of the season and see that the ground has had a face-lift – instead of looking at a load of weeds.”

## Holder Reserve Team Player-Manager

Former Coventry City player Colin Holder has been appointed player-manager of Nuneaton Borough Reserves. Holder, who had a short spell with Borough during the Fred Badham era, is due to take charge next week. He has been manager of West Midlands League side Armitage for three years and had made plans to move to Brereton Social.

## 1976-77

<b>Altrincham v Nuneaton Borough</b>	<b>07-08-1976</b>
--------------------------------------	-------------------

<b>Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Peake, Goodwin, Shields, Evans, Phelps, Turpie, Smithers. Subs: Briscoe, Barnett.</b>
---

Borough made the journey to Moss Lane to play a pre-season friendly match.

Despite looking the better side during the early stages, Borough slipped to a 1-0 defeat against their Northern Premier League opponents. Borough lost Malcolm Phelps with an eye injury, but went on to provide the home side’s shaky defence with some anxious moments.

After four minutes Phelps rose unchallenged to a well-placed corner and headed narrowly over, and in general the Nuneaton build-ups from defence to attack were more effective.

Bob Knight came to Borough’s rescue on more than one occasion as Altrincham fought their way back into the game. The Nuneaton goalkeeper made two particularly fine saves from Morris and Vernon.

Borough lost Phelps, who had been their most effective forward, just seconds before the interval and slipped to defeat after conceding a second half goal.



## Vincent Has Plate Removed

Borough striker Bobby Vincent has been admitted to hospital to have a steel plate removed from his right thigh. The plate was fitted after the November 1974 car crash which threatened to end his playing career. Vincent, who missed Saturday's game at Altrincham, hopes to be back in training inside three weeks.

### Bilston Town v Nuneaton Borough 10-08-1976

Borough travelled to the Black Country to take on Bilston Town in a pre-season friendly match.

Nuneaton manager Stan Bennett's reaction to last night's friendly at Bilston changed from despair to delight in minutes, he revealed today.

Bennett took a sixteen strong squad to Staffordshire for another warm-up game. After a poor start, Borough fought back to win 2-0. "We were absolutely diabolical in the first-half, yet in the second we played some of our finest football," said the Borough boss.

Second half goals from Gary Fleet, who missed Saturday's game at Altrincham, and Ian Goodwin gave Borough victory.

### Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 12-08-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Bennett, Lewis, Barnett (Briscoe (Shields, 78)), Fleet, Phelps, Turpie (Evans), Smithers.**

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park for a pre-season friendly match.

Manor Park fans, analysing their team at home for the first time this season, must have gone away with a two-sided view. In a disappointing first-half they saw the Borough squad fall a goal behind, outclassed in several departments and obviously missing the power of Ian Goodwin, out through injury.

Trevor Peake made an error of judgment in the sixteenth minute mis-hitting a back pass to keeper Bob Knight for striker Marsh to race in and tap home to put Stourbridge in front. Earlier Knight had left his line to punch clear an awkward cross and stood stranded, as Norwood shot wide. But the goal and near miss highlighted Stourbridge's dominance in the first half.

After the break two substitutions, and a sudden injection of determination into the Borough front-line changed the pace of the game. Malcolm Phelps levelled for Borough seconds after the restart. He headed home an inch-perfect cross from Gary Fleet with keeper Moore helpless.

A four-man move by the Nuneaton strikers outlined their second half superiority. Substitute Steve Briscoe fed the ball to Kirk Stephens on the wing whose cross was headed back by Phelps and Fleet poked his shot into the keeper's arms.

Stourbridge hung on grimly to the all-square situation, but another Borough change, Brian Shields, had a golden chance to give Nuneaton victory minutes from time. After Moore

fumbled a cross, Shields hastily blasted his shot high over the wide-open net.

### Nuneaton Borough v Bangor City 14-08-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Evans, Peake, Cross, Smithers, Phillips, Lewis, Phelps, Goodwin, Fleet. Subs: Turpie, Shields.**

**Bangor: Eales, Poole, Lunn, Elliott, McLallen, Williams, Atterton, Broadhead, Lawther, J. Hughes, D. Hughes. Subs: D. Hughes, Olney.**

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

Stan Bennett wore a broad smile after watching from the sidelines as Nuneaton stole a late goal to underline their superiority. Borough were, as usual, rock solid in defence and tough in midfield. The only question mark that hangs over them is no secret – their ability to score goals. Gary Fleet looks better than ever on the ball. It is only his finishing that lets him down.

More than once he had the ball teed up to score, then fell flat as he miscued or shot tamely at goal. But manager Bennett may reap the germ of a partnership that emerged on Saturday between the ever faithful Bob Turpie and the promise of "guest" Brendan Phillips.

In the second half, Nuneaton's better period, the two showed occasional sparks of skill that could have the fans in raptures at Manor Park. Workmanlike Bangor had their moments, but they were an ordinary side and like Nuneaton missed chances. Phillips, who has often been a thorn in Borough's flesh, wearing a Burton Albion shirt, has obviously benefited from a summer with Peter Taylor at Brighton.

He showed positional sense, speed and courage, and it was he who put the ball in the net, three minutes from time. Turpie controlled the ball from a Dave Lewis throw in, then turned on a sixpence and angled a lofted shot at Eales that spun under the bar and bounced out. But Phillips was in position to make certain with a flashing header.

### Nuneaton Borough v Northwich Victoria 16-08-1976

Borough welcomed Northwich Victoria to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly game.

Impressive Borough clicked into gear in their final dress rehearsal for the new season. They hit back from behind to crush Northern Premier Leaguers Northwich Victoria with a superb second-half display.

Dave Lewis, Bob Turpie and Kirk Stephens grabbed the goals that provided a massive confidence booster. But the player who stole the show was newcomer Brendan Phillips. Phillips, who left Burton at the end of last season, has long been regarded as one of the best midfield players in Southern League soccer. And last night he gave the fans a glimpse of the velvet smooth skills that added a new dimension to Borough's play.

But there was so much that was good about Nuneaton's



performance, particularly after the break. After some dreary friendlies manager Stan Bennett now looks as if he has found a blend. He was certainly a much happier man and must now be looking to the start of his first season in charge with renewed confidence.

The first half saw Borough attack often, but without much purpose. Malcolm Phelps won everything in the air up front and some of the build-ups were good. But it was Northwich who went in front – with their only shot of the half. Eccleshall played an early ball through to Swede, who rifled it into the net to stun Nuneaton.

Borough were a much better side after the interval and skipper Dave Lewis equalised five minutes into the second half. He robbed a defender and hit an angled drive into the net. Northwich faded, Borough took complete control and Bob Turpie put them ahead. Phillips set up the move and Turpie hit a shot on the turn which gave goalkeeper Roberts no chance.

That was in the 70th minute and Borough emphasised their superiority with their third goal – a spectacular effort from Kirk Stephens 13 minutes from the end.

## Borough Sign Brendan Phillips



Nuneaton Borough last night signed former Burton Albion star Brendan Phillips – with the help of their fans. For Phillips turned down the chance of a three month contract with Brighton and lucrative offers from Weymouth and Yeovil to move to Manor Park.

And he made no secret of the fact that the supporters helped him to make up his mind. “The potential is here,” he said. “Nuneaton are a

good club and everyone knows the support is here if they are doing well.”

Phillips, one of the most exciting players in the Southern League, is already a success with the crowd. They warmed to his skills during the friendly against Northwich Victoria and he signed after the game.

## Borough Sign Roger Jones

Nuneaton Borough have splashed out a four-figure fee for Stafford Rangers’ striker Roger Jones. And delighted manager Stan Bennett said: “Now we can really go places. I really feel we will be knocking on the door.”

The deal was completed after 21 hours of behind the scenes negotiations. “We thought it would take a lot longer, but it suddenly accelerated and we got him,” said Bennett.

Jones, 27, a 6ft. 3in. centre-forward, has been one of the leading goalscorers in the Northern Premier League. He has scored more than 100 goals for Stafford in three seasons – including two in the Non League Cup final at Wembley.

## Bromsgrove Rovers v Nuneaton Borough 10-08-1976

**Bromsgrove:** Lawrence, Selby, O’Meara, Parsons, Bentley, Kenning, Gavin, Dyer, Williams, Deakin, Hensman. Sub: Mullen.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Evans, Lewis, Cross, Peake, Fleet, Turpie, Jones, Phillips, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.

Borough travelled to the Victoria Ground to play Bromsgrove Rovers in the Southern League Cup first round, first leg.

Borough and Bromsgrove made a blank start to the season on Saturday in a game that could have produced a sackful of goals. Both sides survived near misses in the sweltering conditions. But it is Nuneaton who are fortunate to be starting tonight’s game all square. For it was a combination of good goalkeeping by Bob Knight and poor finishing by Rovers that kept the scoreline blank.

A 4-2 result in favour of the Southern League first division outfit would have been much more realistic. But Nuneaton must now be favourites to reach the second round in front of their own fans. For they supplied all of the class while Rovers bridged the gap between the two sides with hard work and endeavour.

Newcomer Roger Jones, signed only 48 hours earlier, obviously has to settle in. Manager Stan Bennett and key midfielder Ian Goodwin were both missing. And both teams highlighted the problem the non leaguers will face in the early weeks of the new campaign. They have the beginning of the season players trying to play football on end of the season pitches. Bromsgrove’s pitch looked as if it had taken a battering from a long, hard season – a sight that sums up non league grounds all over the country.

But Nuneaton often looked undisciplined and were surprised by the standard of Rovers play. Not many teams will beat the Worcestershire side on the tight pitch. Rovers had Borough under pressure for the first half hour, but Nuneaton should have gone in front in the 15 minutes before half-time. They took control and a goal then would surely have made the second leg a formality.

Gary Fleet had two clear cut chances and Bob Turpie had what looked a certain goal kicked off the line. But Bromsgrove, for who midfielder Mike Kenning and winger Peter Hensman, both had good games, caused Nuneaton problems in the second half. Hensman made Kirk Stephens struggle with his speed before half-time and gave youngster Keith Evans a testing time when he switched wings in the second half.

But it was Bob Knight who emerged as man of the match and he made point blank saves from Stan Williams from chances the centre-forward should have put away. Borough newcomer Jones created problems for Rovers in the air and should be a great asset when he has had chance to settle in. Bromsgrove should find Nuneaton a different proposition on the wide open spaces of Manor Park.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bromsgrove Rovers 10-08-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Lewis, Phillips, Smithers, Fleet, Jones, Turpie. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough welcomed Bromsgrove Rovers to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

The game was only three minutes old when Graham Smith played a free-kick forward to Roger Jones, who cast a shadow over the Rovers defence and nodded it down. Brendan Phillips was there to put it into the net and set Nuneaton on their way to the second round of the Southern League Cup.



**Brendan Phillips prods the ball goalwards – and Borough are one up in the first minute.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The goal led to a wide open tie between two sides always willing to attack. And Bob Turpie settled it with Borough's second on the stroke of half-time. Turpie, hoping to play a full season after his injury problems, rounded off a superb move with a header from a glorious Dave Lewis cross. Jones, destined to make a big impact on Southern League defences, also hit the woodwork and Turpie should have scored in the second half.

And Bromsgrove also missed chances in an enjoyable game. It provided as much entertainment in 90 minutes as most of Borough's home matches did all last season. They were often indisciplined and they lived dangerously at times. But it was refreshing after two seasons of defensive soccer – the sort of football that makes coaches frown and supporters smile.

Certainly the 1500 crowd had their money's worth – which was a tribute to Bromsgrove as much as to Nuneaton. They could have been forgiven for trying to close it up, but the first minute goal changed all that. And Rovers could easily have been on level terms instead of two goals down at half-time. Centre-forward Steve Deakin missed two clear cut chances he should have put away.



**Bob Turpie, hidden by Bromsgrove's number eight, gets in the header that brought Borough their second goal on the stroke of half-time.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But all eyes were on Borough's newcomers as Nuneaton strove to maintain manager Stan Bennett's promise of entertaining football. The second half fell away, but there was still enough incident to keep the fans happy. And Turpie should have crowned the night after a spectacular move in the closing stages. Phillips, already installed as a firm favourite with the crowd, won the ball and played a glorious crossfield ball to Lewis. He hit it back across the middle and Turpie headed it over the top.

But his first half goal will have given him some of the confidence he needs and it was a bright start for Borough. Manager Bennett still has a lot of work to do – but the signs point to better times from the entertainment angle.

## Dartford v Nuneaton Borough

28-08-1976

**Dartford:** Leggett, Robinson, Shovelar, Sampson, Hutchinson, Jones, Akers, Dennis, Dudman, Mitchell, Greenhaigh. **Sub:** Payne.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Goodwin, Turpie, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to play Dartford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bob Turpie launched Borough's season in style – with the first hat-trick of his career. "I have scored two and hit the post, but it is the first time I have scored three," said a delighted Turpie afterwards. The hat-trick took his tally to four from two games and helped to push his injury problems into the past.

But Turpie was the first to admit the great debt he owed to his front running partner Roger Jones – and the rest of the team. Jones gave the Dartford defence in general and former Chelsea star Ian Hutchinson in particular, a nightmare start. But the whole Nuneaton side responded to manager Stan Bennett's appeal for attacking soccer.

They twice hit back from behind and could easily have had six goals. Dartford, promoted from the first division south, must have thought they were playing on another planet. They had scored 18 goals, including eight against Ashford in the Southern League Cup. But Borough were in a different class and threatened to tear the Kent club apart.

John Mitchell and Keith Robinson twice put Darts in front – Robinson from a harsh penalty against Trevor Peake for pushing. But both of those goals were cancelled out by Turpie, who completed his hat-trick in the 55th minute. The fourth was an own goal by Hutchinson, who hit a Turpie pass past his own goalkeeper twelve minutes from time.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bath City

30-08-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Fleet, Lewis, Goodwin, Turpie, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Evans.

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

Bath dampened Borough's bright start to the season at rain-

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



lashed Manor Park. They opened up a two goal lead inside 20 minutes and then held off heavy Borough pressure to take the points. But the match provided plenty of entertainment for the 1,000-plus fans huddled under the stands. And it did nothing to alter manager Stan Bennett's insistence that his side will attack.

Bath went in front after only five minutes when Borough failed to clear the ball on the edge of their box and Peter Higgins beat Bob Knight from close in. Fifteen minutes later City player-manager Brian Godfrey lashed a spectacular second into the net from 25 yards following a half-cleared free-kick.

Borough reduced the arrears in the 28th minute – with a goal created by Roger Jones. Jones, who had figured in all of Borough's attacks, headed down a Lewis cross to Ian Goodwin, who chested it past one defender and hit a superb left foot shot into the net. Kevin Griffin then had Knight at full stretch to touch a shot over the bar as the attacking soccer continued. And then Jones was only a bootlace away from an equaliser when he was caught in two minds in front of the net.

The pattern continued in the second half. Chances were always there, but City gradually tightened their grip. They drafted in an extra man to help curb the threat of Jones and Borough could not find a way through. But it was goalkeeper Ken Allen who saved them as Nuneaton launched a last ditch assault to save the game.

He saved from Jones, Fleet and Turpie and was under heavy pressure as the whistle went. Borough also had their scares, but they had the man of the match in centre-half Trevor Peake. Teenager Peake had a magnificent game in the heart of the defence – his best since he came into the side. Timmy Smithers also did well at outside left – but the result was a bitter disappointment after the performance on Saturday.

## Borough Starlets Attract Attention

Borough starlets Trevor Peake, Kirk Stephens and Timmy Smithers are attracting the interest of Football League scouting teams, manager Stan Bennett revealed today. Scouts have been travelling to Manor Park in the last few days to watch the youngsters.

## Chairman: Does Town Want Southern League Side

David Tinney, Nuneaton Borough's ambitious chairman, today threw out a challenge to the town's sport fans. He said: "They have to decide whether they want a village club or a team that could play in the Fourth Division."

His challenge follows more meetings with the Borough Council over the future of the club's Corporation owned Manor Park ground. "We have appealed for people to help and our problems could easily be solved. But we need to know what the people of Nuneaton want." The latest talks with the council concerned a recent application to stage a Thursday market at the ground, which was turned down.

## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 10-09-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Lewis, Smithers, Goodwin, Turpie, Jones, Briscoe. **Sub:** Evans.

Borough travelled to play AP Leamington in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Two goals in three minutes just before half-time paved the way for a superb Borough win. Ian Goodwin put them ahead from the penalty spot in the 32nd minute after Brakes' goalkeeper John Davies had brought down Bob Turpie. And Turpie then seized on a defensive error to maintain his goal a game average in his comeback season. Adrian Stewart pulled one back for AP fifteen minutes from the end of a rain lashed local derby. But the scoreline told the real story and was a true reflection of the play.

Borough always had that extra class against the promoted Brakes in a match that was a credit to both teams. They shrugged off the wind and rain to provide plenty of entertainment for the 800-plus crowd. And they also had to cope with a referee who made no allowance for the conditions. Northampton official Mr D. Brazier blew for 53 free kicks – 35 of them against Nuneaton. Many were needless, some amazing – and just made matters worse.

Borough stamped their quality on the game early on and gave AP another insight into the gap that exists between the Southern League premier division and the first division north. Their football was controlled, disciplined – and attractive – as the Brakes struggled. Graham Smith hit an upright with a fourth minute shot, Gerry Kavanagh cleared from Turpie and Dennis Taylor saved Brakes on the line.

Driven forward by the power of Dave Lewis and Ian Goodwin from midfield, they had their opponents in trouble. Lewis had a magnificent match – a real captain's game. And young Timmy Smithers who grows in stature every game, helped to provide the balance alongside them in midfield. Borough then turned their superiority into a two goal gap that AP could not complain about.

Brakes hit back in the second half but they lacked penetration against Borough's well-drilled defence, and when they did get through Bob Knight was there to deny them. He saved from Stewart Gallagher and Micky Boot, but AP were never able to maintain intense pressure for any length of time. In the dying minutes Graham Smith headed off the line and Gallagher put a header over the top.

## Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 14-09-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Lewis, Phillips, Goodwin, Turpie, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to The Valley to play Redditch in a Southern League Premier Division fixture.

Borough signposted the road to success with an early goal – and then lost their way. They made a dream start with a goal



that rocked the home side after only 11 minutes, but it turned into a nightmare as everything went wrong and they suffered a double blow five minutes from half-time.

Normally sound Trevor Peake, presented Redditch striker Gareth Dale with a gift of an equaliser and they lost goalkeeper Bob Knight as well. He landed heavily trying to reach Dale's shot and was taken to hospital with a shoulder injury. Youngster Timmy Smithers took over in goal and Nuneaton held out until the dying minutes before Roger Shaw scored twice to settle the match. But things had gone wrong for Borough long before then. Even taking into account Knight's injury they did not play well. Too many players were below their best and much of their football lacked understanding.

Usually reliable performers like Peake, Kirk Stephens, Ian Goodwin and even skipper Dave Lewis struggled to find their form. Everything went wrong – and a first-half shot from Phillips almost ended the game there and then. His wild effort struck overhead power cables behind the goal and sent down a shower of sparks and flickered the lights.

Phillips, clearly feeling the effects of his two weeks suspension put Nuneaton in front with a shot that deflected off Redditch full back Stuart Chadwick and finished in the opposite corner of the net. That should have been the signal for them to drive home their advantage. Instead they struggled. Peake's error and Knight's injury then turned the game and led to a scrappy second half in which both teams struggled to string passes together.

The football was played a break-neck speed and cried out for someone to put his foot on the ball and steady it down. Borough survived what looked a clear penalty when Dale was brought down by the combined efforts of Cross and Smith and Shaw set up and missed an open goal. But it was Shaw, top scorer for Redditch last season who had the final say.

He put them in front with a shot that clipped Smith in the 82nd minute. And he settled it three minutes later when Smithers, who did not have a lot to do pushed out an effort from Mick Tuohy to his feet.

So Borough who began as if they would take both points and then battled for one, finished with nothing to show for their efforts but disappointment.

## Jamie Bennett Steps In For Knight

Goalkeeper Jamie Bennett makes his first team debut for Nuneaton Borough in the FA Cup. He takes over from injured Bob Knight in the first qualifying round tie against Brierley Hill at Manor Park. Knight, virtually an ever-present for two years, failed a fitness test last night. He is still having problems with the shoulder injury he collected at Redditch on Tuesday.

Bennett, with Bulkington Sports last season, played in one of the pre-season friendlies. "This lad won't let us down," said manager Stan Bennett

## Nuneaton Borough v Wealdstone 25-09-1976

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Lewis, Goodwin, Phillips, Turpie, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Phelps.

**Wealdstone:** Lightfoot, Kinnear, Prince, Byrne, Lawrence, Stagg, Fulton, Moss, Light, Duck, Halliday. **Sub:** Watson.

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

Roger Jones, the centre-forward Nuneaton began to think would never score, leaped in the air with joy two minutes from time. He had scored a spectacular goal for Borough against Geoff Coleman's Wealdstone. And more than that, he had opened his own account for the club after eight games. It was a fitting end to the match and a great relief for the former Stafford Rangers striker, who has worked hard for his reward.

It took Nuneaton 78 minutes to break the Wealdstone spell that at one stage threatened to end the game in a goalless draw. And it was young Timmy Smithers who, once again, pulled the game round for Borough. He sailed in to squeeze the ball just inside the far post with a fine header. It was Smithers' third goal in two games, scored from a glorious Dave Lewis cross that was delivered with deadly accuracy from the right touch line.

Smithers' goal was the signal for Nuneaton to take complete command – something neither side was capable of doing until then. For long periods the game became bogged down in midfield and there were few real scoring chances. The best one in the first half fell to Kirk Stephens. But the Nuneaton full-back ballooned the ball over the top from three yards after a Phillips cross was deflected into his path.

Jamie Bennett, again proving himself to be an able deputy for Bob Knight, brought off a fine save when he palmed over a fierce drive from Stagg. Dave Lewis inched the ball over the bar from a free kick and at the other end Halliday headed wide when the Wealdstone broke out of defence. Turpie, who was booked midway through the second half, came close twice when he almost got past former Atherstone and AP Leamington goalkeeper Chris Lightfoot, signed by Wealdstone on Thursday.

Jones headed just over and missed another great chance when he failed to connect with a flying header four minutes from the end. But the big striker put all that behind him when he cracked in a curling left foot drive in the 88th minute. His shot from 25 yards flew into the top left corner of the net.

## Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 27-09-1976

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips (Chinn), S. Bennett, Benn, Phelps, Jones (Vincent), Smithers.

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

Brendan Phillips brightened a first-half that threatened to die with a moment of magic. He outpaced Len Harris, bulldozed



past Martin Dixon and ended a 40 yard run with a shot that put Borough into the lead. That was after 20 minutes and just before half-time he almost did it again. This time beating four players before Terry Satchwell saved.

Goalkeeper Satchwell was Tamworth's hero in a Midland Floodlit Cup match Borough won with ease. But it was Phillips who excited the crowd before he went off at half-time with a hamstring injury that almost kept him out in the first place. Borough missed his skills after the break in a second half that was almost wrecked by torrential rain. A monsoon like storm battered the roofs of the stands and turned the pitch into a swamp.

By that time, though, Nuneaton were already two goals up after Malcolm Phelps had scored from a picture book move. Kirk Stephens played a free-kick forward, Roger Jones headed it down – and Phelps swept it past Satchwell. Tamworth cut the arrears with a 65th minute penalty against Stephens for a foul on Brian Barnes. It was their first shot on target and they only had two all night – the other a 30 yarder from Barnes which brought out a fine save from Jamie Bennett.

Bobby Vincent went on with 20 minutes to go in place of Roger Jones. And he scored Borough's third goal – from the penalty spot with ten minutes left. Vincent had earned the right to take it with a superb ball through to Timmy Smithers which forced Dave Reardon to bring him down.

## Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 02-10-1976

**Kettering:** Livsey, Lucas, Ashby, Mortimer, Suddards, Dixey, Faulkner, Clayton, Dougan, Kellock, Henderson. **Sub:** Harris.

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Goodwin, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Turpie, Smithers. **Sub:** Cross.

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

Forget the scoreline, ignore the result – this game was a triumph for Southern League football. A magnificent match that enthralled the 2,000-plus crowd from beginning to end. And afterwards Borough hid the disappointment of defeat behind pride in their performance. Surely no Nuneaton side has ever played as well and lost.

Player-manager Stan Bennett could have had three goals before half-time. He had two shots superbly saved by Gordon Livsey and one that skimmed the bar. But Nuneaton lost to a cruel goal only seven minutes from the end. Cruel because it followed a bad goal kick by Jamie Bennett, who turned in a performance to remember.

Playing only his fourth first team game Bennett was superb. He and Livsey were in constant action as the game swung from end to end. And he matched the Poppies goalkeeper save for save – until that tragic moment. His kick went to winger John Henderson, who chested it on to give Roy Clayton the kind of chance he rarely misses. But player-manager Bennett was among the first to console him at the end.

Borough were at their dazzling best before half-time when they should have won the game. It was full of incident, but most of the skill came from Nuneaton. Brendan Phillips, Stan Bennett and Dave Lewis dominated midfield. Bennett was an inspiration in his new role which gave Ian Goodwin the chance to play at centre-half. He tired in the second half as it was only his second game of the season.

Only Livsey stood between the Manor Park side and a commanding lead. But the goal they needed – and deserved – did not come. And Jamie Bennett kept them in the hunt with some superb saves early in the second half. The game built up to a tremendous climax as the rain poured down.

No-one left the ground and the Kettering fans erupted with joy and relief when the goal went in. Lewis almost notched an equaliser with the last kick of the game – but again Livsey saved. That was the final gesture in a match to remember.

## Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 05-10-1976

**Atherstone:** Withers, Stockley, Shotton, Russell, Preston, Brown, Dawkins, Franklin, Adams, Vincent, Collard. **Subs:** Tomkinson, Jennings.

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Goodwin (Cross), Peake, S. Bennett (Smithers), Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Phelps, Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to play Atherstone Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Atherstone and Borough fought out the game in true textbook fashion. Both sides entertained the crowd with fast-flowing and tough tackling football – to keep up with the great traditions of these local battles. Players, especially the experienced, seemed anxious to impress, with pride at stake more than anything else.

Johnny Vincent and a spate of ill fortune turned the first-half in Adders' favour. Vincent was in immaculate form. He stamped his authority on the game early on and his deadly passing and superb vision created a few worrying gaps in the Borough defence. But Vincent could not be matched by his forwards with Lou Adams almost redundant up front. However missed chances are not confined to the Adders' camp as Borough were to learn.

The Manor Park side were fighting an uphill battle in the first half almost from the start. Ian Goodwin was carried off in the fourth minute and was eventually substituted by Roy Cross. And player-manager Stan Bennett again fell victim to injury and did not return after the interval. Timmy Smithers substituted. But nothing can be taken away from the Sheepy Road club's sparkling first half display.

In a bout of sustained pressure Borough keeper Jamie Bennett fumbled a Peter Dawkins cross but Brown's shot was charged down. Then Bruce Collard had a shot cleared for a corner by the back-tracking Malcolm Phelps. Borough began to slip into top gear towards the end of the half and Roger Jones and Phelps both had good efforts.

After the break Borough took control of midfield and almost



went ahead through Steve Briscoe, who broke through but was denied by some brave goalkeeping from Colin Withers as he tried to round the keeper. Phelps had a shot superbly saved by Withers after 70 minutes. Roger Jones burst through from 30 yards in Borough's best move of the game, but Smithers blasted his cross over. Jones then fired wide after a good move involving Kirk Stephens and the unlucky Malcolm Phelps.

## Fleet Fined By Borough

Gary Fleet has been fined by Stan Bennett after going missing for a fortnight. Fleet, undoubtedly one of the most skilful players at the club, has been in trouble with Bennett before. During the trip to Italy in June, he was almost sent home after an incident during a team talk.

### Nuneaton Borough v Corby Town 11-10-1976

**Borough: Bennett, Stephens, Smith (Thomas, 60), Cross, Briscoe, Phillips, Peake, Smithers, Turpie, Jones, Phelps.**

Borough welcomed Corby Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Irrepressible Borough buried Corby's Southern League Cup hopes under a five goal avalanche. They reduced the Northamptonshire side to a shambles with a four goal first half display. And they then missed as many chances again before rounding off the triumph with a final flourish. The last time the clubs met, Corby pulled off a shock 3-0 win in the Non League Cup.

There was never any threat of that happening again after Nuneaton's explosive start. The Southern League First Division side were completely outclassed from beginning to end. Borough were without player-manager Stan Bennett, skipper Dave Lewis – and Ian Goodwin. But they always carried too much skill and power for the struggling Steelmen and the tie was virtually settled when Malcolm Phelps scored the first goal after 14 minutes. A Bob Turpie free kick was pushed against the underside of the bar by goalkeeper Walters and Phelps rammed in the rebound.

Two minutes later Roger Jones glanced in a header at the near post from a Steve Briscoe corner. Jones was a constant menace to Corby, who were always vulnerable to high balls. Another Briscoe free-kick led to the third goal. He found Turpie, whose header curved over Walters with the keeper off his line. Trevor Peake, pushed forward into midfield in Bennett's re-shuffled team, notched the fourth just before the break. Corby were in trouble when Walters could only palm out an overhead kick from Phelps under pressure from Jones. The ball fell to Peake who lashed it back into the net.

Jimmy Gough had a chance for Corby two minutes into the second half, and after that the game fell away. It had long been over from the result point of view and Borough slackened off – and missed chances. Graham Smith, in at centre-half, went off injured after 60 minutes to be replaced by Wayne Thomas,

another of the exciting youngsters who are challenging for places. Peake dropped back to allow Thomas to operate in midfield and the youngster played with cool assurance. More chances went begging before Phelps hit the fifth goal 13 minutes from the end. Turpie sent over a corner and Brendan Phillips launched himself into a full length dive. His header was blocked by Walters, but Jones was in quickly to challenge, and the ball ran loose for Phelps to score.

Phelps had the ball in the net again four minutes later, but was pulled up for offside. Borough could have added two more in the closing stages. Walters dropped a deflected shot from Jones, then clutched the ball on the line when a goal looked certain. And, seconds from the whistle, Turpie hit a free kick that struck the top of the bar and went into the gardens in Beaumont Road.

### Milton Keynes City v Nuneaton Borough 30-08-1976

Borough made the journey to play Milton Keynes City in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Former Borough goalkeeper Brian Robinson inspired the home side. He denied Nuneaton at least four first-half goals with some superb saves. And Milton Keynes then went on to score twice after the break to win an often scrappy Midland Floodlit Cup match. The first-half was all Borough – and Robinson – before the home side went ahead in the 55th minutes. Malcolm McCormack hit a long range shot that struck the foot of a post and rolled in.

Borough had two penalty appeals turned down and a goal disallowed before substitute John Robinson scored Milton Keynes' second goal 15 minutes from the end.

Borough manager Stan Bennett gave youngsters Dave Benn and Wayne Thomas another taste of higher grade soccer and Steve Harrison made his debut in the back four. But the Nuneaton player who stood out was Gary Fleet, who stakes another claim for a return to first team football.

Bennett said: "He ran himself into the ground and his attitude was great." Fleet, still not match fit after his long lay-off, tired in the last 20 minutes.

### Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 25-10-1976

**Borough: Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Turpie, Jones, Fleet. Sub: Phelps.**

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Burton dealt another hammer blow to Borough's pride in a bizarre game. Eerie, mist-shrouded Manor Park provided the perfect setting for an X-certificate clash. An untidy, spoiling shambles of a game – won by a scrambled goal. At half-time there had been twenty free kicks, two bookings and four shots at goal. The free kick tally doubled in the second half and the sides struggled to string three passes together.

Birmingham referee Mr J. H. Rees did not help. He was

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



official and affected the flow of the game. Burton turned up to stifle Borough's attacking flair and strangle the game in midfield. They needn't have bothered. Borough were that bad. Clumsy is the only word to describe the efforts of both sides in a free-kick littered start. Bob Turpie was booked for dissent and then Albion defender Peter Shone was booked for kicking Turpie. Up to half-time, there had been only one real shot of note – a free-kick from Eddie Hogan pushed over the top by Jamie Bennett. The other three efforts, two from Borough and one from Burton, were simply on target, but caused no problems.

Albion then made the breakthrough after an hour of the sort of football that drives people to distraction. Midfield player Graham Fearn hit the best ball of the match. A 50-yarder that took out Kirk Stephens and Trevor Peake and found Terry Spinner, whose shot was blocked by Jamie Bennett, but Les Wright ran in and scrambled the ball over the line.

Gary Fleet almost celebrated his return to the Borough side with an equaliser. His left foot shot was superbly saved by Mick Rose, the ex-Notts County keeper. Rose went on to make brave saves from Roger Jones and substitute Malcolm Phelps, who went on for Turpie.

But it was clear it was not Nuneaton's night. They simply did not have the ideas, flair and imagination to prise open Albion. And Burton won a game everyone at Manor Park will want to forget in a hurry.

## Margate v Nuneaton Borough 30-10-1976

**Margate:** Bowtell, Barr, Thornley, Fusco, Summers, Clewlow, Bacon, Gilbert, Cook, Turner. **Sub:** Plumb.

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Walsh, Jones, Phelps, Smithers. **Sub:** Turpie.

Borough made the journey to Hartsdown Park to play Margate in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough collected a point from a hard earned draw – but Malcolm Phelps was convinced they should have had two. He hit the post in the dying minutes and then saw goalkeeper Steve Bowtell save from the rebound. But Phelps insisted: "It was over the line. He scooped it back with his arm." Bowtell was given the benefit of the doubt by a referee who was too far away to see. And a game that never promised great things ended all square – a fair result over the 90 minutes.

For Borough had escaped in the first half when Norman Fusco hit an upright with a free-kick which looked a goal all the way. Those were the only efforts of note from two teams who bogged themselves down in the Hartsdown Park mud. Nuneaton were the better side before half-time when their determination denied Margate control. The Seasiders then balanced it up after the break – but both sides struggled to put their game together.

Wind, rain and mud made it difficult from the start and one of Margate's lowest crowd's in living memory did not help.

Only 217 fans bothered to turn up. There was no atmosphere and little excitement. Few places could have been more depressing and, in the end, Nuneaton did well to travel back with a point.

Borough supplied most of the skill through one man – Brendan Phillips. He was the only attacking player who looked as if he might do something to set the game alight. Otherwise, the honours went to defenders in general, and Kirk Stephens and Trevor Peake in particular. Stephens had a superb first-half and Peake blossomed after the break when Margate started to make the running.

Stan Bennett kept his side going in midfield where newcomer Arthur Walsh had a disappointing debut. The 22-year-old Scot had little chance to show his skills and never adjusted to the pace of the game. Jamie Bennett had another sound game in goal and has now been beaten just five times in eleven games. The final whistle came just in time to beat a torrential downpour that would surely have put an end to the match had it come earlier.

But Borough travelled back with their fifth away point from five games, which helped to ease the journey after a depressing afternoon.

## Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone 01-11-1976

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, S. Bennett, Thomas, Turpie, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

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

Timmy Smithers gave Borough the home win they badly needed with a smartly-taken goal. Tenacious Smithers scored from a right wing cross by Roger Jones five minutes from the end of a fast and furious first-half. But the victory should have been more emphatic – and Borough almost let the Kent club off the hook.

Smithers, Stan Bennett and Bob Turpie all missed chances – and Jones could have had a hat-trick. Had the chances gone in Maidstone would have been stone dead before the interval. Instead, they were able to stage a second half rally that rattled Nuneaton and almost brought them a point.

Maidstone, a skilful, energetic side, rattled Borough in the opening stages and Colin Norman missed an easy chance after four minutes. But Borough pulled themselves together, forced a series of corners – and a string of saves from goalkeeper Derek Bellotti. Jones provided the biggest threat to the Maidstone defence, yet finished another match without his name on the scoresheet.

He set up a chance for Turpie after ten minutes which Bellotti saved. He then laid on Smithers' goal, followed two minutes later, by a chance he created for himself, again saved by the keeper. And, early in the second half, he went past three players in a devastating run, but gave Bellotti time to come out, narrow the angle and save.



Borough ran into problems after the first hour. They should have had the game wrapped up and found themselves struggling. They lost control in midfield where 18-year-old Wayne Thomas showed all of his promise before half-time.

The front runners, frustrated by Bellotti and their own failings, faded – and Maidstone stormed back. The Stones, impressive in their approach work, lacked penetration, although Borough owed a great debt to Trevor Peake and his back four. Glen Coupland almost equalised 20 minutes from the end with a shot that rolled agonisingly close and Nuneaton had to battle hard.

But Borough hung on to take both points, improve their home record and move up three places in the premier division. They can now go to Barton Rovers, who had two officials in the crowd, with renewed confidence. The South Midland League club representatives could not fail to have been impressed with Borough's first-half. But the way their discipline fell away after half-time will surely have been noted by the Bedfordshire spies.

## Wayne Thomas To Sign Professional

Teenager Wayne Thomas this week agreed to sign professional forms for Nuneaton Borough, but said: "I still want to play in the League." Bedworth-born Thomas has already had a three month trial with Peterborough United. And Borough manager Stan Bennett sees him as a youngster of immense potential: "He has a lot of skill and is willing to learn," said Bennett.

### Nuneaton Boro' v Gravesend & Northfleet 08-11-1976

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, S. Bennett, Lewis, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Exciting Borough stormed to their most impressive Southern League win of the season. They hit Gravesend with two goals just before half-time, added another in the second half – and won in style. The Kent club were fortunate to escape a five goal defeat, so completely did Borough dominate the attacking play.

Gravesend made their intentions abundantly clear from the outset. They wanted a point. But that plan went by the board when Borough scored twice in as many minutes – the first after a hairline penalty decision. Barry Coventry's tackle on Timmy Smithers looked as if it was a fraction outside the box. But Boston referee Mr Maurice Elding decided it was inside, pointed to the spot, and Brendan Phillips rifled home the penalty. Barely a minute later Borough struck again through Roger Jones after Smithers had again caused problems.

He towered above Ben Embery and Ken Pearce as Dave Lewis sent in a left wing free-kick and looped a header into the net. No-one deserved the goal more than the big centre-forward

who had a magnificent first half. Unselfish, dangerous and brave, he was on the end of almost every attack and gave Pearce a hard time. It was also fitting that Lewis played a part in the goal. For the Borough skipper turned in another powerhouse display.

Before the two goal burst Brendan Phillips had brought out a breathtaking save from John Cowen. Jones set up the chance, Phillips ran in – and Cowen flung himself full-length to stop the shot. Cowen had also reached a shot from Phillips that found its way through a ruck of players.

Jamie Bennett in the Borough goal was nothing more than a spectator – Gravesend's first and only real effort on target was a weak header with 15 minutes to go. Gravesend persisted in their defensive attitude in the second half, despite the two goal gap. And they again paid for it when Steve Briscoe hit the goal of the game seven minutes after the break. He seized on a half-clearance and swivelled to thunder in a stunning left foot shot that gave Cowen no chance. Briscoe also hit the post ten minutes later, but by that time the game was well and truly wrapped up.

Almost immediately, Vincent showed a flash of skill when he flicked the ball up with his left foot and sent over a cross with his right that drew applause from the appreciative crowd. But there was no further score. Borough didn't need any more proof that they were better than Gravesend.

Few sides have been so easily curbed. Borough's back four played well, particularly Graham Smith at left back. But it was the attack that stole the show – and that's how Stan Bennett intends it to be.

## Kirk Stephens Picked For England

Modest Kirk Stephens has been the centre of attention in the Borough dressing rooms this week. For everyone at Manor Park is delighted at his selection for the England non-league squad. The Borough full-back plays against Italy at Bedford Town's ground on November 24.

"I just can't believe it," he said. "It's the greatest thing that has every happened to me. I think everyone in the club has congratulated me."

### Minehead v Nuneaton Borough

13-11-1976

**Minehead:** Macey, Impey, Clausen, Carter, Boyd, Burns, Brown, Bryant, Leitch, Jenkins, Durbin. **Sub:** Crowley.

**Borough:** J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Briscoe, Smithers. **Sub:** Thomas.

Borough made the journey to Somerset to play Minehead in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough pounded premier division newcomers Minehead to the brink of submission. And only a brilliant save from goalkeeper John Macey robbed them of victory in the dying seconds. He somehow reached a left foot shot from Brendan Phillips after tireless Timmy Smithers had got in behind a



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



flagging Minehead defence. Had it gone in, the home side could not have complained. They were run ragged in the second half after Roger Jones had equalised to wipe out their early lead.

But the point lifted Borough up to eighth place in the table – and put them in the right frame of mind for the FA Cup game. And the way they played was yet another triumph for the attacking brand of soccer that is making them a team to be feared. Minehead were stunned. They expected a dull, dour defensive performance from the Manor Park side. Nothing could have been further from the truth. In the end it was they who had to defend – forced back by a constant stream of Nuneaton raids in the second half.

But things looked bad for Borough when they fell behind to a goal after only five minutes. Micky Burns shot them in front following a left wing cross and they were in full cry. Jim Jenkins caused all sorts of problems with his speed and their three front runners looked useful.

Borough then pulled themselves together, gritted their teeth and slowly took control. The back four soon had the measure of their strikers; they were composed in midfield and they plugged away up front. And Minehead were already in trouble when Jones headed the equaliser via full back John Clausen two minutes into the second half.

That was the signal for Nuneaton to step up the pressure and Minehead were fortunate to survive. Macey made a superb save from Phillips, whose skills always threatened to win the game. Briscoe had the ball in the net, but was offside, and Jones loomed large in nearly every attack. But much of the danger was spread by left wing runs from Timmy Smithers, whose energy is boundless. Borough almost conceded goals to Derek Bryant and substitute Paul Cowley when they were caught pushing forward.

But that, nowadays, is the only way they know how to play and, in the final outcome, the moral victory was theirs. They have now taken six points from their six away trips and there are more to come.

## Nuneaton Borough v Milton Keynes City 28-08-1976

**Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Smith, Thomas, Lewis, S. Bennett, Phillips, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. Subs: Briscoe and Turpie.**

Borough welcomed Milton Keynes to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough had Milton Keynes under siege. They spent almost 75 per cent of the match in the visitors half of the field. But the one way traffic led to congestion in the Milton Keynes penalty box and Borough finished with only two goals to show for their efforts.

Roger Jones headed the first after 65 minutes – a superb effort from a Dave Lewis corner. The big centre-forward dwarfed goalkeeper Brian Robinson and left him hopelessly stranded for his sixth goal for the club and his third in three

games. Stan Bennett hit the second on the stroke of full-time. A tremendous left foot shot that Robinson never saw. But there was always more than two goals difference between the two sides. It was apparent from the outset as Robinson made fine saves from Bennett and Smithers in the early minutes. A goal rush looked on the cards. But it never materialised as Borough's attacks snarled themselves up in the crowded Milton Keynes goalmouth.

For long periods, Borough attacks were impressive, but unproductive. This time, though, they showed patience, refused to allow frustration to creep in and won with ease. Bobby Vincent, playing his first full senior match at Manor Park since his car crash two years ago today, almost celebrated two minutes from half-time. Jones headed a Phillips cross to his feet and he lashed the ball inches wide of the net.

Vincent did well and turned in a performance that should do his confidence a power of good. The second half followed a similar pattern and Borough should have scored in the 60th minute. Timmy Smithers beat two defenders, one of them twice, and gave Brendan Phillips a clear look at goal. His shot hit a defender, was half cleared and Lewis lashed the ball over the top. Five minutes later, Jones broke the deadlock and the Southern League First Division (North) side faced more pressure.

Kirk Stephens, one of the business players in the Borough side, almost forced a penalty. Vincent shot wide with his left foot, Lewis again hit the ball over – and then Bennett notched the second to provide a spectacular end to the match.

Roy Cross and Vincent were both booked by referee Mr J. H. Rees early in the second half. Defender Cross had his name taken for showing dissent and Vincent went into the book for not standing ten yards away from a free-kick.

## Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 23-11-1976

**Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Fleet, S. Bennett, Phillips, Briscoe, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Thomas.**

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

Stan Bennett re-shuffled his pack and came up with all of the aces. Forced into changes because of an injury to centre-forward Roger Jones, he pushed skipper Dave Lewis forward and recalled Gary Fleet from the wilderness of West Midlands League first division football.

And it worked like a dream. Lewis was magnificent, Fleet a revelation, and Borough reached new heights in a superb first half. They almost let Telford off the hook in the last 20 minutes by playing themselves into trouble, but the result was richly deserved. For an hour, Telford were outclassed as Borough powered forward with a brand of football that must surely have frightened the life out of any watching Lincoln City officials.

Borough's FA Cup opponents could not fail to have been impressed by the quality, skill and determination of their

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



play. Inspired by a sixth minute goal from manager Bennett, they threatened to tear the Shropshire side apart. Lewis hit the second, a spectacular 25 yarder, ten minutes from half-time and it looked a question of how many they would get. Only brave goalkeeping by Bill Weir kept the scoreline down as Borough bewildered Telford, Geoff Hurst and all.

No side could have maintained that standard for 90 minutes, and, understandably, Nuneaton began to fade. They started to give the ball away and Ken Draycott cashed in to reduce the arrears in the 73rd minute. Hurst almost seized on another error, a rash back pass by Bennett, as Telford threatened an equaliser.

But they failed to create any real chances against a Nuneaton defence that always held them in check, and the Manor Park side hit back to round off their performance with a flourish. Fleet and Brendan Phillips both went close, and Weir saved bravely from Briscoe. But Borough sent away their biggest crowd of the season in a happy mood, after another triumph for Stan Bennett's crusade for attacking football and two more precious Southern League points.

## Chelmsford City v Nuneaton Borough 27-11-1976

**Chelmsford:** Spink, Rowell, Horner, Coker, Scott, Kellard, Burney, Mitchell, Lamb, Tomkins, Walker. **Sub:** Wright.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Bennett, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Briscoe, Smithers. **Sub:** Turpie.

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

Borough looked into a mirror on Saturday – and saw an image they once knew well. A team more concerned about losing than entertaining the fans. A side ruled by caution and motivated by fear; dull, dour and absolutely unimaginative. That picture was reflected by Chelmsford, once known throughout the Southern League for their attacking talents. Not any more. In this match they played only two front runners and filled the middle of the park – at home.

Their football was just like Borough used to play. And the contrast showed how things have been transformed at Nuneaton in the past few months. For Stan Bennett took a team to Chelmsford which was basically the same as the one that went there last year. But he sent them out to attack and made City look as if they were playing away.

Borough dominated seventy per cent of the attacking and picked up the points with a late goal from Dave Lewis. Not only that, they scored another triumph for their cavalier approach to every match. To be fair, Chelmsford were without Jimmy Greaves and had two reserve team players in the side. But there was no excuse for the way they played – their dismal attitude towards the game. They snarled it up in midfield, it was 48 minutes before the first corner and neither goalkeeper had a lot to do.

Borough were again without injured centre-forward Roger

Jones, but manager Bennett refused to send his side out to contain. That would have been a betrayal of everything he stands for.

It looked, however, as if they would have to settle for a point until Lewis, again superb in his striking role, struck with the winner. Graham Smith played the ball forward to Timmy Smithers, goalkeeper Nigel Spink failed to hold his cross – and Lewis snapped up the chance from three yards. The goal gave them their tenth point from the last six games, stretched their unbeaten run to nine matches – and maintained their buoyant mood.

Bob Knight came through his comeback without any problems from the shoulder injury that forced him to miss 18 games. He made one save from centre-forward Steve Lamb that showed he had fully recovered. The whole team knuckled down to do the job in hand. They refused to be frustrated by City's negative approach, plugged away – and it paid off. And the leading sides are now casting anxious glances towards Manor Park and the club that has been brought back to life.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dover 29-11-1976

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Fleet, Bennett, Phillips, Briscoe, Lewis, Smithers. **Sub:** Turpie.

**Dover:** Gilchrist, Reynolds, Keeley, Brookes, Waite, Hamshere, Wilson, Marley, Brown, Rogers, Christie. **Sub:** Wickens.

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

Club captain Dave Lewis last night made a mockery of his "makeshift" tag with a goal that would have made any centre-forward proud. The club skipper, operating up front in place of injured Roger Jones, launched himself at a Kirk Stephens cross in the 24th minute. He ignored a mass of flying legs and planted a superb header just inside the near post for his third goal in three games. Timmy Smithers scored the second in the 79th minute and Dover replied on the stroke of full-time.

But their goal made the match look closer than it was – and Borough wrote another chapter in their success story. Unbeaten in ten games, they are now fourth in the table, breathing hard on the heels of the leaders. And the crowds are coming back. Last night's attendance of 1,800-plus was the biggest of the season.

But Borough struggled to put their game together before Lewis broke through and much of the second half was uninspiring. Mid-table Dover provided much stiffer opposition than Telford, they were well-organised, rugged in defence and gave little away. They made Nuneaton battle hard for both points but the better side won in the end.

The early goal from Lewis rocked them back on their heels and Steve Briscoe had a shot saved by goalkeeper Gilchrist with his legs eight minutes later. Trevor Peake then had to

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



bring down Brooks after a bad pass from player-manager Stan Bennett had put Stephens in trouble.

The second half fell away as Borough struggled to find a way through. They tended to over-elaborate and played into the hands of the Kent club's defence. Then Smithers scored from another Stephens cross to put the points beyond doubt. Stephens got in behind the Dover defence and his centre found Smithers at the far post. The winger's shot was blocked by full-back Reynolds – but he hit the ball back into the net from the rebound.

Slack play by the Borough defence gave the visitors their late goal. They failed to clear, Christie hit the ball into a packed goalmouth and Brooks snapped up the chance. But that made no difference to the outcome – and Stan Bennett's Borough bandwagon rolls on.

scorer – and full-back Graham Smith grabbed the fifth. And they could have gone into double figures, but for the bravery of "Glassboys" goalkeeper Mick Moore and some near misses.

Moore saved from Jones and saw a Briscoe shot deflected onto the woodwork before Borough opened the floodgates. Smithers hit a long right wing cross from Brendan Phillips back into the middle, Stourbridge defender Barry Kelcher missed his clearance – and Briscoe snapped up the chance. That was in the 27th minute and, fifteen minutes later, Briscoe made it 2-0 with a superb goal.

Stan Bennett laid the ball back to Phillips, he slipped it out to Kirk Stephens and Briscoe beat Moore with a glancing header from the full-backs' cross. Briscoe played his part in the third with the second half only twelve minutes old. His shot was pushed out by Moore to Smithers, who hit the ball high into the net – for Borough's 50th goal of the season.

Stourbridge were in complete disarray and Briscoe completed his hat-trick after a defensive blunder in the 63rd minute. Nuneaton, with the Lincoln cup tie at the back of their minds, could have been forgiven for dwelling on their four goal lead. But not this team. They went for more, and had Stourbridge under intense pressure. Moore saved from Briscoe and Phillips and Smithers then set up the fifth for Smith – his first goal for the club – in the 80th minute. Phillips laid it back, Smithers played it inside the full-back and Smith swept it home to the delight of his team-mates.

Stourbridge then hit the post following a quick break before Moore denied Phillips a goal in the closing seconds. The goalkeeper pushed his shot on to the underside of the bar and gathered the rebound. That incident summed up Borough's display. Five goals up on a heavy pitch and with Lincoln just five days away, they were still plugging away when the whistle went. And the bookies' odds of 6-1 against them beating the Third Division side at Sincil Bank are beginning to look more than generous.

## NUNEATON BOROUGH FC



in association with British Rail are running a special train to Lincoln  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11**  
FA Cup Second Round

### LINCOLN v NUNEATON BOROUGH

Tickets £1.75 on sale at **Manor Park**  
Will **YOU** join us?

One thousand enjoyed it to Crook and back,  
Victory in Cup Ties we now have the knack,  
They were outnumbered at 200 miles,  
Please support Stan and his players in piles,  
The train fare is only one seventy-five,  
Let's invade Lincoln like bees round a hive

## Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 06-12-1976

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Bennett, Smith, Phillips, Lewis, Fleet, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Turpie.

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup third round tie.

Borough blasted bewildered Stourbridge out of the Southern League Cup – and set their sights on Lincoln City. Stourbridge had no answer to Borough's skill and fire-power on a mud bath of a pitch. And the Manor Park side romped into the quarter-finals, still on the crest of a wave. They could not have asked for a better result as a build up for Saturday's FA Cup trip to Sincil Bank.

Stourbridge, among the leading clubs in the first division north were left in a state of shock as the goals went in. Steve Briscoe notched a hat-trick – his first for the club – Timmy Smithers joined Roger Jones and Bob Turpie as joint top

## Willenhall Town v Nuneaton Borough 13-12-1976

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Bennett, Cross, Smith, Fleet, Lewis, Phillips, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. Subs: Vincent and Harrison.

Borough made the journey to Noose Lane to play Willenhall in a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Borough added another game to their already crowded fixture list after failing to beat Willenhall. They dominated more than two thirds of the game and peppered in shots from all angles. But most of them were weak or off-target and the teams have to meet again on January 3 to decide who goes through. The Manor Park side started in style and looked as if they had recovered from Saturday's nightmare at Lincoln.

They were full of running, their build-ups were good – but their finishing let them down. That, and a superb defensive performance from the West Midlands League leaders,



kept the scoreline blank. Forced to defend, well organised Willenhall did it well. Never panicked, they always managed to get enough players behind the ball to cope with Borough's attacks. But goalkeeper Walker had only one real effort of note to save – a header from Timmy Smithers with twelve minutes to go.

Right back Dams, one of their most impressive defenders, also made a goal-line clearance. Generally, however, it was a night of frustration for Borough and their fans. And the tempers of both teams almost spilled over in the closing stages. Willenhall, determined to give nothing away, had two players booked and several personal vendettas threatened to break out. Gary Fleet, Roger Jones and Steven Briscoe should all have scored for Nuneaton.

But the longer it went on the more evident it became that the Manor Park side would not find the net. It was one of those nights – and Willenhall almost stole in seven minutes from the end. Sturgess played the ball forward to Harper and caught Borough without any defensive cover. Harper was clear, but he narrowed his own angle, panicked and shot over the top.

That was Willenhall's fourth effort at goal. Borough piled up nineteen without troubling the goalkeeper and the sides now have to meet again at Manor Park to see who meets Tamworth in the third round.

## Borough Hope To Make £3,000

Borough are hoping to pocket around £3,000 from their FA Cup run. They collected something like £1,100 from their share of the six ties previous to Saturday. And they shared the proceeds of a 7,000 plus gate – after expenses – from the Lincoln match.

## Football League Club Bid For Stephens

Nuneaton Borough full-back, Kirk Stephens has been offered the chance to play in League football. Manager Stan Bennett said today: "The club has had a definite approach from a League side. The offer was made three weeks ago, but at the time we were still involved in the FA Cup and none of our players were prepared to leave."

### Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 27-12-1976

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet (Thomas), Jones, Briscoe, Smithers.**

Borough made the journey to The Eyrie to face Bedford Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

The only Christmas spirit at Bedford on Monday was to be found in the directors' rooms after the match. It was certainly lacking on the field. Nuneaton earned the points but at a cost. They had Gary Fleet, Kirk Stephens and Brendan Phillips all booked while Bedford had one player booked and defender Bobby Folds sent off.

And the blame for the incidents, many of which came off the

ball, can be laid at the feet of referee Brazier of Cambridge. He failed to clamp down on the niggling incidents that crept into the game early on.

The goal that means Nuneaton have lost only once in their last 16 appearances came in the 59th minute. Roger Jones' centre-cum-shot completely deceived Peacock in the Bedford goal and all he could do was to help it into the net.

The match contained very few scoring chances though Timmy Smithers can consider himself unlucky when five minutes before half-time his shot was well-saved by Peacock who flung himself across the goal.

After the sending off Bedford were stretched but Nuneaton could not increase their lead though they did have two breakaway chances through Briscoe and Jones – but Peacock kept them out.

Gary Fleet was taken to hospital midway through the second half with a broken nose after a collision.

### Nuneaton Borough v Willenhall Town 05-01-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Fleet, Thomas, Phillips, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Turpie and Benn.**

Borough welcomed Willenhall Town to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round replay.

Borough powered through the Manor Park mud to book their place in the third round. Both teams emerged with credit from a battle on a porridge like pitch – there was never any shortage of effort. But Nuneaton, always the more classy side against their West Midlands League opponents, won comfortably in the end.

Steve Briscoe put them in front ten minutes before half-time and Roger Jones settled the tie in the 77th minute. Willenhall organised themselves well in defence to keep the score down to a respectable margin. Apart from two first-half headers though, they seldom looked like scoring. And they owed a large debt to goalkeeper Dave Walker for a number of fine saves.

Both sides struggled to get going on a pitch that two days earlier had been blanketed in snow, slush and ice. One patch of mud in front of the main stand soon churned into a bog.

Vorley went close for Willenhall, Jones had a goal disallowed for Borough and Bob Knight pulled off a spectacular save from Matthews. But Borough's defence with Graham Smith and Roy Cross in commanding form, soon had the measure of the Willenhall forwards.

Nevertheless, the score could have been two goals each before Briscoe put Borough on the victory trail in the 35th minute. Jones headed on a Wayne Thomas free-kick and Briscoe ran in to force it over the line. Youngster Thomas had a fine first half in midfield where Borough were without suspended player-manager Stan Bennett and flu victim Dave Lewis.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



The players struggled to keep their feet in the second half, although Borough were clearly the better side. But they needed another goal to confirm it and had to wait until the closing minutes before it came. Smith made it when he took on and beat two defenders before laying on the pass for Jones to score. Jones was immediately replaced by Bob Turpie, who was soon involved. He laid one ball back to Brendan Phillips on the edge of the box which nearly brought a spectacular goal.

Phillips dug the ball out of the mud and chipped it towards the roof of the net. But Walker, off his line, managed to reach up and keep it out. Willenhall defender Vorley was booked when he brought down Timmy Smithers in full flight. And the replay almost ended with another goal in the dying seconds. Turpie appeared to be pushed off the ball in the box, but Leicester referee Mr Brian Goodfellow, who handled the game well, waved all protests aside.

## Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Boro' 05-01-1977

**Hillingdon:** Phillips, Davies, Burge, Millett, Pearce, Smith, Adams, Metchick, Richardson, Cleary, Griffiths. **Sub:** Ryan.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Turpie, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

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

A tragic own goal by Wayne Thomas struck deep at the heart of Borough's problems. Hillingdon had already missed a penalty and it looked the only way either side would score. But Borough's display left manager Stan Bennett with some decisions to make.

For an own goal defeat should not be allowed to cloud the other issues that emerged from the match. First, and most important, Bennett has to take a long, hard look at his front line. He needs another experienced striker – that must be clear. Bob Turpie, recalled in place of Steve Briscoe, was always out of touch. Bobby Vincent is still not ready.

The only other candidate is skipper Dave Lewis, who scored three goals in three games as a makeshift striker earlier in the season. But Lewis is badly needed in the middle of the park – Saturday's game provided more evidence of that. He failed a fitness test on a pulled calf muscle and Borough sorely missed his influence.

They had skill in midfield, but no bite and with the forwards making no impression much of Borough's soccer was powder puff stuff – pretty to watch but not effective. Bennett himself has an even bigger influence on the side when he plays. Without either one of them, Borough lack the drive that has put them among the top clubs. With both of them out they are up the creek without a paddle.

Gary Fleet had a magnificent match in midfield, but lacked the support he needs. He has to have a Lewis or a Bennett alongside him to complement his skills – so does Brendan

Phillips, who tends to drift. Consequently, a heavy burden fell on the defence, superbly led by Trevor Peake. The youngster again showed that a lot of Football League scouts in the Midlands are not doing their job. Why he is still playing in the Southern League is a mystery.

Neither he nor anyone else could do anything about the goal that won the match. Thomas sliced a left wing cross into his own net in the 32nd minute. It was cruel that the goal that decided the points should come in such a tragic way from the youngest player on the field. Thomas had earlier figured in the dramatic fourth minute penalty incident that Borough survived. He laid a back pass to Lou Adams and Roy Cross was forced to dive and handle the ball – but Ken Millett shot wide from the spot.

Borough almost saved the match in the closing minutes. Briscoe, on as substitute for Turpie, had the ball in the net, but had clearly handled. And Timmy Smithers had a shot cleared off the line when an equaliser looked certain.

## Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 10-01-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Thomas, Phillips, Smithers, Briscoe, Jones, Turpie. **Subs:** Harrison and Fallon.

Borough welcomed Tamworth to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup third round game.

Borough claimed there should be no need for a second game. They insisted that a 66th minute header from Roy Cross went in amid confusion on the Tamworth goal-line. The net bulged, but the ball came down and was quickly booted away. Sheldon referee Mr Michael Abson appeared to point to the centre circle – and then allowed play to continue.

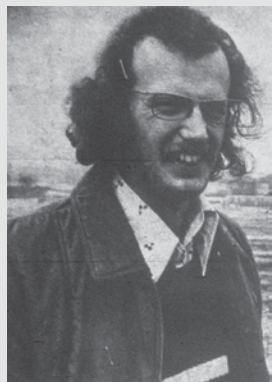
The controversy still raged long after the game, but there should have been no need for arguments. For Borough should have taken advantage of their second half bombardment on the Tamworth goal. The bar saved Tamworth on two other occasions, once from their own defender Glen West and then from Steve Briscoe.

Goalkeeper Terry Satchwell also pulled off a whole series of fine saves to keep Borough at bay. His best was a full length effort from a Roger Jones header that he dived to push around the post. The second half was completely dominated by the Manor Park side – after Tamworth had posed them problems before the break.

They had struggled to put their game together in midfield where Gary Fleet was the latest absentee with a thigh strain. John Flannagan whistled a shot wide, Nigel Bunt panicked with the goal at his mercy and Tamworth could have been in front at the break. The second half, though, was a different story and the only time Tamworth threatened was when Neil Perry broke clear only to blaze over.

Just before half-time two shots from Timmy Smithers and one from Bob Turpie were blocked in quick succession by busy Satchwell. That gave Tamworth a foretaste of what was

to come and it looked odds on a Nuneaton victory as they powered forward. But they could not force the breakthrough – and have to do it all over again.



## Arthur Moss: Borough's Administration Manager

Arthur Moss has been appointed Administration Manager of Nuneaton Borough Football Club, a new, and key role. He will be in charge of the day to day operations at Manor Park.

The job embraces administration, dealing with the fans, taking decisions on problems that arise, and fund raising. Everything in fact, that involves the organisation of a busy Southern League club. Only the team and the Social Club will be out of his jurisdiction.

Chairman David Tinney summed it up: "We want a Mr Nuneaton Borough, someone with his finger on everything that happens."

## Wellingborough Town v Nuneaton Boro' 19-01-1977

**Borough: Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Ison, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Thomas, Vincent, Briscoe, Smithers. Subs: Harrison and Barnett.**

Borough made the journey to the Dog and Duck to play Wellingborough Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

After a slow start Nuneaton cruised to an easy victory. It was a game which Borough always seemed destined to win although they had only two discernable shots at goal in the first half-hour. Yet it was only a matter of time before they got that first all important goal.

And once it came, they had little difficulty overcoming a Wellingborough side who are at the bottom of the Southern League first division table with only two victories to their credit so far this season. Bobby Vincent broke the deadlock in the 38th minute by stealing into the penalty area to nonchalantly hit a glancing header into the net off Graham Smith's free-kick.

The Northamptonshire club's spirited play earlier was overshadowed three minutes later when the referee harshly awarded a penalty against them when Steve Briscoe was pushed over by Chambers. Brendan Phillips scored from the spot. Dave Lewis hit the third shortly after the break with a simple header and Vincent scored a fourth from the spot in the 79th minute, this time when Carteris undisputedly bundled over Smithers.

By that time, the game was in decline and crude tackles stopping play every few minutes. But much of the blame

must lie on the shoulders of Northampton referee Mr Dennis Brazier who never allowed the game to flow. He booked Wellingborough's Chambers for kicking the ball away in anger and also Nuneaton's Trevor Peake for the same offence. Home club skipper Brian Knight was also booked for a bad tackle on Phillips.

## Ground Improvement Scheme

Nuneaton Borough are planning a ground improvement scheme at Manor Park – with a difference. For they may step in with an offer for the stand and floodlights at Romford, who are moving.

The Essex club have sold their Brooklands ground and will have new headquarters next year.

Borough chairman David Tinney today confirmed they are interested in "certain equipment" at Romford. He said: "Keith Johnson, myself and a Nuneaton Borough councillor are going to Romford next week to have a look."

## Maidstone v Nuneaton Borough 22-01-1977

**Maidstone: Bellotti, McVeigh, Street, Hill, Glozier, Norman, Fraser, Russe, Coupland, Merrick, Stonebridge. Sub: Irvine.**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Lewis, Fleet, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Thomas.**

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

Bobby Vincent made a surprise comeback and then said: "I think I proved something." The centre-forward battled through the clinging mud in his first full premier division match for more than two years. Since his car crash in November 1974, he had played only ten minutes of Southern League football as substitute against Gravesend.

And he was making plans to play for the second team on Saturday when he received a dramatic: "You are playing at Maidstone" recall.

Player manager Stan Bennett was forced to reshuffle his side with both himself and Roy Cross on the injured list. He brought back Vincent and played Steve Briscoe in the middle of the back four alongside Trevor Peake. Briscoe did the job well – and Borough fought for their point with 90 minutes of all-out effort.

They had to on a pitch that was ankle deep in mud in places and slowly sapped the strength of both sides. "That's the sort of performance that wins championships," said Stan Bennett. "I was proud of all of them."

Maidstone put the Manor Park side under heavy pressure at times. But when they did manage to get through they found goalkeeper Bob Knight in superbly confident form. His steadiness spread through the side and they began to take on the Kent club.

Vincent showed glimpses of his old flair. Once he left two



players staring at each other. And he almost scored what would have been a “dream” goal with a header from a Brendan Phillips free kick.

No-one worked harder than Phillips, normally a player who does not relish muddy conditions. But he was always involved in the thick of the action. So was skipper Dave Lewis, who drove the side on from midfield – and Trevor Peake had another superb match at centre-half.

Maidstone had skill, but never played with the same conviction as the Manor Park side. But afterwards manager Terry Adlington claimed they had been robbed of what would have been a match winning goal.

Bob Glozier slammed in a spectacular volley which was disallowed because another forward was offside: “That was diabolical,” said the ex-Derby goalkeeper. He thought his side should have won by at least 2-0 – which was grossly unfair to Nuneaton. In fact, they could easily have snatched a goal which would have been just as unfair on the Kent club. For both sides deserved credit for the way they tackled the conditions.

Sutton referee Mr G. R. Rigby had reservations about starting the game in the first place. Had they not done so well he certainly would not have finished it.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wimbledon 24-01-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Bennett, Fleet, Lewis, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Vincent.

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

Dave Lewis scored the goal that beat champions Wimbledon and then predicted: “In two years time we could be like them.” Said the Borough skipper: “We are a young side – people sometimes forget that. We are still learning.”

Wimbledon’s exploits are already legendary – so Lewis is aiming high. But if the quality of his match winning goal is any yardstick, Borough are on the right track. Timmy Smithers, 21 at the weekend, seized on a bad clearance and hit a first time centre for Lewis to beat Dickie Guy with a spectacular diving header. That goal still separated the teams at the end – after a second half in which Borough struggled.

The 2,500-plus crowd, the biggest at Nuneaton in the Southern League for two seasons, was treated to an explosive start. And it was Borough who made the running to be rewarded by Lewis’s memorable goal. Bob Knight then rescued Borough when he stopped a Connell shot with his legs when an equaliser looked certain. The second half was a different story. Anxiety crept into Borough’s play and Wimbledon’s patient professionalism threatened to wear them down.

Whenever a move broke down the Dons simply went back to square one and started all over again. They played the way they have been drilled and taught to do – the way Burnley, Leeds and Middlesbrough know only too well.

Billy Edwards shot over the top, Glen Aitken blazed wide and the soccer was scrappy. Borough struggled to put their game together and were further disjointed in the 67th minute. Player manager Stan Bennett, clearly in trouble with a thigh injury, had to go off. Bobby Vincent went on up front and Lewis dropped back into midfield. The both had to settle and while they were doing so Connell missed a free header for the Londoners.

By this time though the game had fallen away. Even referee Mr A. D. Blake from Bridgnorth, competent in the first half, threatened to go haywire. But Trevor Peake and Steve Briscoe plugged away in the heart of the defence as Borough battled on a muddy pitch made more treacherous by rain.

The game cramped itself in midfield, but all of the efforts at goal came from Wimbledon – and most of them were high and wide. Borough’s only real effort in the second half came from Lewis – a fierce 35-yarder that went wide. That was in the closing seconds and it was fitting that the Borough skipper should end a match he opened so brightly. Like he said, the potential in the Borough side is immense.

They didn’t play well – but they beat the champions, moved into fifth place in the premier division and have been beaten only once in eleven Southern League games. Along with that they have scored 67 goals since the start of the season – not bad for a side still learning.

## Machin Joins Borough

Former Coventry City skipper Ernie Machin has signed for Nuneaton Borough and insisted on making his debut in the reserves. He told player-manager Stan Bennett: “I need a couple of games to make sure I don’t let anyone down.”

Machin plays against Bilston Reserves and will be in the side for the Senior Cup replay at Tamworth.

## Bath City v Nuneaton Borough 29-01-1977

**Bath:** Allen, M. Rogers, Ryan, Broom, Bourne, Taverner, P. Rogers, Godfrey, Redrobe, Simmons, Higgins. **Sub:** McInch.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Cross, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Lewis, Smithers. **Sub:** Thomas.

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

Borough added more weight to their growing belief that they will win something this season with a magnificent performance at Bath. For the last two years at least, a goalless draw away at Bath would have conjured up visions of dour, defensive football. That did not apply on Saturday – it will never be farther from the truth.

Controlled, skilful and adventurous, Borough took the game to the league leaders and often made them look like the away side. Player-manager Stan Bennett and his number two Stan Marshall insist it should be that way. And Bennett, forced to watch from the stand, could hardly conceal his delight.



Borough proved beyond doubt that they have fully recovered from the Cup thrashing at Lincoln. That hung over the club for a while and showed in their play. But the win over Wimbledon last Monday probably had more of an effect on the way they played. A young side, the average age is just over 23, have found the maturity that was missing early on. Wimbledon showed them how. You find a style, stick to it whatever happens and never panic.

In the past Borough have tended to do just the opposite. They have gone in front or conceded a goal and allowed their own anxiety to dictate. Consequently, much of their football has been played at 60 miles an hour. Not on Saturday. They played football from the back. Whenever a move broke down they went back and started all over again. But Borough proved that they can be a much more exciting side than the Dons.

Ask Bath – they had no-one to compare with the skills of Brendan Phillips and Gary Fleet, the persistence of Timmy Smithers and the total commitment of Dave Lewis. Fleet and Phillips dominated midfield with their skills. Phillips had three shots blocked, one over the top and a miskick that could have brought a goal. And Fleet continued to show an unselfishness that would have astonished even him a year ago.

Smithers looked a potential match winner, particularly early on, and Kirk Stephens was back to his best. But one player who deserved special praise was Steve Briscoe, who, playing in the middle of the back four, turned in the finest display of his Southern League career.

All of this points to that growing maturity that has allied itself to their vast potential. They will lose games and make mistakes – but if they play like they did on Saturday their belief that this could be a special season could well come true.

## Borough Maladministration Concerns

Accusations of “maladministration” were levelled at Nuneaton Borough Football Club during a stormy annual meeting. They came from major shareholder Mr Norman Peckett, who expressed deep concerns at the way the club was being run.

He was not happy that the meeting was the first for two years and questioned the directors’ report. It showed that only one member of the board, chairman David Tinney, had any shareholdings. Said Mr Peckett: “I am not accusing you of malpractice, but of maladministration.

“Remember you are a public company and must be seen to be clean. Other shareholders expressed dissatisfaction at the statement of accounts which showed a deficit of more than £17,000. But moves to adjourn the meeting were defeated after discussions that went on for 90 minutes.

Former club secretary Mr Harry Broadhurst said the figures showed the club to be “insolvent and bankrupt.”

He said: “You should come straight out and tell the shareholders and the public where you stand.” Another

former director, Mr Peter Barratt, was concerned about the share issue and director loans. The figures he claimed, did not tally. There should be 2000 shares, but there were 2,133. He was promised a full breakdown within seven days. Chairman David Tinney said that the question of directors’ shares had now been rectified. On the balance sheet, he said that £7,000 had been wiped off the debts since the end of last May. Nearly £4,000 had also been spent on capital expenditure – £3,000 of it on new players.

He said: “The position is better now than it has been for some time because costs have been decreased, income increased and there have been loans from the directors.”

## Development Bonds

Nuneaton Borough supporters may be asked to buy £5 development bonds to help improve facilities at Manor Park. Approval for the bonds to be issued was given by the shareholders at the annual meeting. And five thousand of them could soon be on sale – providing there are no objections from the Football Association.

## Coleman Sacked By Wealdstone

Geoff Coleman has been sacked as manager of Southern League Wealdstone. The former Nuneaton Borough boss has had his contract terminated only after ten months with the Premier Division side. Alan Fogarty, Coleman’s assistant at Manor Park, has taken over as caretaker manager.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone United 07-02-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Fleet, Thomas, Lewis, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Vincent.

**Atherstone:** Withers, Stockley, Shotton, Preston, Russell, Smith, Kiernan, Minton, Franklin, Tearse, Webster. Sub: Dangerfield.

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

Borough battled for an hour to break down a ten man Atherstone team in the Manor Park mud. But an ill-tempered, free-kick strewn local derby ended goalless. Blood on the dressing room floor summed up 90 minutes of football in the raw. It came from a gash on Dave Lewis’s left ankle which will surely keep him out of Saturday’s game at Wimbledon.

Adders also paid a price – full back Bob Stockley was sent off after a tackle on Graham Smith in the 30th minute. But the point they won will do them more good and there was no argument about who was the happier manager at the end.

Joe Kiernan sent his Atherstone side out to battle – and they responded to a man. He resisted the temptation to bring back Jeff Astle, left out Johnny Vincent and relegated Chris Dangerfield to the subs bench.

Borough manager Stan Bennett was far from happy. He was angry. Angry at the tactics the Sheepy Road side employed and bitter about the way the match was handled by Ibstock



referee Mr David Wragg. The sending off of Stockley, booked earlier after a clash with Lewis, changed the course of the game. Beforehand both sides had attacked on a pitch that shimmered in the floodlights.

Afterwards, Adders shut up shop and spent most of the second half in their own penalty area. They defied Borough to break them down – and no-one did more to resist the Manor Park side than skipper Mick Preston He and goalkeeper Colin Withers inspired their defiance.

Roger Smith, moved to full-back to fill in the gap left by Stockley, showed amazing endurance in only his first Southern League game after a cartilage operation.

Barry Franklin, pulled back into midfield in the same reshuffle, showed determination that has been missing from his play. And David Tearse performed the thankless task as a one man front line without flagging. Tearse went in Adders' one – and only – shot at goal just before half-time. He turned on the ball from 25 yards and unleashed a power drive that Bob Knight touched over the top.

That apart, Knight was virtually redundant, as Borough camped out in their opponents' half for the the second match running. Gary Fleet was magnificent in midfield. His skills shone through – even in the mud. Kirk Stephens sent over a constant stream of crosses which bombarded the Adders' goal. Fleet and Brendan Phillips had two chances, but it became clear as the game went on that Borough would not score. Steve Briscoe became the third player to be booked. He bundled into Tearse as the free-kick tally mounted in the second half.

Withers went full length to save from plucky Wayne Thomas, who kept his head despite what became a running battle with Franklin. The Adders' goalkeeper then stopped a point blank range shot from Roger Jones with his legs as they pulled seven, eight and nine men back. A 25-yarder from Stephens brought out another superb save from Withers.

But Adders held out and the 2,200 crowd – cut by a pre-match downpour went home with mixed feltings. A point gained for Atherstone, one lost by Borough – but a game that failed to live up to expectations. As often happens in local derbies, there was too much at stake.

## Phelps Set To Join Worcester

Nuneaton Borough are set to collect another transfer fee – for Malcolm Phelps. He has talks with Worcester City and is expected to sign for the Southern League First Division side.

Centre-forward Phelps was released by Borough last November, but they retained his registration. Unhappy at losing his first team place at Manor Park, Phelps intended to join another club on a non-contract basis.

But Worcester contacted him when they lost top scorer John Inglis, still in hospital with ear trouble. Said Borough manager Stan Bennett: "They want Malcolm on a month's trial and if they decide to keep him they will pay us a small fee."

## Borough Say Thank You To Margaret



Margaret Lewis has left Nuneaton Borough after four hectic years in the offices of a busy Southern League club. She served with three commercial managers and was there through times of strife.

For some time she was the club's only full-time employee: "Often she was under extreme pressure," said chairman David Tinney in a tribute to her efforts for the club.

"We could not have wished for anyone better. She was one hundred per cent Nuneaton Borough."

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Wimbledon v Nuneaton Borough

12-02-1977

**Wimbledon:** Guy, Tilley, Bryant, Donaldson, Edwards, Bassett, Cooke, Aitken, Connell, Holmes, Friend. **Sub:** Marlowe.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Briscoe, Peake, Cross, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Thomas.

Borough travelled to Plough Lane to play Wimbledon in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Champions Wimbledon inflicted a gaping wound on Borough's title hopes. The Manor Park side travelled to London as heirs apparent, but were sent packing like upstarts – beaten out of sight by the Dons. But much of the damage was done before the match started and the Manor Park side can argue that they left both points on the treatment table.

To go to Wimbledon with a full-strength side is hard enough. To take them on with a team stripped of key players by injuries is asking too much. Without Dave Lewis, Ian Goodwin or Stan Bennett they took on the Dons with a sense of foreboding. And their worst fears were confirmed when Wimbledon raced into a fourth minute lead.

That goal plunged Nuneaton on the downward path – and they never recovered. Some of their football was attractive. To their credit they always tried to attack. But they could never match the power and organisation of the Dons and

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



crashed to their heaviest Southern League defeat of the season. Apart from one shot by Timmy Smithers which brought out a superb save from Dickie Guy, they rarely looked like scoring.

Roger Jones worked hard with little support, Bobby Vincent struggled and Smithers was mostly ineffective. And without the drive of a Bennett, Lewis or Goodwin, they lacked inspiration in midfield. No matter how hard they tried the odds were too heavily stacked against them. Had they been given more time to settle things might have been different. But Roger Connell's early goal – he deflected the ball into the net with his thigh – put paid to that.

Afterwards player-manager Bennett had to admit: "We cannot have any complaints – although I thought four goals flattered them." Connell's goal was scrappy and so was the second scored by Dave Donaldson five minutes before half-time. A bad back pass from Gary Fleet led to confusion, Bob Knight was slow coming off his line and Donaldson scored with a shot in-off Knight as the keeper scrambled back.

Knight was at fault with the third goal by Billy Edwards in the 75th minute. Edwards scored with a diving header at the far post from a corner that should not have reached that far. Billy Holmes completed the rout in the dying seconds when he cut along the bye-line, had a right foot shot parried by Knight – and then scored with his left foot.

Borough's best players were all in the back four – despite the scoreline. Trevor Peake held them together, Steve Briscoe worked hard and full backs Kirk Stephens and Graham Smith were both busy. Smith bravely stayed on with blood streaming from a gash on his head after a first half collision with Holmes. But the damage was done and Bennett must now hope that his injury problems clear up quickly so that confidence can be restored.

## Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 14-02-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Fleet, Thomas, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Benn.**

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to face Worcester City in a Southern League Cup quarter-final tie.

Brendan Phillips won a superb Southern League Cup tie with a magnificent goal. He shot Borough into the semi-finals with only seven minutes left. City goalkeeper John Taylor blocked his first shot – a piledriver from the edge of the box – but was powerless as he followed up to score. The goal crowned an exciting performance from the Manor Park side who gave Worcester a football lesson.

Just as Wimbledon showed on Saturday the gap between champions and challengers, Borough demonstrated the difference between the premier division and the first division north. Controlled, skilful, at times almost arrogant, they outclassed the St George's Lane side. They took Worcester's impressive record apart.

City had not lost in 21 games at home, are runaway leaders in the chase for promotion and have scored more than 80 goals in all competitions. That meant nothing as Stan Bennett's side turned in a performance that brought gasps of admiration from City's biggest crowd of the season.

Their class shone through from the first kick – although they survived a 20th minute penalty miss from Worcester winger Dave Roberts. Trevor Peake was adjudged to have fouled Norman Pemberton, but it looked more of a dive than a trip. Justice was done as Roberts shot wide from the spot.

Three minutes later, Bob Knight pushed a shot from Lionel Martin over the top. By that time, though, City had realised what they were up against. Gary Fleet had virtually taken control of the game in midfield, flanked by the skills of Phillips and Wayne Thomas. Thomas, the youngest player on the pitch, turned in his best display since he signed professional.

Bennett made changes. He pulled Roy Cross back alongside Trevor Peake, brought Thomas into midfield and pushed Steve Briscoe up front. The difference was astonishing, and Worcester felt the full brunt of the aftermath of the Wimbledon defeat. To play like Nuneaton did only two days after their 4-0 set back at Plough Lane was a tribute to the courage, character, and, above all, the skill of the Manor Park side. Briscoe and Peake were both booked, Briscoe for a foul and Peake for arguing about the penalty.

But it was not that sort of game. Borough won playing football – and the crowd loved it. The excitement built in the second half as the sides battled away. Smithers volleyed over the top, Knight saved from Tudor and Taylor held a shot from Stephens at the second attempt.

Jones landed a shot on the crossbar and then headed and shot wide. Mellor was robbed by Stephens in full flight – and then came the goal that won the tie. Smithers crossed, Jones and Tudor challenged, and the ball dropped to Phillips, who did the rest.

## Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 17-02-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Goodwin, Jones, Owen, Smithers. Subs: Benn and Barnett.**

Borough made the journey to Kettlebrook to play Tamworth in a Birmingham Senior Cup fourth round tie.

Nuneaton strolled to a quarter-final place as Tamworth offered little resistance from the start and suffered their seventh successive defeat. Borough were without several regulars, but gave Goodwin his first game in the first-team since October and reserve-teamer Owen a chance to shine on his debut. Both players did well, while Tamworth, without the grit and determination of ex-Nuneaton man Len Harris, were more than outclassed.

With only one goal in their last six matches, Tamworth have problems. They rarely threatened a Borough side that cruised

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



through this tie with confidence and ease. Right from the start, Nuneaton made clear their superiority in the air and Roger Jones headed them into a 19th minute lead from a neat Phillips cross.

Smithers made no mistake ten minutes later when he tucked home a clever flick from Jones, and Borough were efficiently in command. Jones made it 3-0 ten minutes into the second half when he shot home a left-side cross, and Tamworth suffered another blow when skipper and ex-Borough player Dennis Oakes was helped off with a broken nose.

Owen celebrated his debut with Nuneaton's fourth goal after 76 minutes and Smithers added a fifth in the dying seconds to give the Manor Park side an easy win.

Borough were never stretched and can only look back on this tie as nothing more than a practice session. They now meet Alvechurch in the semi-finals.

## Anglo-Italian Invite

Nuneaton Borough have again been invited to take part in the Anglo-Italian Tournament. The organisers contacted chairman David Tinney and extended an invitation. He said: "We have provisionally accepted." But he added: "We shall have to investigate the cost involved and the possibility of sponsorship."

### Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 19-02-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, R. Jones, Owen, Smithers. **Sub:** Goodwin.

**AP Leamington:** Garnell, Taylor, Kavanagh, A. Jones, Brown, Boot, Pollard, Lee, Stewart, Keeley, Turpie. **Sub:** Gorman.

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Roger Jones, twice a Wembley finalist with Stafford, is in the mood to go there again. His hat-trick against AP Leamington provided more evidence that he has hit top form at the right time. And that could be bad news for Willington, Borough's opponents next Saturday.

Jones has added a new dimension to Borough's play and has now scored 17 goals in all competitions, although he admitted he has found them harder to score in the Southern League. Things have worked out well for the rangy number nine after a disappointing start. When he first joined Borough he went 12 matches without finding the net – last week he hit five in two games.

His goals against AP kept him on target for a double – a Southern League championship medal to add to his Northern Premier League one that he won at Stafford. Early on against the Brakes a hat-trick looked as distant as the twin towers. The Leamington side threatened to take control and Bob Turpie shot them ahead with a gift goal. Bob Knight hit a goal kick straight to him and he lashed it back into the net.

Borough were in trouble before Jones struck twice to pull

them round. He scored with a header from a Timmy Smithers cross and followed up to score after newcomer Derek Owen had hit a post. Owen, signed as a professional just before the kick-off, worked hard on his Premier Division debut. He helped set up the third goal for Jones in the 67th minute with a left-wing cross.



**Roger Jones gets above the Leamington defence to plant a header into the net and level the scores.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Leamington's challenge petered out as the Manor Park side took over. They denied the Brakes control in midfield where Leamington struggled to get to grips with the skills of Brendan Phillips, Wayne Thomas and particularly Gary Fleet. But the player who stood head and shoulders above everyone was Trevor Peake, who had another magnificent match.

Shrewsbury referee Colin Taylor booked Turpie and Steve Briscoe when "needle" crept into the game and continuity went out of the window. But AP suffered most. They lost their heads and composure after their bright start.

Manager Jimmy Knox gave them a verbal lashing at half-time for "mixing it." Said Knox, never a manager to mince his words: "I was disgusted. We were doing well before they got involved. That is not our style. We can't compete playing like that and it cost us the game. But I have no complaints."

It was only their third defeat in 15 games, a run that has consolidated their position in their first season of Premier Division soccer. Borough have their sights set higher. With five competitions still to aim at, they must surely bring at least one trophy back to Manor Park.

### Nuneaton Borough v Wellingborough 21-02-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Briscoe, Thomas, Benn, Fleet, Goodwin, Lewis, Owen, Barnett. **Subs:** Smithers and Martin.

Borough welcomed Wellingborough Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Stan Bennett dug deep into the club's potential last night and gave the fans a glimpse of the shape of things to come. He included five teenagers in the youngest team Borough have fielded at first team level. And they responded with a four goal win that put them eleven points clear at the top of the Midland Floodlit Cup table.



The Borough player-manager was delighted, although he admitted he had to “sort things out” at half time. “We struggled to put our game together in the first-half, but we sorted it out at half-time and you saw what happened.”

What happened was that Borough, who rarely looked like scoring before the break, suddenly cut loose. They hit three goals in four minutes and killed off the Southern League first division north side. Gary Fleet started the goal rush in the 48th minute. Kirk Stephens crossed, Derek Owen laid it back – and Fleet blasted the ball into the net.

Two minutes later Steve Briscoe headed the second after another Stephens’ centre had been flicked on by Lewis. Lewis, who showed no effects from his ankle injury, then scored the third from the penalty spot. He was pushed by McGowan, took the kick himself – and blasted it high into the net.

The fans then had to wait until five minutes from the end before sixteen-year-old Chris Martin, on as substitute, netted the fourth. He lobbed the ball over the keeper’s head to complete the rout. But there was so much that was good about Borough’s display. Derek Owen again showed his vast potential up front with a brave, skilful and hard working display.

Dave Benn looked a great prospect in midfield and the other youngsters, Kevin Barnett and Chris Martin did well. The other teenager in the squad was Wayne Thomas, who showed his versatility by operating at left back. Gary Fleet, who must have felt like a veteran in comparison – collected a first-half booking.

## Derek Owen Poaching Row

Derek Owen, in the middle of a poaching row between Nuneaton Borough and Bedworth United, today insisted: “It’s not true.” He said: “No-one from Nuneaton approached me while I was at Bedworth.” Teenager Owen signed professional forms for the Manor Park club recently – and sparked off allegations of illegal approach.

Bedworth United chairman Mr Joe Davis claimed the player had been “got at.” Said Mr Davis: “I am aggrieved by the whole business. It’s a pity because I’ve always valued our relationship with the Borough.”

## Scarborough Next In Non League Cup

Holders Scarborough will be Nuneaton Borough’s opponents in the quarter-finals of the Non-League Cup. The tie will be played at Scarborough’s Seamer Road ground on March 19.

### Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 03-03-1977

**Borough: Bennett, Stephens, Harrison, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Goodwin, Vincent, Lewis, Martin. Subs: Owen and Chinn.**

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

Burton Albion again proved to be Borough’s bogey team. But the Borough youngsters can have no complaints for failing

to end a series of disappointing results against the Brewers. Six first-teamers were rested by Nuneaton manager Stan Bennett and Borough needed more experience than the five regulars could offer. Burton easily soaked up all the pressure Nuneaton could throw at them, and in the final 15 minutes the visitors may have grabbed a dramatic winner.

The game soon became lost in a succession of niggling fouls, and a lack of direction from both sides. Most of the football was confined to midfield and the best chances came from ambitious long-range efforts. The newcomers, three teenagers with Jamie Bennett, Ian Goodwin and Bobby Vincent, failed to make any real impression on the game.

Sixteen-year-old Chris Martin almost ran himself to a standstill in the first-half and the other youngsters Steve Harrison and Wayne Thomas worked hard – but to no avail as a strong Burton side soon dampened their enthusiasm with some crunching tackles.

Kirk Stephens fired in the first shot of the game – into the arms of Burton keeper Mick Rose, and then Lang and Jentas both had shots well saved by Jamie Bennett. Bobby Vincent, who looked short of match practice fired over, and Brendan Phillips forced Rose into making a finger-tip save. The Burton goalkeeper did not come out for the second half after badly spraining his ankle after catching a high cross. Striker Bob Sykes went between the posts – but Borough could not ram home their advantage.

Trevor Peake went close with a header and substitute Derek Owen fired across the face of the goal. And then Burton had a golden chance to punish Borough’s lack of striking power. Kirk Stephens lost possession in his own half, but full-back Colin Hallsworth fired over the top. Lang also hit over from close range after another good run from Hallsworth. And Mick Fletcher had two shots blocked for the Brewers – but Borough held on.

### Wealdstone v Nuneaton Borough 05-03-1977

**Wealdstone: Morton, Watson, Prince, Downes, Lawrence, Fursden, Griffiths, Moss, Parratt, Duck, Byrne. Sub: Fulton.**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Owen, Smithers. Sub: Thomas.**

Borough travelled to the Lower Mead Stadium to play Wealdstone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough were stifled by a Wealdstone team fighting for their Premier Division lives. Wealdstone players and officials breathed a sigh of relief after gaining a point – at home. But the Londoners’ tactics turned the game into a dull and lifeless affair. Borough manager Stan Bennett was disgusted. “I know they are struggling, but their tactics were deplorable.

“They had no intention of letting the game flow and making it enjoyable to watch. We travel away to entertain, but there was no chance of us doing that,” he added. All the Borough players were disappointed with the game, yet it was a point



away from home, a valuable point as Nuneaton keep up the championship hunt. Morale at the London club has reached an all-time low. The match programme sees the club doomed for Division One South and the notes say “it’s a reasonable assumption from a glance at the table that we will be in Division One next season.”

And this pessimism is reflected on the field of play. Manager Alan Fogarty, one-time assistant at Borough, sent his team out to “hang on and stop them” – and it succeeded. But even he was surprised when the Stones went into a shock lead, an even better excuse for hell-bent defending. George Duck hit his 197th goal for the club after combining well with Watson.

But it did not take Borough long to hit back. Gary Fleet sent in a pin-point cross and Brendan Phillips crashed the ball past Morton from a tight angle. The goal made Wealdstone tighten up their defence to near suffocation point and the game drifted into an endless pattern of clumsy passing and numerous stoppages.

Manager Stan Bennett also slammed Bexley Heath referee Brian Rundle for his handling of the game. “He was terrible. If there had been a chance of the game flowing, he stopped it. I lost count of the number of times he blew his whistle.”

One bright note in the gloom was Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight. On the rare occasions that Wealdstone pressurised, Knight was in great form. He proved that with a superb fingertip save from Griffiths in the second half.

Nuneaton Borough are trying to forget this match. Ironically many home supporters thought it was the best Wealdstone performance of the season.

## **Nuneaton Borough v Redditch United 07-03-1977**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Fleet, Thomas, Briscoe, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Goodwin.**

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

Leg weary Borough dropped a point that dealt a blow to their championship hopes. They attacked one-time leaders Redditch for seventy per cent of the game. But they lacked the spark that turns pressure into goals in a jaded performance. Still in five competitions with less than three months of the season to go, they are beginning to feel the strain.

It showed at Wealdstone on Saturday and was painfully clear last night. Redditch held them well. They always managed to get enough players back behind the ball and in Ken Lawrence they had the man of the match. Bearded Lawrence was a towering figure in the massed United defence that presented a solid red wall.

But the Worcestershire side were helped by attacks that were slow to build and far from positive. The match was summed up by the amount of work each goalkeeper had to do. Despite Borough’s attacks Reg Edwards in the Redditch goal was rarely under severe pressure.

He saw a volley from Brendan Phillips graze a post in the first-half. And Gary Fleet almost took some paint off the top of the bar with a 20-yard scorcher early in the second half. Apart from those efforts Borough seldom looked like scoring.

Bob Knight had even less to do – although one save from Pugh in the 51st minute prevented what looked a certain goal. He pushed a point blank range header from the Redditch number 13 across the goal. Clearly, Borough missed the height, power and menace of injured centre-forward Roger Jones.

Jones watched from the trainer’s box while his team-mates played as if he was out on the pitch. Long, high, hopeful balls to no-one in particular that were gobbled up by Lawrence and co. A first half dominated by Nuneaton led to a similar pattern after the break. Although Redditch were slightly more adventurous after half-time, they had made their intentions clear. They pulled players back, sometimes everyone was in the Redditch area, and defended by sheer weight of numbers.

Borough have managed to expose those tactics before and will have to do so again – it is something they have to live with. But they never looked like breaking Redditch down.

## **Borough Ground Grading Shock**

The Football League will shortly make an announcement that will stun non-league soccer. For only four grounds in the whole of the country have been passed fit for Football League status. Nuneaton Borough’s Manor Park is one of those turned down.

Borough have been told a new stand is a must before it can approach Grade A standards. But the biggest surprise of all is that the Northern clubs have been left completely out in the cold. None of the Northern Premier League grounds meet Football League requirements.

## **Yeovil v Nuneaton Borough 09-03-1977**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Briscoe, Phillips, Lewis, Goodwin, Fleet, Owen, Jones. Sub: Smithers.**

Borough made the journey to the Huish to play Yeovil in a Southern League Cup semi-final first leg.

An injury time goal doubled the size of Borough’s task after a bruising battle. With only seconds left the Manor Park side were half-way through to the final. Only one goal separated the teams as the first leg drew to a close.

The clock showed two minutes over normal time and Swanage referee Mr Brian Stockley checked his watch. Yeovil launched their last attack, started by player-manager Stan Harland. The ball was played forward to Kevin Leigh. He shot goalwards – and it took a deflection off Trevor Peake and tucked itself into the corner of the net, wide of Bob Knight. Barely 30 seconds later the whistle went – leaving Borough with a three goal gap to bridge in the second leg.

The justice of the goal was arguable. Yeovil had missed chances in the first-half. But the timing was cruel. A one goal

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



deficit would have been hailed as a moral victory – two casts doubts over Borough’s ability to pull back. The Manor Park side suffered an early blow when Gary Fleet twice went down injured. Clearly in distress, he limped off in the 39th minute to be replaced by Timmy Smithers.

Thirteen minutes earlier Yeovil had taken the lead through centre-half Terry Cotton. Don Rogers played a corner to the near post, Frank McMahon flicked it on and Cotton hit the woodwork with a header. The rebound went straight back to him and he scored despite a valiant goal-line attempt by Steve Briscoe to keep it out.

Borough were up against it and Fleet’s injury did not help. They struggled in midfield where skipper Dave Lewis fought almost a lone battle and a heavy burden fell on the back four. Roy Cross and Trevor Peake were superb, Kirk Stephens did well to hold Rogers and Steve Briscoe again proved his worth at left back. But their plan to string four players across midfield failed. Recalled Ian Goodwin showed his lack of match practice, although he improved as the game wore on.

Brendan Phillips was never in the tie and substitute Smithers was left to make all of the runs down the line. Only Lewis provided the competitiveness the system demanded – too much for one player to carry. He finished the game with a leg injury – one of six players with knocks. Both he and Fleet must be doubtful for Saturday’s game. Injuries that have not had time to clear are beginning to rebel against the strain of six games in 12 days.

Lewis fired a 30 yard free-kick over the top in the first-half, but Borough’s best chance fell to Derek Owen. With 15 minutes to go, a quick break split the Somerset side. Roger Jones played the ball out to Smithers, who turned it inside for Owen – only for the youngster to hit it over the top with time and space to do better. Owen had a chance ten minutes earlier, but they were cancelled out by two misses by Yeovil centre-forward Doug Hickton.

## New Stadium Plan For Pingles

Nuneaton Council is to be asked to consider a £170,000 multi-purpose sports scheme for the Pingles. The move follows a request from Nuneaton Borough FC for the council to provide a £50,000 stand at the Manor Park ground.

But a four-page council report suggests the stand could be better utilised by moving the Borough to the Pingles and providing a new arena for athletics and football events.

“The Borough Football Club would be integrated within a permanent and well-planned recreation area and would have available to them in the initial phase a first class football pitch, spectator accommodation and changing facilities,” says the report.

A squash court complex with office accommodation is also on the cards. Plans to move the Borough from its present base are part of a suggestion to upgrade facilities at the Pingles and promote the growth of sport in the town...

## Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 12-03-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Goodwin, Thomas, Phillips, Peake, Jones, Lewis, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

**Kettering:** Dighton, Lucas, Richards, Mortimer, Suddards, Dougan, Phipps, Kellock, Newson, Clayton, Ashby. **Sub:** Conde.

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

Kettering squeezed more life out of Borough’s fading Southern League title hopes in a scrappy game. And the strain of a hectic season is beginning to take its toll. Seven games in fifteen days would exhaust any side and that’s just how Borough looked – weary and lethargic. They played their part in a first half that contained plenty of action and promised goals. But the game had fallen away before the end and Nuneaton lost another vital point.



**Kettering goalkeeper Ken Dighton goes full length to clutch the ball with Dave Lewis and Trevor Peake in attendance.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

In the end the result did more good for Wimbledon than anyone else and they must surely be destined for their third successive title. Derek Dougan’s team selection gave the fans into what was to come. Dougan, whose career has been strewn with goals, decided to play himself in the back four. And he move full-back Roger Ashby into midfield where Borough were never able to take command. He need not have bothered. Nuneaton were never sharp enough up front to cause him any problems and Ashby spent most of the match looking for someone dangerous to mark.

Stan Bennett’s team selection was controversial. He moved centre-half Trevor Peake into midfield, dropped Derek Owen, left Steve Briscoe on the subs’ bench and played Dave Lewis up front. The changes never looked like paying off. All they did was to confuse the situation. Borough had chances and Kettering goalkeeper Ken Dighton was always under more pressure than Bob Knight.

Roger Jones hit the woodwork in the first half and both Lewis and Graham Smith could have scored. But the goal that



would have upset Kettering's carefully laid plans never came. They were able to drag eight men back whenever danger threatened – and did it well. Thoroughly professional in everything they did, they fully deserved their point.

Disturbances in the crowd created more interest than the action on the pitch as the second half dragged to a close.

## Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 14-03-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Briscoe, Thomas, Lewis, Phillips, Lane, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Smith.**

Borough welcomed Yeovil Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup semi-final second leg tie.

Borough last night opened the door to Southern League Cup survival – only to have it slammed in their face. Centre-forward Roger Jones scored after only five minutes when he followed up on a Brendan Phillips shot that hit the woodwork. That halved the deficit from the first leg and gave them hope. But their success was short lived. They hardly had time to celebrate before Yeovil were level.

Just two minutes later, Don Rogers thumbed back through the pages of his goal scoring career for one to remember. The ex-QPR and Crystal Palace star moved on to a superb pass from player-manager Stan Harland. He cut inside Kirk Stephens, got a lucky bounce, left Roy Cross for dead – and sidefooted the ball into the net as Bob Knight came out.

From that moment Borough's hopes of bridging the two goal gap died. The game fell away after its two goal start and the Somerset side took a 3-1 aggregate win. Four players were booked – Frank McMahon, Brian Thompson and Dick Plumb for Yeovil and Borough's Kirk Stephens. Plumb went into the book after a tackle on Thomas that cartwheeled the teenager to the turf. Thomas was taken to hospital and has a badly bruised ankle that swelled like a balloon.

Borough again struggled in midfield where, for once, Dave Lewis failed to stamp his authority. Alongside him, Phillips and Thomas were ineffective. All three were overshadowed by the skill and industry of red-headed McMahon and the impressive team work of the Yeovil side. Up front, Borough had no-one to match big Doug Hickton, another player who did Yeovil proud. Apart from the two shots that Franklin saved, newcomer Lane struggled to adjust to the pace of Southern League soccer.

Scarborough manager Colin Appleton watched impassively from the stands as Borough tried to save the tie early in the second half. He left before the end, no doubt confident that the bookies are right in making his side favourites for the Non League Cup.

Before he left he saw Yeovil tighten their grip on the tie and Thomas added his name to the injury list. The four day break before Saturday's quarter final in Yorkshire will be like close season for the Manor Park players. But they will have to improve if Wembley is to stay in their sights.

## Bennett Extends Contract

Borough player-manager Stan Bennett has turned down offers to move into the Football League and has extended his contract to stay with Nuneaton Borough. He disclosed: "I have had an offer but I would rather stay here. Going into the League with this club would give me a greater sense of achievement." Bennett will back up his judgement within the next few days by signing a two year contract with the Manor Park club.

## Council Refuse Manor Park Improvements

Nuneaton Borough Football Club have been refused council help for plans to improve Manor Park. A request for financial aid to provide a £56,000 stand at the ground has been turned down by the Council. And instead the club are to be asked to discuss long term plans to develop the Pingles...

## Manor Park v Pingles Debate

### Remember Guildford

So the council want to move the Borough to the Pingles? Remember Guildford City who were moved from their Joseph's Road ground? They are no longer in existence!

What are the council offering anyway? – just an open space at the moment. If the Borough move there will the council fulfil their promises? Surely a stadium with a running track included, would cost more than the £170,000 the council are offering.

It could take several years to make the Pingles acceptable to the Football League. By providing Romford's stand and building new changing rooms, Manor Park could be brought up to standard in the close season.

So think again Councillors. Help the Borough, don't play a part in their downfall.

**Interested Blue (Name and address supplied)**

### High Time Club Was Allotted Something

On the question of Pingles versus Manor Park for Nuneaton Borough FC, the following points should be remembered.

Multi-purpose football grounds are not usually a success – ask Poole Town where speedway has all but killed off the football club, and Hillingdon Borough where the athletics track and velodrome are now part of the terracing.

Fixture clashes between athletics meetings, training sessions and football matches are inevitable, especially in the spring and Easter periods.

Borough have had enough difficulty rearranging matches in this season and we all hope for more successful years such as this. After all the money spent in recent years on the Civic Hall, squad courts, swimming baths and other recreational facilities, it is high time something was allotted to the local football club.



I seem to remember the mayor of 1966/67 referring to the successful Borough side of that year as a great advert for the town and hoped they gained Football League status to increase this publicity. Don't most people pay for their advertising?

Let's see the council help make Manor Park a first-class FOOTBALL stadium.

**M. S. LANE, 157 Heath End Road, Nuneaton**

## What Will They Get For Their Money?

Once again the ratepayers of Nuneaton are being asked to finance "pie in the sky" projects. A few years ago the "wonder stadium of Nuneaton" was going to be built on the tip in Haunchwood Road. Here was going to be Nuneaton's answer to Wembley, or so rumour had it. What happened to this glorious idea? Nothing!

The £170,000 project which at the suggestion of the leisure and recreation committee should be built at the Pingles is really too idiotic for words. What on earth does this committee think they are going to get for this meagre sum of money? Once again we have councillors playing Monopoly with our money...

The general idea of course is for Nuneaton Borough to move down to the Pingles and this wonderful new stadium. Being a life-long supporter of the Borough I would welcome a great new modern stadium, which I think must include the following:

- Ground capacity 25,000-30,000, including terracing with adequate viewing from any part of the ground.
- Stand with seating for 1,800-2,000.
- Covered accommodation for 10,000-15,000.
- Office and fund raising facilities.
- Floodlighting (preferably corner sited). Lighting capacity 140-180 Lux.
- Social Club facilities.
- Excellent playing surface (a first-rate drainage system is also required).

I challenge the council to ask the Borough treasurer to cost as accurately as possible a project with the items I have listed and then publicly state how this figure was arrived at. My estimate is that it would be far in excess of £1 million. I look forward to seeing in print the council's reply as I am sure other supporters and ratepayers will be...

Manor Park could be given a face-lift at a fraction of the cost of a new stadium and it could also be developed as a leisure centre for Arbury, Stockingford and Camp Hill areas, thus saving the council its first £114,000 which it plans to spend in Greenmoor Road. Included in these leisure plans of the future could be the marina, which is hardly possible with the brook between the Pingles and Lloyds garage.

At the moment Manor Park football ground contains the potential for all my seven points. Many readers will now be saying that one minute I am against the spending of £170,000 because it is a waste of money and the next I am talking about the development of a leisure centre at Manor Park.

My real point is that if the council has £284,000 spare cash to spend then I suggest that this money could be more reasonably spent on developing Manor Park, not just for football, but for the community as a whole.

As it seems the council will not be prepared to do this by initially loaning the Borough enough money to buy, transport and erect this stand, but seem more concerned with erecting buildings for posterity purposes then I think it is time they went to jail on the Monopoly board.

In conclusion may I state that I hope the board of Nuneaton Borough will somehow see their way clear to purchase this stand and floodlights and that the public of Nuneaton who have the Borough close to their hearts will help to partly finance such a venture which I am sure will only lead to a better standard of football at Manor Park.

I hope if this decision is taken by the board then the council of Nuneaton will not stand in the way of this progress.

**R. W. MOSS, 184 Windermere Avenue, Nuneaton**

## Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth

26-03-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Goodwin, Peake, Bennett, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Smithers, Briscoe. Sub: Lane.**

**Weymouth: Gadsby, Lawrence, Tunbridge, Dyer, Durkin, Hoursley, Iannone, Henderson, Courtenay, Southern, Gregory. Sub: Huxley.**

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

Borough brushed aside a feeble challenge from bottom of the table Weymouth in a one-sided game. They re-charged their goal scoring batteries and gave their confidence another boost for tonight's clash with Scarborough. But they will not meet weaker opposition that the struggling Dorset side.

The Terras, twice champions of the Southern League, offered only token resistance. And their sad decline seems certain to plunge them into the first division south. Never in with a chance, Weymouth added to their own misery by conceding an own goal and missing a penalty.

Timmy Smithers, back in the side with renewed vigour, shot Borough in front after 18 minutes. He beat goalkeeper Mike Gadsby from 25 yards for his second goal in four days. That signalled the end of any hopes the visitors had of salvaging anything from their long trip. Uncertainty spread from goalkeeper Gadsby right through the side and the game ceased to be a serious contest long before the end.

Borough with player manager Stan Bennett back in the side, were never in any trouble. Bennett back in place of injured skipper Dave Lewis was booked after a clash with Ianiello



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Iannone and then went off after 60 minutes. Brendan Phillips also had his name taken – the only blots on an otherwise problem free performance. Weymouth were so poor that Bob Knight had only one real shot to face – and that was the penalty. Even then, he had nothing to do. Terras' full-back Ray Tunbridge drove it against the foot of a post.



**More misery for Gadsby as he kneels to take a sliced clearance attempt from team-mate Brian Southern – only for the ball to slip through and trickle over the line.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The penalty miss came after Borough's lead had been increased by a 54th minute own goal. Midfield player Brian Southern sliced an attempted clearance and it somehow trickled through Gadsby's hands and over the line. After that, Borough never needed to move out of second gear to dominate the match. They romped through and emphasised their superiority with another goal in the closing seconds. It summed up Weymouth's problems.

They had given up the ghost as Steve Briscoe crossed from the right. Roger Jones, unmarked beyond the far post, knocked the ball back into the middle. And Brendan Phillips completed the move with a close range header for the sort of goal Scarborough are unlikely to give away. But Borough, who have gone through a lean spell, could not have wished for a better, or easier, build up to tonight's Non League Cup quarter final replay. They know they face a harder task against the powerful Northern Leaguers – but at least they had the scent of goals back in their nostrils.

## Alvechurch v Nuneaton Borough 30-03-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Goodwin, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Bennett, Jones, Lane, Briscoe. Sub: Owen.**

Borough made the journey to Lye Meadow to play a Birmingham Senior Cup quarter-final tie.

Borough tumbled to their second cup defeat in two days, losing 1-0 to Alvechurch. Manager Stan Bennett was back in the side and new signing Kevin Lane made his second appearance after joining the club from Torquay a fortnight ago.

## Dover v Nuneaton Borough 02-04-1977

**Dover: Raine, Reynolds, Keeley, Brown, Waite, Brooks, Wilson, Lloyd, Christie, Hobbs, Rogers. Sub: Clay.**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Goodwin, Lane, Jones, Owen, Briscoe. Sub: Vincent.**

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

Borough salvaged a Southern League point from their worst week of the season in a drab draw. Much of the match was a hard slog in the cheerless atmosphere of the Crabble. Both sides lacked flair, imagination – and, above all, penetration and there was little excitement for the sparse crowd.

Borough were stripped of the skills of Brendan Phillips, Gary Fleet and Timmy Smithers. And they suffered another cruel blow as early as the ninth minute when they lost Kirk Stephens. The full-back went into a tackle with winger Kenny Rogers, twisted his knee and was taken off with damaged ligaments. That did not help matters. An already re-shuffled side had to take on another shape. But they were rarely in danger of losing – or winning.

They struggled to set up chances and the main threat from Dover was presented by gangling centre-half Dave Waite. He went close three times when he moved up for set pieces in the first half. Strangely, though, he decided to take most of the free-kicks himself after the break. Borough's only threat before half-time came when a shot from Dave Lewis slipped through the goalkeeper's hands. He managed to recover as Derek Owen darted in and the danger passed.

The second half rarely promised goals. Dover did most of the attacking, but Nuneaton held them without too many problems. Both sides struggled to put together more than two passes at a time. And it became even more clear as the game dragged on that neither side would score.

Injuries and defeats by Scarborough and Alvechurch had clearly drained a lot of the conviction out of Borough's play. Dover, although a top half of the table team, also lacked drive. The result was a stalemate and boredom for the pitiful crowd of only 357 – a far cry from the 5000-plus who turned up at Manor Park last Monday.

Bobby Vincent, on as substitute after the injury to Stephens, almost brought some colour to the game in the closing minutes. He sent in the best shot of the match – one that dipped over the bar.

## Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 04-04-1977

**Borough: Knight, Smith, Cross, Peake, Briscoe, Thomas, Bennett, Goodwin, Lewis, Jones, Owen. Sub: Vincent.**

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

Hillingdon blasted Borough to defeat with two goals inside

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



four minutes at Manor Park last night and dealt another savage blow to their pride. With fifteen minutes to go, Borough looked to have both points safely in the bag. They had improved after a dreadful first-half and led through a 56th minute Roger Jones goal. That lead should have been increased – there should have been no danger. Then Hillingdon suddenly showed them how to score goals.

A centre was knocked in from the left, Alan Kirkup headed back and full-back Graham Pearce volleyed into the net from just inside the box. That stunned Nuneaton and four minutes later they were hit by an even better goal. Hillingdon centre-forward Tony Burge cut inside Trevor Peake and Roy Cross and unleashed a shot from all of 20 yards. The ball bent towards the goal and dipped under the bar past stranded Bob Knight. Almost immediately Bobby Vincent went on in place of player-manager Stan Bennett.

He did more in those final minutes than some of the players had done all of the match. By that time though, the damage had been done and Borough plunged to their third home Southern League defeat of the season. Borough started the match without Brendan Phillips, Gary Fleet, Timmy Smithers and Kirk Stephens. And they were in trouble early on as Hillingdon took the game to them.

Murphy lobbed the ball on to the bar and George Cleary slipped a shot wide with only Knight to beat. Borough gradually pulled themselves together, but a string of free-kicks and misplaced passes made the match a poor one to watch for the meagre 1,000 plus crowd.

Stan Bennett again reshuffled his side at half-time. Steve Briscoe was pushed forward and Wayne Thomas moved to full-back. The chances made a vast difference. Borough attacked with renewed vigour and Jones put them in front after 56 minutes. He chased a long right wing cross from Derek Owen and turned the ball into the net as Hillingdon goalkeeper Phillips left his line.

Three minutes later Jones beat three defenders and laid on a glorious chance for Owen. But the youngster panicked and shot across the face of the net. Hillingdon player-manager Barry Fry drove a shot over the bar before Jones fluffed another chance. He miskicked in front of goal after Ian Goodwin had made the running. But Borough then paid dearly for the misses as Hillingdon suddenly stormed back to plunder both points with their dramatic late goals.

## Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 24-04-1977

**Atherstone:** Withers, Stockley, Shotton, Brown, Preston, Minton, Drew, R. Smith, Neale, Flannagan, Jennings. Sub: Kiernan.

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, G. Smith, Goodwin, Peake, Bennett, Phillips, Smithers, Jones, Lewis. Sub: Vincent.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to face Atherstone Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

The worst Adders-Borough game in years ended in a drab,

goalless draw. As a local derby it was always a non-starter – one big yawn for the 1,800 Bank Holiday crowd. Instantly forgettable, the game contained nothing in the way of excitement or entertainment and drifted into obscurity.



**Adders' striker Mark Neale gets up to win the ball in the air in the Sheepy Road derby. But his effort came to nought and the game dragged out into a drab goalless draw.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Two sides, both badly affected by injuries managed only three efforts at goal between them. One brought a superb save from Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight – the highspot of the match. But the man with the most work to do was Wellingborough referee Mr Brian Hill, who blew for 45 free-kicks.

Adders lost midfielder Roger Minton as early as the 26th minute and Borough fielded several walking wounded. But that was no excuse for such a poor game in which Dave Lewis and Malcolm Shotton were booked and others fortunate to survive.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 11-04-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Peake, Goodwin, Smith, Phillips, Bennett, Lewis (Lane 45), Vincent, Jones, Smithers.

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

Borough turned in a much improved display – only to be robbed of a win by a last minute goal. There were only seconds left when Bedford substitute Ronnie Bridges scrambled the ball into the net for the equaliser. His goal cancelled out a superbly worked 65th minute effort from the Manor Park side.

Graham Smith played the ball forward, Roger Jones headed on – and Brendan Phillips powered clear to score. The goal was stunning in its simplicity and made a mockery of the Borough efforts that had gone before. A magnificent save from Eagles' keeper Ray Peacock had denied Jones a goal from the last attack of the first-half. He somehow touched a header from the Borough centre-forward around the post.



Kevin Lane, on as substitute for the injured Dave Lewis, was desperately close at the start of the second half. Generally, though Borough's shooting was erratic and they had a let off when Bedford midfield player Dave Earle hit the woodwork in the 26th minute. But Nuneaton's display was light years better than their performance at Atherstone two days earlier.

They showed far more flair and imagination – and Bobby Vincent had his best game since his comeback. Vincent, who is to be given an extended run between now and the end of the season to prove himself, was always involved. He was still short of stamina and pace but the old skills came back and drew gasps of admiration from the sparse crowd. Youngster Wayne Thomas also did well at right back in a display that should help to bring some of the confidence back to Stan Bennett's injury hit side.

They were without Gary Fleet, Kirk Stephens, Steve Briscoe and Roy Cross, lost Lewis at half-time, and Bennett finished the match as a passenger. But they battled through and their football was better – even if their finishing was still poor.

## Transfer Wrangle

Nuneaton Borough are involved in a wrangle with Worcester City over a transfer fee for Malcolm Phelps. They claim Worcester owe them £100 for the ex-Alvechurch striker. But City, newly crowned champions of the Southern League first division north, insist it is not so. Phelps joined Worcester five weeks ago: "They took him for a month and said they would pay a small fee if they kept him on," claimed Borough secretary John Evans.

The Worcester club were contacted before the transfer deadline, and their manager said Borough could take Phelps back, but there was no time for Borough to contact the player. Worcester deny any fee is due, as they offered the player back and Nuneaton did not take him.

## Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 13-04-1977

**Borough: Knight, Thomas, Smith, Goodwin, Briscoe, Owen, Phillips, Lane, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. Subs: Benn and Fallon.**

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

Andy Harrison's 79th minute equaliser out of the blue, wrecked Nuneaton's hopes of increasing their lead at the top of the table. The Burton defender added the finishing touch after Kim White had nodded on Colin Hallsworth's centre to give Albion a share of the points. It was more than a depleted Burton side deserved. For most of the match Borough – themselves hard hit by injury – created the better chances.

When Brendan Phillips hammered home a close range effort to give Borough a 55th minute lead it looked as if it was curtains for Albion. Borough had provided a meagre crowd with the most thrills in an undistinguished first half. They could have taken the lead in the 35th minute when Albion keeper Mick Rose palmed away a power shot from Roger

Jones. Timmy Smithers, following up, blasted the rebound against the woodwork.

A minute before the interval, Graham Fearn, Albion's stand-in centre forward brought a fine one handed save from Bob Knight. But after Phillips had scored Smithers could have increased Borough's lead when he went in on the blind side to connect with Lane's cross, but Rose pulled off another good save.

## Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro' 16-04-1977

**Gravesend: Smelt, Idle, Hall, Embery, Pearce, Burrett, Finch, Brown, Woon, Jacks, Woolfe. Sub: Walker.**

**Borough: Knight, Smith, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Lane, Phillips, Thomas, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. Sub: Owen.**

Borough made the journey to Gravesend and Northfleet to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bobby Vincent is back on the Southern League goal trail – after more than two years of anguish, pain and doubt. Against Gravesend on Saturday, he hit one from 25 yards and grabbed another with all of his old arrogance and skill. The goals were his first in the premier division since the car crash that almost ended his career in November 1974.

And they could not have come at a better time for the striker who knows that football can be as cruel as it can be kind. Vincent's joy lit up the Gravesend ground as the first went in eleven minutes before half time. The ball cannoned in off an upright. The second, in the dying minutes, was a touch of vintage Vincent. Had he scored it at the Cock and Bear end at Manor Park they would have gone wild.

Unselfish Kevin Lane laid on the chance with a superb pass when he could have tried himself. Vincent controlled the ball, rolled it back to wrong foot the whole of the Gravesend defence and shot just inside a post. Understandably Vincent grabbed the headline – not one player begrudged him that. They all shared his delight – but they also deserved their share of praise. For one of the youngest sides Borough have fielded in years took Gravesend apart.

They became the first side to complete a double over the Kent club for more than three years. Gravesend officials could not remember their last four goal defeat home or away. And Borough did it with five players on the injured list. More important, they beat Gravesend with sheer skill. From start to finish they were a class above Fleet who led the premier division earlier in the season.

Roger Jones, whose own two goal performance was overshadowed by Vincent, headed them in front after 32 minutes. After that there was only one team in it as Vincent increased the lead before half-time. Jones then hit the third in the 77th minute before Vincent rounded off a superb Borough display

Magnificently refereed by Mr Norman Drewitt from Brighton, the game was always dictated by the Manor Park side. But



it was the way they went about it that made manager Stan Bennett beam with pride. The youngsters showed the depth of talent he has at Manor Park. One player who stood head and shoulders above the others was Kevin Lane. Lane, not yet 20, joined Borough from Torquay as a striker. He was a revelation against Gravesend in midfield where he could play an important part in the future.

But the day belonged to Vincent, who has grown in confidence over the past three games. Everyone played their part, but he needed a goal to remove more of the doubt that has nagged his comeback – and got two.

## Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 18-04-1977

**Borough:** Guyan, Smith, Briscoe, Fallon, Peake, Thomas, Benn, Barnett, Ebery, Owen, Martin. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough made the journey to Kettlebrook to play Tamworth in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Youthful exuberance was outwitted by experience at Tamworth when the home side snatched a win against the youngest Borough side to be fielded this season. With two key games and this Floodlit Cup game to squeeze in during a five day spell, Borough manager Stan Bennett decided to rely on his youngsters – and paid the price with a 1-0 defeat.

The experience of Tamworth's Lenny Harris, Larry Barnes and David Eades was a telling factor. Lenny Harris, an ex-Borough man, was an inspiration to the home side in midfield and put Borough's defence in difficulty time after time. And Eades was in a shoot on sight mood. His second goal, only a few seconds before half-time, was rewarded for his tenacity and keenness.

Barnes won the ball at the back and knocked it forward to Perry who pushed a dangerous high centre across. It left the Borough defence flat footed as Eades rose to nod home a winner past Borough keeper Guyan. Borough tried everything to get back into the game and lacked nothing in effort after the break, but the "Tammies" were not to be denied.

Owen, Borough's most robust player, earned a booking after carting Lenny Harris into the crowd and Peake, Thomas and Ebery made creditable efforts. Bobby Vincent joined in the fray in the dying minutes – but it was all too late.

## Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough 20-04-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Smith, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Lane, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Chinn.

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

Bobby Vincent inspired a Borough comeback with his third goal in two Southern League games. But it was to no avail as the Manor Park side crashed to defeat against bottom of the table Weymouth. Vincent cut the Dorset sides two goal lead in the 48th minute when he burst past two defenders to score. Moments later, Weymouth goalkeeper John Clarke made a

breath-taking save to deny Roger Jones an equaliser. Clarke called on all of his vast experience to rescue his side when the Nuneaton centre-forward found himself put clear by a rebound.

Borough's bid to save the game failed – and the Terras went on to clinch the points with an 84th minute penalty from Ianielo Iannone. Wayne Thomas fouled Derek Courtney and Iannone made no mistake from the spot. Weymouth surprised Borough early on with a brand of soccer that belied their league position. Jones hit the bar for Stan Bennett's side early on, but the home side took control with two goals.

Top scorer Tommy Henderson swivelled on the six yard line to hit a left wing cross past a helpless Bob Knight in the 16th minute. The home side delivered another shock nine minutes later when Dave Metchick and Gary Huxley combined to set up a goal for Brian Gregory. The ex-Luton centre-forward powered his shot high into the roof of the net. Borough were in trouble and they defended desperately as the Terras pushed forward.

But it was a different story after the break. Borough pulled themselves together and Vincent's goal changed the complexion of the match. Then came Clarke's match saver from Jones – a goal then would surely have given them a wonderful chance. They maintained the pressure with both Jones and Brendan Phillips working hard. But the goal they so badly needed – and deserved – never came and Iannone settled it.

Weymouth ended the game with a final flourish and looked far from a relegation side. They have collected seven points from the last four games and have a series of home matches to play. And that could be bad news for Atherstone and the rest of the relegation battlers. Borough full-back Graham Smith was booked late in the game for a foul on Ray Tunbridge.

## Councillor Against Financing Borough Ground

Nuneaton Councillor Stan Williams has voted against providing financial help for the football club he supports. Mr Williams, secretary of the Borough Social Club, last night toed the Labour Party line and turned down a request to buy a £56,000 stand for the Manor Park club.

But today he admitted: "I may have made the wrong decision. It was a group policy to refuse the Borough's request for money and I went along with it."

## Nuneaton Borough v Minehead 23-04-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Lane, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Smith.

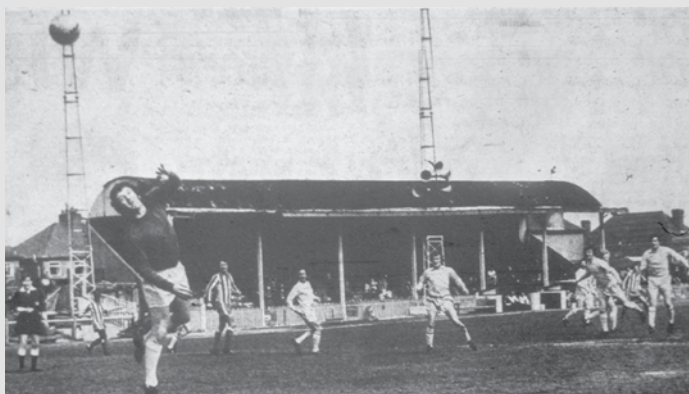
**Minehead:** Macey, Brown, Clauson, Carter, Boyd, Burns, Risdale, Bryant, Leitch, Jenkins, Durbin. **Sub:** Impey.

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

Jim Jenkins scored a spectacular solo goal to give Minehead both points. Jenkins, wanted by several League clubs, struck

seven minutes from time – and was surprised by the room he had. But while the Somerset side celebrated Borough were left to reflect on their fourth home Southern League defeat of the season – and their sad decline. Once among the top clubs, they have now won only twice in the last 13 games. Since the Scarborough defeat scarred their season they have become just a pale shadow of the side that promised great things.

They put Minehead under pressure and their approach was often good in the wet and windy conditions. But they were never able to convert their pressure into goals after Kevin Lane had put them ahead. Lane chipped the ball under the bar from the edge of the box in the 26th minute. Centre-forward Roger Jones then had what looked a perfectly good goal disallowed. He went up between two defenders to head home a Bobby Vincent cross, but the referee rule it out for pushing.



**Minehead goalkeeper John Macey is helpless as Kevin Lane's chip heads towards the net for Borough's goal after 26 minutes.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

A goal then might have changed the whole complexion of the game and given Minehead too much to do. Instead they were able to hit back and Derek Bryant equalised with a soft header that caught goalkeeper Bob Knight off his line 12 minutes from the break. Minehead then hit the woodwork and Mike Burns had a shot blocked from barely six yards. At first it appeared that Knight had managed to get his body behind the shot, but it was confirmed later that the shot had hit Steve Briscoe.

Briscoe was booked as the game threatened to get out of hand in the second half. Minehead's tactics frustrated Borough. They closed up midfield and moved forward at every opportunity to catch Borough in their offside trap. But they were far from negative. Always better organised and more disciplined than Nuneaton, they looked dangerous on the break.

Dave Lewis, back in midfield for Borough, had a fine game, and Ian Goodwin and Trevor Peake were both on form. But Borough have lost the edge they had before the Scarborough defeat. Injuries have taken their toll and they paid another heavy price when Jenkins plundered the points. And instead of chasing top clubs, Borough could now find themselves struggling in the top half of the table.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 25-04-1977

**Borough: Knight, Smith, Briscoe, Cross, Peake, Lane, Phillips, Thomas, Jones, Vincent, Chinn. Subs: Owen and Benn.**

**Atherstone: Hall, Montgomery, Russell, Shotton, Brown, Tomkinson, Drew, Smith, Franklin, Neale, Reeves. Subs: Preston and Flannagan.**

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Bobby Vincent salvaged some of Borough's pride with a late equaliser. His 81st minute header saved them from defeat in another uninspiring local derby. And they must now wait for the outcome of the Adders-Burton match to see who qualifies for the final.

The competition hardly inspired interest last night – less than 700 fans turned up. The season is dragging to a close – and it showed. Two jaded teams struggled to put their games together. Adders have their thoughts on more important matters, like staying in the Southern League premier division, and Borough need a break.

The competitive edge showed through at times. Gary Brown, Roger Smith and Borough centre-forward Roger Jones were all booked. Much of the play was aimless before Brown injected some life into the game with a goal on the hour. Smith sent over a right wing corner. Nigel Drew headed it on and Brown scored at the far post.

It was the first goal in more than five hours of football between the two clubs. The other three games all ended goalless. Before Brown struck, youngster Gary Reeves had a chance for Adders, Vincent went close and Steve Tomkinson shot wide. But the football was poor until Adders made a determined start to the second half. They carried the game to Nuneaton and were the better of two unimpressive sides when Brown shot them ahead.

The goal stung Borough into action and there was more enthusiasm in the closing stages. Adders faced pressure and Hall saved from Vincent before Borough's most popular player scored. Jones sent over a right wing cross and Vincent glanced a header past the goalkeeper for his fourth goal in as many games. In the dying minutes Drew fired wide, Shotton headed away from Vincent and Wayne Thomas lifted the ball over the top in a goalmouth scramble.

### Ground Improvements For Manor Park

Ground improvements are being planned for Manor Park – which will not cost Borough a penny. For a group of fans have launched their own campaign to improve the Corporation-owned stadium. And they are hoping their efforts will convince the council the club should stay at the ground that has been its home for more than half a century.

The supporters have formed themselves into a seven-man committee and already have several projects in mind. Headed by Stan Marshall, the committee consists of



John Moore, Bob Moss, John Robbins, Glenn Noon, John Hammond and Sid Clay. All have supported Borough for years – but it is the first time most of them have been actively involved. They have the full backing of the board and other supporters are rallying round.

The committee will run the Nuneaton Borough Development Fund. “All of the money raised will be spent on the ground,” said John Moore. “We want to improve facilities for the people who come through the turnstiles.”

## Roger Jones Picked For England

Roger Jones, Nuneaton Borough’s 22 goal striker, has been chosen to play for England. He is in the squad for the non-league international in Italy next month. But there is disappointment for Gary Fleet, who has missed his chance through injury.

Telford United v Nuneaton Borough	30-04-1977
<p><b>Telford:</b> Weir, Harris, Daley, Devlin, Ross, Bache, Garbett, Draycott, Bentley, Hurst, Kemp. <b>Sub:</b> McCauley.</p> <p><b>Borough:</b> Knight, Smith, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Lane, Phillips, Cross, Jones, Vincent, Owen. <b>Sub:</b> Thomas.</p>	

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

Borough breathed fresh life into a flagging season with another win – and two more goals for Bobby Vincent. Vincent rescued a first half to forget with a goal to remember nine minutes from the break. It had all the hallmarks of the Vincent of old and showed how much progress he had made since his comeback.

Ian Goodwin flighted the ball in, Roger Jones headed it down – and Vincent scored with an overhead kick. Few players in Southern League football would have tried it let alone scored. Even Geoff Hurst, who knows a bit about scoring goals, gaped in astonishment. That looked enough to beat Hurst’s poor Telford side, who were top of the table earlier this season. Then Ken Draycott hauled them back into the match with an equaliser set up by Hurst twenty minutes from time. But, just when it looked as if the game would end in a draw, Vincent again exploded on the scene.

Derek Owen hit over a long corner, Roger Jones headed it back from beyond the far post and Vincent beat Phil Weir with a header. It was his sixth goal in as many games and he is now beginning to show the form that had the fans flocking to Manor Park. Almost forgotten after his car crash, his future looked bleak just a couple of months ago. But his fairy tale comeback has changed all that – there are a lot more goals to come from arguably the best centre forward to wear a Borough shirt.

Had he been able to come back earlier, Nuneaton would surely have challenged for the title instead of trying to break back into the top six. Vincent was booked three minutes after

his match winner for a foul on goalkeeper Weir. And Bob Knight pulled off a breath-taking save from Hurst in the final minute. Hurst broke from midfield and hit a left foot shot that looked a goal all of the way.

But Knight, so dependable for the Manor Park side this season flung himself across his line and pushed it around the post. The three goals and Knight’s save provided the highlights in what was generally, a typical end of the season encounter. Both sides looked disjointed in midfield where neither of them managed to take control. Telford had little to offer – their full-backs were their best players. And Borough’s defence, where Trevor Peake again showed the form League clubs continue to ignore, was rarely in trouble.

The win was Borough’s eleventh away success in all competitions this season. For the third year running the points they have dropped at home have cost them a chance of the title. But with a string of home games left, they can at least repair some of the damage.

Nuneaton Borough v Grantham Town	02-05-1977
<p><b>Borough:</b> Knight, Thomas, Peake, Goodwin, Briscoe, Lane, Cross, Phillips, Vincent, Jones, Owen. <b>Sub:</b> Smithers.</p>	

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

Bobby Vincent added another two goal chapter to the comeback story of the season. Two against Grantham pushed his tally to eight from the last seven games. And he can now achieve what two months ago looked impossible – finish the season as Borough’s leading scorer in the Southern League. Roy of the Rovers could hardly have had a better plot.

Vincent shot Borough in front after only ten minutes following a Derek Owen corner. Ian Goodwin beat the Grantham defence in the air, Roger Jones shot against the woodwork – and Vincent drove the rebound into the net. The goal was special – his first at Manor Park in the Southern League since his car crash in November 1974. But Grantham refused to take a back seat and give Vincent the stage.

They hit back and Steve Carr should have equalised from a Bob Norris through ball just before half-time. They were level seven minutes after the break when John Bower played the ball forward, Norris Headed it down, and striker Dave Platt scored with a superb shot on the turn.

Borough began to struggle. Grantham were the better side and Carr headed straight at Bob Knight when he should have done better. Knight denied Carr another chance before Barry Nash drove the ball across the face of the Borough goal and inches past the far post. Tempers frayed and Grantham full-back Barry Shaw collected a booking for a tackle that put Brendan Phillips out of the game. Phillips was carried off with a hole in his leg made by a stud and Timmy Smithers went on as substitute.

Vincent was then booked – his second in successive games –

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



for a challenge on Gardiner. Owen followed him after a rash tackle from behind before an astonishing incident changed the face of the game. Steve Briscoe sent over a long free-kick and Gardiner, always conscious of Vincent's presence, carried the ball over his own line. That was in the 77th minute, Borough were back in front – and Vincent wrapped up the points barely two minutes later.

Much of the credit must go to Jones, who helped set up Vincent's two goals at Telford. He came away from two defenders, drew Gardiner and squared the ball across the middle to Vincent who scored with a nonchalance that bordered on arrogance.

## Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 04-05-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Briscoe, Goodwin, Peake, Lane, Cross, Owen, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Smith.

Borough made the journey to London Road to play Grantham in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Two second half goals ended Borough's hopes of success at a ground where they usually do well. The first followed a defensive mix up in the 55th minute. Goalkeeper Bob Knight parried a shot from Grantham striker Dave Platt. Steve Briscoe tried to clear – only to hit the ball straight at Knight and it rebounded into the net. Seventeen minutes later Knight parried another shot, this time from Bob Norris and Steve Carr followed up to score.

Twice near the end, the ever dangerous Bobby Vincent got clear of the Grantham defence. But each time he was stopped – once by a save from Gardiner and then by a last ditch tackle by Barry Shaw. His best effort of the game, a shot flicked just inside the post, was brilliantly saved by Gardiner. Generally, though, he struggled to shake off the tight marking of home skipper and centre-half Ron Harrison. Steve Briscoe was booked in the 28th minute for a bad tackle on Shaw.

### Bennett Not Quitting

Nuneaton Borough player-manager Stan Bennett has retained all of his professionals – with the exception of himself. But he denied today that he intends to hang up his boots. He said: "I shall definitely be playing next season, but on a non-contract basis. What it means is that I shall have some leeway to make additions to the squad."

## Nuneaton Borough v Chelmsford City 07-05-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lane, Phillips, Goodwin, Owen, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.  
**Chelmsford:** Penn, Foggo, Coker, Binks, Loughton, Kellard, Norman, Greaves, Lamb, Burney. **Sub:** Wigley.

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

Derek Owen added his name to Borough's Southern League score sheet with a performance that overshadowed Jimmy

Greaves. The former England star looked on helplessly while Owen grabbed the glory with a two-goal display, scoring a goal in each half. He shot Nuneaton in front after half-an-hour – with his first Southern League goal for the club. And he made the game safe with his second 18 minutes from the end.

Greaves gave the fans a glimpse of his magic early on when he lifted a ball that was running away from him over the top. He had a lazy chip from a free-kick saved by goalkeeper Bob Knight early in the second half. But he could do nothing to halt Chelmsford's slide and they now face relegation for the first time in their history.

Windswept Manor Park was hardly the scene for delicate soccer skills. Borough, though, cruised to victory against a side that has haunted them in the past. Chelmsford were one of the glamour clubs while Nuneaton were struggling to establish themselves. Times change; that position has now been reversed and Borough have earned a place among the elite. They have finished second and fifth in the past two seasons and are destined for a place in the top six this year.

Not bad for a club that for years languished in the bottom half of the table. And the future is bright. For Borough again fielded a young side and it was appropriate that Owen, still only 18, scored the goals. To lose players like suspended Roger Jones and injured Kirk Stephens, Gary Fleet and Dave Lewis, would be too much for some clubs. But Borough demonstrated the strength of their young talent with a display that delighted manager Stan Bennett. To be fair they owed a debt to the experience of players like Graham Smith and Roy Cross. But the youngsters have grown in stature this season – and there are others knocking on the door.

Chelmsford could never match their enthusiasm and were a well beaten side. Their frustration showed in the second half when both Greaves and player-manager Bobby Kellard were booked. And their problems increased when midfielder John Burney was taken to hospital with knee ligament damage after the interval. But Borough won well and with ease and are set for a final burst that could take them past the 50 points mark in the Premier Division.

## Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 09-05-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Smith, Phillips, Lewis, Lane, Owen, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Benn.

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

Dave Benn stepped up for his Southern League debut last night – and hit the goal that beat Yeovil. Benn, Borough's youngest professional, scored from a goalmouth scramble with 13 minutes to go. He limped off with a leg injury at the end, but his winner eased the pain.

"It was a dream come true," said the youngster, still only seventeen, and clearly a player with a future. Benn went on as substitute for Kevin Lane, another teenager, after an hour

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



of untidy football. Yeovil's negative tactics had frustrated Nuneaton and the game was heading for a goalless draw. Then, as the minutes ebbed away in typical end of the season style, Borough broke the deadlock.

Brendan Phillips let the ball run in the box and Timmy Smithers had a shot stopped on the line. Smithers managed to hit the ball back into the middle – and there was Benn to apply the finishing touch from close in. The teenager was injured almost as soon as he went on and twice went down for treatment. But there are no prizes for guessing who was the happiest player in the Borough dressing rooms at the end.

Yeovil made their intentions clear from the start – player-manager Stan Harland saw to that. Stubbornly defensive, they strung five players across the back and barred the way to goal. Borough rarely looked like scoring and Yeovil never made any effort. Consequently, the first half provided poor entertainment for the 757 fans, Borough's lowest Southern League gate of the season. But the second half improved, Yeovil made one of their rare excursions into the Borough half and almost scored.

Full-back Brian Thompson, put clear by a free-kick shot across the face of the goal. The ball was half cleared to the edge of the box and John Clancy lifted a shot over the top with Borough in trouble. Yeovil then survived loud protests for a penalty against Mike Harrison for handball. Moments later only a superb save by goalkeeper Mike Franklin denied Borough a goal. He twisted himself backwards in mid-air to clutch a header from Trevor Peake.

Borough had a goal disallowed when Dave Lewis bundled the goalkeeper over the line. Yeovil decided to shake off their defensive problems – and looked useful. Had they done it earlier, Nuneaton may have found themselves in trouble. Benn then grabbed his goal and Bob Knight saved at the feet of Doug Hickton in the closing seconds.

The win was Borough's third in four games and should assure them of a place in the top six.

## Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 11-05-1977

**Burton:** Alcock, Thompson, Fletcher, Eaton, Annable, Styles, Fearn, Wright, Long, Hogan, Jentas. **Sub:** Harrison.

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Goodwin, Jones, Owen, Briscoe. **Sub:** Lane.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough virtually condemned Burton Albion to Division One North next season with a single goal victory. And it was Brendan Phillips who sank his old team mates with a brilliant goal in the 13th minute. A deft flick by Roger Jones left Phillips clear and his fierce volley screamed into the net with Barry Alcock absolutely helpless.

Phillips showed his old club just what they had been missing in midfield this season and Burton had no-one who could

match his deceptive, uncanny skills. Albion, though made hard work of breaking through a competent Borough defence in which Trevor Peake mastered the aerial threat of Les Wright. Steve Long completely missed a centre with the goal at his mercy but connected with a full blooded drive just before half-time only for Bob Knight to block it, although he knew little about the shot.

Borough pulled ten men back into their own box after Wayne Jentas had incredibly headed wide from three yards, on the hour. But Nuneaton managed to catch Burton out when they broke quickly. Derek Owen had three efforts to seal victory – but twice he shot wide from the edge of the box and Alcock made a brilliant save to deny the youngster a third time.

## Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 14-05-1977

**Yeovil:** Franklin, Thompson, Flay, Jones, Cotton, Harrison, Annalls, Leigh, Hickton, Plumb, Harland. **Sub:** Albury.

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Goodwin, Jones, Owen, Smithers. **Sub:** Lane.

Borough made the journey to The Huish to take on Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough committed soccer suicide at Yeovil and then came back from the dead. After only 24 minutes they were three goals down and heading for their heaviest Southern League defeat of the season. Careless and carefree they had been punished for their mistakes and the match looked over as a contest. But teenager Derek Owen breathed new life into their play with a goal on the stroke of half-time that altered the course of the game. For much of the second half Borough were the better side.

Yeovil, in full cry at the start, were subdued as Borough tightened up their play and improved in midfield. But the goal they desperately needed to set the game alight came too late. Skipper Dave Lewis scored three minutes into injury time – there was hardly time to restart. At least, though, they turned what could have been a slaughter into a respectable scoreline. And they salvaged some pride from their last away trip of the season.

Bad play rather than bad luck cost them the early goals. Their game went to pieces. Yeovil defender Mike Harrison was allowed to rise unchallenged to head the first goal after two minutes. Goalkeeper Bob Knight should have had the second, scored by Kevin Leigh after 15 minutes. Borough's best attack broke down, Bryn Jones powered over the half-way line and played the ball forward to Leigh, who turned it past Knight as the keeper left his line.

The third followed a corner, hit back into the middle by John Clancy. The ball went across the Nuneaton defence to full-back Brian Thompson, who fired into the roof of the net from three yards. Yeovil, who had scored five against Kettering earlier in the week, had set themselves up for another goal glut. But Nuneaton suddenly realised that they were in the same league and began to play like a premier division side.



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



And Owen rocked Yeovil back on their heels with a superb goal from full 20 yards after 44 minutes. That inspired the Manor Park side and they began to show some of the form that has brought them so much success away from home. But they still lacked skill up front as they battled to bridge the gap. Ninety minutes went by before Lewis scored one of the most spectacular goals of the season.

Graham Smith played the ball onto him and he volleyed an unstoppable shot from 25 yards. That brought down the curtain on their away programme in style. But they were left to reflect on the first-half mistakes that cost them both points.

## Borough Need To Find £2,000

Cash troubled Nuneaton Borough Football Club have been ordered to pay a £2,000 bill – to prevent bailiffs from moving in. The money, for unpaid Value Added Tax, has to be paid by today. Borough chairman David Tinney confirmed that the club owed the cash. But he said: “As far as I am concerned the cheque has been sent. It is one of the debts that we inherited and we left it as long as possible.”

## Tinney Resigns

David Tinney has resigned as chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club following another “power struggle” at Manor Park. He said: “A situation has developed over the past few months where by running the day to day affairs of the club has become increasingly difficult.”

Mr Tinney, who has also quit as a director, added: “Directors and chairmen are in football for the pleasures – and expensive pleasures at that. When it ceases to become a pleasure, that is the time to go.”

Noel Kelly, managing director of a Coventry firm is the new chairman.

## Nuneaton Borough v Margate 18-05-1977

**Borough: Knight, Thomas, Goodwin, Harrison, Smith, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Owen, Vincent, Ebery. Sub: Fallon.**

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

Irrepressible Bobby Vincent earned depleted Borough both points from bottom club Margate. Vincent added the finishing touch to the best move of the match 20 minutes from time. But for much of the game both sides struggled on a dustbowl of a pitch. Goalkeeper Bob Knight hardly had a shot to save all night – and Borough were not that much better in front of goal. Trevor Peake, Kevin Lane and Roy Cross added their name to the injury and illness list before the start.

That presented manager Stan Bennett with the chance to give Steve Harrison and Les Ebery a game. Both did well, particularly Harrison, who turned in a solid performance alongside Ian Goodwin in the back four. Dave Lewis set what should have been the pattern of the game in the

eleventh minute. His shot, from fully 35 yards, almost caught goalkeeper Steve Bowtell by surprise. But the teenager – with Derby County earlier this season – went full length and somehow managed to force the ball over the bar.

Centre-forward Alan Pain then fired over the top for Margate – but there were few shots on target from either side. Dust rose from the players’ boots as they battled in midfield – an indication, if the supporters needed any reminding – that the season is almost at an end. Vincent always looked a class above the other forwards and should have scored early in the second half. Put clear, he drew Bowtell, only to clip the ball high and wide.

But it was fitting that he should get the goal that rescued the match from complete oblivion. Dave Lewis and Timmy Smithers did the work and Vincent applied the finishing touch for his eighth Southern League goal in nine games. Smithers did well to keep the ball in play down the right touchline. He found Lewis, who burst past two defenders in a neat run and Vincent was there to beat Bowtell with a header as the Borough skipper hit the ball into the middle.

The rest of the match was forgettable with little action for the 800-plus crowd. Margate, already relegated are destined to finish bottom and Borough are assured of a place in the top five. There was little to play for – and it showed.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 20-05-1977

**Borough: Knight, Thomas, Briscoe, Goodwin, Smith, Phillips, Lane, Lewis, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Owen.**

Borough welcomed Dartford to Manor Park for the final Southern League Premier Division game of the season.

Borough brought their hectic season to a close with an emphatic win in a windswept match. They overpowered a Dartford side that had little to offer and the game ceased to be a contest as early as the 22nd minute. As soon as Timmy Smithers had put Nuneaton in front with their 50th Southern League goal of the season the result was no more than a foregone conclusion.

Dartford, who won the Southern League Cup and then had to fight to avoid relegation, were never in with a chance. Brendan Phillips scored Borough’s second just before half-time and Derek Owen completed the rout in the closing minutes. Borough could easily have helped themselves to a bagful of goals in a one-sided affair. Always in control they attacked at will and there was little the Kent club could do to stem the tide.

But poor finishing robbed them of a scoreline to remember and a chance to end the season in style. Smithers’ goal was a gift from Dartford defender Henry Lyle. He lost control of the ball with time and space to clear and Smithers nipped in to score. Borough forced a string of corners and missed a series of chances before Phillips netted. With three minutes to go before half-time Steve Briscoe started a move in midfield,

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



swept the ball out to Wayne Thomas and Phillips hammered in the full-back's centre with the Dartford defence in disarray. The fans then had to wait until the 80th minute before Owen supplied Borough's third goal. On as substitute for Roger Jones, he shot in off the woodwork after Dave Lewis had made the running.

But the player everyone wanted to score – Bobby Vincent – failed to get in on the act. Vincent needed two goals to join Roger Jones as Nuneaton's joint-top scorer and complete a remarkable comeback. The chances were there, he was always in the thick of the action, but he was unable to cash in. Jones, back from Italy where he played for the England Non-League side, went closer to scoring than his popular partner. The centre-forward was denied a goal by a goal-line clearance from Dartford's John Stevens after half-an-hour.

Clearly tired after his excursion into Europe he was replaced in the 65th minute. Owen went on and almost immediately brought out a superb save from Dartford keeper Roger Keen, who managed to get a hand to Owen's shot which took the pace off the ball and it trickled inches wide. Vincent then missed the easiest chance of the match after Steve Briscoe had turned the Dartford defence and moments later he volleyed over the top. Owen completed a season that contained 79 competitive matches for the Manor Park side with a goal set up by Dave Lewis.

## Peake Wins Player Of The Year

Trevor Peake is Nuneaton Borough's "Player of the Year" – after only one full season in Southern League soccer. He walked away with the award when the fans went to the ballot box in the Evening Tribune poll. Still only 20, Peake is the youngest player to hold the trophy.

Few people will disagree. Certainly not his team-mates. For since he made his debut in a Birmingham Senior Cup tie as a shy teenager, Peake has blossomed into a cornerstone of the side. His immaculate play, cool soccer brain and defensive skills have made him one of the most exciting centre-halves in non-league soccer.

### Nuneaton Borough v Coventry City 23-05-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Marston, Stephens, Thomas, Chinn, Briscoe, Goodwin, Fallon, Lewis, Phillips, Jones, Owen, Vincent, Smithers, Smith.

**Coventry:** Sealey, Oakey, Beck, Holton, Powell, Wallace, Cartwright, Ferguson, Murphy, Hutchison, Thomas, Gooding, Nardiello.

Borough welcomed Coventry City to Manor Park to play Dave Lewis' Testimonial match.

Dave Lewis wanted to say "thank you" more than 1,400 times – to the fans who turned out for his testimonial match. "I just want them to know how much I appreciate it. They made my night," said Borough's 28-year-old skipper. So too did Coventry and manager Gordon Milne. He brought no fewer than nine first-teamers to play in the game, including internationals Tommy Hutchinson, Ian Wallace and Jim

Holton. "City really did me proud. I'm most grateful." But there was no Jimmy Greaves to grace the occasion. He contacted Lewis after breaking down on the M1 to say he would not be able to make it.

The match itself was settled with a goal three minutes from time when a Derek Owen shot through a crowded goalmouth was helped over the line by Coventry defender David Gooding. "I think they gave us the goal to round off my celebrations," said Lewis in the dressing room afterwards. But there had been plenty of incident in the second half from Borough to cheer the crowd.

Terrace favourite Bobby Vincent chipped a shot against the angle of bar and post which somehow rebounded to safety. Earlier he shot over the top when well placed. Coventry's young keeper Les Sealey then produced a super save to tip over a 25-yard drive from Steve Briscoe. Then came the winner to make Lewis' testimonial complete.

## Borough VAT Fine

Nuneaton Borough Football Club were today fined £306 for failing to file VAT returns. The fine was imposed by Nuneaton magistrates after the club pleaded guilty to the offence. The court heard that the Borough was eight months overdue with the returns. In all £1,331.37p was outstanding.

## Tinny Reflects On Chairmanship

David Tinny this week looked back on his 12 month reign as chairman of Nuneaton Borough – and spoke of the heartache that followed his decision to quit. Mr Tinney severed his connections with the club a fortnight ago in a shock announcement. He hinted at a power struggle at Manor Park and claimed: "I had no alternative. It was becoming increasingly difficult to run the day to day affairs of the club."

Talking freely for the first time since the news broke, he said: "It would be easy enough to be bitter and resentful at the way things have been done. But I think it is sufficient to say that I hope Alf Scattergood and Noel Kelly get enough personal satisfaction out of the outcome to make up for the heartache I have endured..."

## Development Fund Allows Improvements

Nuneaton Borough's newly formed Development Fund has already raised £400 towards ground improvement plans. And work is scheduled to start shortly on the first project at Manor Park. The area between the main stand and the Beaumont Road gate is to be given a face lift.

Now covered in shale and loose chippings, it is to be levelled off and tarmacked. The estimated cost is around the £400 mark – cash which has already been raised by supporters.

The group organised a Race Night and a prize draw, and spokesman Bob Moss said: "It looks as if we can now go ahead with our first project. We have had a lot of support from the terraces and it is very encouraging."

## Southern League Premier Division 1976-77

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wimbledon	42	28	7	7	64	22	63
Minehead	42	23	12	7	73	39	58
Kettering Town	42	20	16	6	66	46	56
Bath City	42	20	15	7	51	30	55
Nuneaton Borough	42	20	11	11	52	35	51
Bedford Town	42	17	14	11	54	47	48
Yeovil Town	42	15	16	11	54	42	46
Dover	42	13	16	13	46	43	42
Grantham	42	14	12	16	55	50	40
Maidstone United	42	13	14	15	46	50	40
Gravesend & Northfleet	42	13	13	16	38	43	39
AP Leamington	42	12	15	15	44	53	39
Redditch United	42	12	14	16	45	54	38
Wealdstone	42	13	12	17	54	66	38
Hillingdon Borough	42	14	10	18	45	59	38
Atherstone Town	42	14	9	19	41	49	37
Weymouth	42	16	5	21	53	73	37
Dartford	42	13	10	19	52	57	36
Telford United	42	11	12	19	36	50	34
Chelmsford City	42	9	13	20	56	68	31
Burton Albion	42	10	10	22	41	52	30
Margate	42	9	10	23	47	85	28

## Borough £20,000 In Debt

Nuneaton Borough Football Club has debts amounting to more than £20,000. Up to date figures released today by chairman Noel Kelly show the club owes £20,226. Substantial loans from directors are not included in the amount.

But Mr Kelly is far from dismayed. He said: "It may look bad, but we have stopped the slide. Things are definitely on the upward trend. The figures may not show that but I can see it."

The figures are a result of an intensive look into the club's finances insisted upon by Mr Kelly when he took over a month ago. "We have to lay our cards on the table," he explained. "People ought to know where we stand."

Mr Kelly refused to comment at length on figures issued earlier this year by his predecessor David Tinney. They showed Borough to have paid off a considerable slice of the debts. But Mr Kelly said: "I don't know where Mr Tinney got those figures from."

Borough lost something like £4-£5,000 a season over the past three years. This was considerably reduced last year – despite several set-backs. Transfer fees cost £2,300, approximately £1,194 was lost on the Anglo-Italian Tournament – and £1,800 on an ill-fated attempt to set up a new Football Pool.

"But for those things we would have shown a working profit on the season," said the chairman.

## Bennett Signs New Contract



Stan Bennett settled his future with Nuneaton Borough by signing a new two-year contract. The final details were completed today and afterwards he said: "We now must go out and try to win something for the supporters."

Changes at boardroom level had delayed the signing, but after talks with new chairman Noel Kelly, Bennett was more than pleased to stay on as manager.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Borough Launch Appeal Fund

Nuneaton Borough have sent out a "come and help us" appeal to the public. The appeal has been launched by chairman Noel Kelly, who says: "Like every football club, we need the town behind us."

"We can make it," he says. "But we need help to shorten the long road back. What we are asking is for the people of Nuneaton to help us reduce the debt and ensure the future of the club."



**Bob Turpie heads goalwards with Alan Wykes on the floor and the ball is on its way for what was to prove the winning goal.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Ian Goodwin chipped a free-kick around the Racing Club wall for the equaliser and Turpie headed them in front. That should have been the signal for Borough to go all out for goals.

But Goodwin missed a 60th minute penalty, Dave Lewis hit the woodwork with a thunderous right foot drive and other chances went begging.

While this was going on there was always a chance the visitors would grab an equaliser. And when Morby stepped up for his second penalty a replay looked certain.

Knight performed his rescue act to spare Borough's blushes and they crept sheepishly into the first qualifying round.

## Brierley Hill Alliance — 1st Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Brierley Hill to Manor Park for a 1st Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Goodwin, Turpie, Jones, Phillips, Smithers. Sub: Phelps.

Brierley Hill: Everton, Gwynne, Cooper, Bills, Sorrow, Swallow, Vincent, Hickman, Nickless, Sander, Harwood. Sub: Taylor.

Borough disguised the true story behind a one-sided cup tie under a cloak of missed chances. The two-goal scoreline was ridiculous – they could have won by double figures in an incredible game.

Chance after chance was tossed away and the Brierley Hill goal had some escapes that bordered on the miraculous. Yet just two goals, both scored by Timmy Smithers, separated the teams at the end of the tie.

Smithers rounded off an eventful week with what was a well-deserved personal triumph. Only five days earlier he had gone in goal when Bob Knight was injured at Redditch and had been beaten twice.

Then he was singled out for special praise by Stan Bennett for his contribution to the side in his first

## Racing Club Warwick — Preliminary Round

Borough welcomed Racing Club Warwick to Manor Park to play a Preliminary Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Goodwin, Fleet, Lewis, Jones, Turpie, Smithers. Sub: Phelps.

Racing Club: Hyland, McGoff, Maurice, Taylor, Morby, Wykes, C. Downing, Fisher, Shrimpton, Johnson, Allsop, M. Taylor. Sub: A. Downing..

Someone forgot to tell Racing Club Warwick that they had no chance. The Midland Combination side were all set up to be played off the park by powerful Borough. It was, most people thought, just a formality for the home side. Such a foregone conclusion that barely 1200 fans bothered to turn up on a bright afternoon. But Racing Club remembered that the Cup is soccer's greatest leveller – and gave Nuneaton the shock of their lives.

And only a dying minutes penalty save from Bob Knight prevented them from forcing a shock replay. The fans fell silent as Cliff Morby stepped up to take the kick, given against Trevor Peake for a foul on Mick Taylor. But Knight pushed it over the top – to a great roar of relief.

Borough player-manager Stan Bennett was far from pleased. His pre-match prediction that the goals would flow never materialised. "It is always difficult to play against sides like these," he said. But he admitted : "We didn't play well. We are still searching for the right blend." The pattern of the tie was set in the Racing Club dressing room long before kick-off. Manager Gerry Baker talked to his players for an hour and a half.

He had watched Nuneaton twice and worked out a plan to stifle their much vaunted attacking flair. It worked: "Everyone did exactly what I told them to do. No manager can ask for more than that," he said. But Baker had no complaints about the result – or the penalty miss.

"These things happen," he said. "And Nuneaton were the better side. They were a lot fitter than us. But I was proud of the way my lads played."

But even Baker could not have planned for the seventh minute penalty that gave his side a great start. Roy Cross was penalised for hands and Morby beat Knight from the spot.

Then two goals in three minutes just before half-time eased their problems.



**Exciting teenager Timmy Smithers blasts Nuneaton's first goal to set them on the path to FA Cup victory against Brierley Hill.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Lye Town — 2nd Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Lye Town to Manor Park to play a 2nd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Turpie, Smithers. Sub: Phelps.

Lye Town : Warhurst, Plant, Edwards, B. Taylor, Morton, Jackson, McGrath, T. Taylor, Smith, Siddaway, Parry. Sub: Cole.

Borough kept their sights firmly set on the FA Cup horizon – after a gamble that paid off. Player-manager Stan Bennett decided to risk the leg he thought he had broken five days earlier. But the injury stood up to the test and the player manager stayed on.

But fears of a Cup shock by West Midlands League Lye Town were dispelled in the first 16 minutes. Bennett admitted he was worried about them before the game – but an explosive start solved those problems.

After 16 minutes Borough were two goals up and goalkeeper Jamie Bennett had saved a penalty. And Lye were never able to recover. They were fortunate in fact, not to be beaten by six. Brendan Phillips shot Borough in front after just seven minutes with a goal to remember.

He beat three defenders and slammed

season as a professional. And he rounded it all off with a goal in each half against gallant, but completely outclassed Brierley Hill.

Few games at Manor Park have been so one-sided. The West Midland Leaguers were outplayed and overrun. Their defence was in a daze for nearly all the ninety minutes. Some sides can play all season without setting up the number of chances Borough created.

Roger Jones, Bob Turpie, Ian Goodwin and Brendan Phillips should all have joined Smithers on the goal trail. No-one suffered more than Jones who badly needs to find the net to give his confidence a boost. The big centre-forward has failed to score in eight matches since his transfer from Stafford Rangers.

On Saturday he was constantly involved – always a threat – and often desperately unlucky. But, like all strikers, Jones thrives on goals and must now be wondering when he is going to score.

Like the other forwards on Saturday, he had a marvellous opportunity to put that right and Brierley must have been amazed that they escaped so lightly. Borough peppered in shots from all angles, most of them unfortunately,

off target. Those that did get through were stopped by keeper Bob Everton, although some he knew little about.

Jamie Bennett in the Borough goal could have spent his first-team debut on the terraces and not conceded a goal.

In the end, Smithers' goals, one after 31 minutes and the other half-an-hour later, carried Borough through to the second qualifying round. But they will be having nightmares about those missed chances long after this season's cup run is over.



**Roger Jones and Kirk Stephens both put in a challenge as Warhurst gropes for the ball. But the goalkeeper managed to clutch it on the line.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

a powerful left foot shot past Keith Warhurst. Four minutes later Lye were awarded a penalty against Roy Cross for hands after some confusion in the Borough goal area.

Centre-forward Don Smith stepped up to take the kick that would have put Lye back in the tie. But Jamie Bennett, who has done a magnificent job in goal for Nuneaton, flung himself to his left and saved. Five minutes after that it was all over when Timmy Smithers grabbed his third FA Cup goal of the season.

Then it was a question of how many Nuneaton would get as the difference in class between the two sides became more and more apparent. Brave defensive play, courageous goalkeeping – and missed chances kept the Manor Park side at bay.

Borough should have crushed Lye out of sight in a hectic start to the second half. But the scoreline stayed the same and there was nothing Lye could do about it.

They hardly created a clear cut chance against Borough's solid back four and were outclassed in midfield where Phillips had a superb game. He was booked along with Bennett and full-back Kirk Stephens, but there was no one on the park to match his skill.

So Borough went through, Bennett's gamble paid off and they now face Bromsgrove or AP Leamington in the next round.

## **Bromsgrove Rovers – 3rd Qualifying Round**

Borough welcomed Bromsgrove Rovers to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Phelps.

Bromsgrove: Lawrence, Selby, Bentley, O'Meara, Parsons, Dyer, Kenning, Mullen, Edwards, Hope. Sub: Deakin.

Two second half goals won a gale-blown Cup tie and moved Borough to within 90 minutes of a place in the



**Brendan Phillips rifles a left foot shot past Bromsgrove keeper Mike Lawrence – and Borough are on their way to victory.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

First Round. Brendan Phillips after nearly an hour and Roger Jones in the dying minutes found the target to sink brave Bromsgrove. But the game was a triumph for one man, Dave Lewis.

For he was the inspiration and driving force behind the success of the Manor Park side. Lewis passed a pre-match fitness test on an ankle injury that has troubled him for some time. But it was hardly noticeable as he urged his side on to victory with a superb display.

Lewis was magnificent in midfield in conditions that would have daunted lesser players. He ignored the wind, rain and mud to set an example few Southern League skippers could match. And fittingly, he had a hand in the two goals that kept the side on course for success.

It was Lewis who played the ball forward for Roger Jones to set up the chance for Phillips to score after 58 minutes. And it was Lewis who gave Bob Turpie the chance to send over the cross for Jones to score with four minutes to go. Added to that, he almost scored himself with three shots in rapid succession – all of which could have brought goals.

In the end it was his sheer courage, guts and determination that divided the two teams in a typical Cup tie. Few

people would argue that the Borough skipper is having his best season. He has unearthed skills that not many supporters have given him credit for in the past.

But Lewis has long been one of the most respected players in the premier division – and the fans are beginning to realise it as well. Borough had their problems. Anxiety showed in their play before half-time when they tried to rush everything. Consequently they made Bromsgrove look composed and there were a lot of worried faces with the scoreline still blank at half-time.

Then only the bar stopped them from falling behind when Compton Edwards hit a first-time shot in the 49th minute. But they survived, took the lead through Phillips – and Bromsgrove folded. And Jones, who had always caused problems for Rovers in the air, scored with his header to make sure.

The tie had no chance of being a classic – the conditions made sure of that. Short, sharp gusts of gale force wind made it treacherous for defenders and forwards alike and miserable for the fans. But Nuneaton are still there after their most difficult task so far.

And Lewis deserved to lead them out in the First Round on the strength of his performance alone.

## Barton Rovers — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Barton Rovers for a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Barton: Berry, Evans, Norris, Crossley, Downward, Dollimore, Dunn, Blythe, Bodsworth, Turner, Fossey. Sub: Smith.

Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Turpie, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.

Stan Bennett took one last, fleeting glance at the sloping, postage stamp sized Barton pitch and put his side's FA Cup display into perspective. Rain was still sheeting across the rolling Bedfordshire hills as the players dashed through the darkness to the comforting warmth of their team coach.

Behind them, their fans were celebrating in the Barton Social Club: "I'm glad that's over," said the Borough player-manager. "Leeds United would have struggled out there today."

But Borough were through to the First Round after a tie that was never as close as the scoreline suggests. They hit Barton with two goals before half-time and were 3-0 up with only five minutes to go. Barton then scored from the penalty spot and grabbed another two minutes later.

By that time though the game had been won and the village club's fairytale hopes of further progress had been wrecked. They were dashed as early as the second minute when Brendan Phillips set up the chance for Timmy Smithers to shoot Nuneaton in front.

Bob Turpie then converted a penalty after Phillips had been brought down and Bennett hit the third 14 minutes from the end. The three goal lead just about summed up the difference between the two sides. But the wind, rain and clinging Bedfordshire clay drew the sides closer together as the tie progressed. And the two goal finish left the friendly South Midlands League club with a lot of memories.

Their first followed a harsh penalty

decision against Roy Cross for what looked a perfectly legal tackle on Gordon Turner. Barton skipper Gwyn Evans scored from the spot and slack play by Borough gave substitute Pete Smith their second. The referee hardly had time to re-start the match before the final whistle confirmed Borough's place in the First Round.

Before the Barton goals Borough had battled to stamp their authority on the game. Tightly marked Phillips was a constant threat, Bennett and skipper Dave Lewis provided the grit in midfield and the back four gave little away. They owed a lot to Cross, who had his best game for the club.

The ex-Port Vale defender showed aggression that is rarely a feature of his game and emerged as man of the match. It was easy to see why Barton do so well in the South Midlands League where they seldom lose. Determined and well organised, they stuck to their game, despite the obvious difference in class between the two sides.

Any team that can come back and score twice when everything appeared to have crumbled around them deserve special praise. But platitudes are no consolation in the FA Cup where the result overshadows everything.

They were left to count the proceeds of a record gate – in excess of 1,500 of which at least 500 came from Nuneaton. And Borough were left to celebrate a result that could mean so much to their hopes for the future.

## Crook Town — 1st Round Proper

Borough made the journey to Crook Town to play a 1st Round Proper FA Cup tie.

Crook: Pollard, Riley, Butterfield, B. Newton, Gott, Weatherell, White, Temple, Turnbull, Suggett, D. Newton. Sub: Hussey.

Borough: J. Bennett, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, S. Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Briscoe, Smithers. Sub: Turpie.

Stan Bennett fought his way to the dressing rooms through a mass of

deliriously happy Borough fans and then said: "What other club would get support like that." They hugged him, kissed him – almost lifted him off his feet. The young Borough player-manager could hardly believe it. "I didn't think I was ever going to get off," he said.

"Now I know what they mean when they say this is the Manchester United and Aston Villa of non league soccer.

Nearly a thousand fans made the 400 mile trip to the North East for the Cup tie. And the scenes at the final whistle triggered off memories and turned back the clock.

The fans were celebrating a triumph that put the Manor Park club through to the second round for the first time in ten years. They turned the Crook Town ground into a mass of blue and white to witness a Cup tie that was much closer than the scoreline suggests.



Roger Jones soars above Crook defender Gott to head Borough's first goal after 25 minutes. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough held all of the aces before half-time, went into a two goal lead and looked in a different class. Then they lost two goal centre-forward Roger Jones, saw Crook reduce the arrears – and were under pressure for 20 minutes. But an 80th minute goal from Steve Briscoe dealt a stunning blow to the home side.



**Jones again – with his second goal just before half-time and the one that left him with damaged knee ligaments.**

Photo Nuneaton Evening Tribune

It virtually ended Crook's hopes and midfield player Willie White put through his own net on the stroke of full-time.

Borough's Cup hopes looked to be out on a limb during the spell of second half pressure from Crook. But Bennett disagreed: "I honestly didn't think we were going to lose," he said.

Borough swept into a 25th minute lead with a superb headed goal by Jones from a Brendan Phillips free kick. Jones struck again three minutes from half-time with an equally stunning goal from a left foot shot. What the fans did not know was that the big striker had damaged his ligaments in scoring the goal. He stayed on until ten minutes into the second half and then had to go off and was replaced by Bob Turpie.

Almost immediately Jamie Bennett was involved in the kind of incident that gives goalkeepers nightmares. He went up to take an inswinging corner from

White and punched it into his own net.

That was the signal for Crook to throw everything at the Manor Park side as they went flat out for an equaliser. But they left themselves open for a goal on the break – and it came ten minutes from time.

Turpie superbly turned his defender and laid on a pass for Timmy Smithers, whose cross caught goalkeeper Dave Pollard on the near post and Briscoe scored from a yard out. From that moment, there could be only one result. Borough were through. They knew it, their supporters knew it – and so did Crook.

Fog began to roll in from the surrounding hills as the tie drew to a close. But there was one more incident to come. White, with no-one near him, suddenly turned the ball back towards his own goal. The goalkeeper had come out and the ball rolled past him. He

galloped back in a vain attempt to keep it out, but it rolled over the line and just a few seconds later, the whistle signalled Borough's triumph.

And the fans rushed on to the pitch. Determined to savour every moment of an afternoon that meant so much to everyone at Manor Park.

## Lincoln City – 2nd Round Proper

Borough made the journey to Lincoln City to play a 2nd Round FA Cup tie.

Lincoln: Grotier, Guest, Neale, Booth, Ellis, Cooper, Hubbard, Ward, Graham, Smith, Harding. Sub: Fleming.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Briscoe, Smithers. Sub: Bennett.

Inquests raged and arguments flared after Borough's sensational FA Cup defeat at Sincil Bank. Questions were asked – should the tie have been played on the frostbound pitch? Did Stan Bennett make his biggest blunder when he left himself out. And – why did Borough wear boots on a pitch like an ice rink?

They will be repeated over the years. Most will stay unanswered. Only the facts will remain – and a scoreline that will cast a shadow over the club in seasons to come.

The facts are simple, harsh and cruel. Borough were outclassed, outfought, out-run, over powered and out-manoeuvred. They had no chance from the word go and only the brilliance of goalkeeper Bob Knight prevented Lincoln from entering their name into the FA Cup record books.

Anyone who has any doubts about that should have gone into Borough's dressing room at the end. It was like a tomb – full of dazed, bewildered players who had gone through a nightmare.

For, whatever anyone says about the conditions and the footwear the sides used, Borough knew they had played badly. Lincoln, in training shoes, kept their feet, while Nuneaton slithered all over the place.



**Hundreds of Nuneaton Borough fans made the trek North today to cheer on the Manor Park outfit in the FA Cup. They made their way by coach and train to Crook for today's first round tie. This group of fans gave the thumbs up to Borough's chances before leaving the Bus Station for the 200 miles trip.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune





**These Borough fans were ready to raise the roof at Lincoln decked out in their blue and white scarves and with their banners and rattles.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

ceased to be a contest from then on.

A harsh penalty given against Gary Fleet and converted by City skipper Sam Ellis put Borough in deeper trouble before half-time.

Some of the Nuneaton players changed their boots during the interval, but it made no difference – the die had already been cast. John Ward made it 3-0, Sam Ellis scored another dubious penalty and Peter Graham completed the rout. Graham showed why manager Taylor preferred him to crowd favourite Percy Freeman.

His skills shone through where a big player would have struggled and his two goals inside two minutes in the final stages vindicated Taylor's brave decision.

Graham's goal put Borough out of their misery, ended their death throes and further emphasised the difference between the two sides – if any more evidence was needed.

So Borough, who fought long and hard through six earlier rounds for their chance of instant fame, were bundled back into obscurity. Now comes the testing time for the new regime at Manor Park that has done so much to restore the faith of their fans this season.

No-one can argue with that. But if the two teams had played in Wellington boots, Lincoln would still have torn them apart. And Borough simply had no answer as the Imps found the form that took the Fourth Division by storm.

They had the advantage of full time professionalism on their side. They played on the pitch last Saturday and trained on it all week. Their preparation had to be better than Borough's – but it was the way they set about everything that was so impressive.

Manager Graham Taylor had left no stone unturned – and it showed from the first whistle. They probed Borough's weaknesses, stifled their skills and

turned them into a pale shadow of the side that has brought Manor Park back to life this season.

The atmosphere, made electric by more than 3,000 Nuneaton fans at the start, soon was tinged with sadness as realisation dawned. Realisation that Borough were not going to add another glorious chapter to their history. There was no glory at Sincil Bank – not even pride in defeat. That was clear as soon as Lincoln's Alan Harding forced a scrambled goal in the eleventh minute.

Phil Hubbard set up the goal and went on to torment and dazzle Borough with a magnificent performance. He and Knight were the men of the match that



**Borough fans in jubilant mood as they wait at Trent Valley Station for the train to Lincoln. Their mood was less jubilant on the way home, as they had witnessed their favourites humiliated in a 6-0 defeat.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Bridgend Town — 3rd Qualifying Round

Borough made the journey to Bridgend Town to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy tie.

Bridgend: Weaver, Mathews, Harris, Slee, Moore, Stapleton, Jones, Beattie, Bekker, Linnane, Davies. Sub: Colwill.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Fleet, Phillips, Jones, Briscoe, Smithers. Sub: Thomas.

Borough presented their fans with a Christmas bonus they could do without – a Non League Cup replay against Bridgend. Held to a draw by the Welsh Premier League side, they now have to fit in an extra game this week. But at least it will pay off the debts they incurred on their trip to industrial South Wales.

For they travelled home with an empty purse after a grim struggle in the wind, rain, mud and biting cold. Gate receipts came to £47 – not enough to pay for Borough's travelling expenses and the referee and linemen.

So instead of sharing the proceeds, the two clubs have to stand an equal part of the loss. Borough were never in danger of losing the tie, Bridgend keeper Chris Weaver had far more to do than Bob Knight and chances went astray. On the other hand, they were never able to stamp any real authority on the game.

They attacked without conviction and struggled in midfield. Clearly the Lincoln defeat is still having an effect. The spark they showed before the Sincil Bank disaster has dimmed – they badly need a couple of goals for it to be rekindled.

But player-manager Stan Bennett may have to think hard about the formation of the side. Midfield is where his problems lay on Saturday. He could not play himself, but it is obvious there is not room for Brendan Phillips and Gary Fleet in the same side – certainly not in the middle of the park.

They are too alike. Both struggled in

the heavy conditions and threw a heavy burden on skipper Dave Lewis, who had to do the battling alone. There is no balance and nothing like the aggression they have when Bennett is there himself.

Defensively, they were sound. Bridgend winger Gary Jones caused problems for Kirk Stephens and Graham Smith. But Trevor Peake and Roy Cross bottled up the middle with Cross again in superb form. Free kicks littered the tie. Smith was booked in the first-half and Bridgend midfielder Andy Beattie was sent off near the end.

Beattie, one of the home side's best players, received his marching orders following a foul on Roger Jones seven minutes from the end. By that time though, the players had become frustrated by the inconsistency of Bristol referee, Mr K. Bissex and Beattie paid the price.

A minute later, Timmy Smithers missed Borough's best chance when Jones presented him with an open goal – only for him to shoot wide. Had he found the net, the scoreline would have been a fair reflection of the match.

For Borough showed most of the skill under the clinging conditions, although Bridgend battled with grim determination. They may find things difficult on the wide open spaces of Manor Park and Borough should go through to the First Round Proper.

## Bridgend Town — 3rd Qualifying Round Replay

Borough welcomed Bridgend Town to Manor Park to play a 3rd Qualifying Round FA Trophy replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Lewis, Bennett, Phillips, Briscoe, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Fleet.

Unimpressive Borough clawed their way through to the first round of the Non League Cup after a sensational replay against battling Bridgend. Player-manager Stan Bennett was sent off, Borough twice hit back from

behind – and Gary Fleet hit a dramatic injury time winner, to keep them on the Wembley trail.

Fleet, on as substitute for Steve Briscoe, scored with a right foot shot after Timmy Smithers had made the running. The goal avoided what could have been a catastrophe for the Manor Park side. For Bridgend looked the better side for long periods as Borough struggled to put their game together.

They created more problems for themselves than they did for the Welsh Leaguers. And Bennett summed it up afterwards when he said: "If we do get through to Wembley, we will look back on this as our hardest game."

Bennett was sent off – for the first time in his career – after a 19th minute incident involving Bridgend centre-half Clive Stapleton. They clashed near the trainer's box and Willenhall referee Mr A. C. Lewis ordered them both to the dressing rooms. That increased Borough's problems. Without the driving force of their player-manager they looked a team lost.

A drab first half then ended in dramatic style – with two goals in the space of a minute. Jan Bekker shot Bridgend into the lead – and Brendan Phillips equalised only seconds later. Both were superb goals and hardly reflected the standard of football served up by the sides before the break.

More shocks followed and Bekker restored Bridgend's lead thirteen minutes into the second half with a spectacular volley from a free-kick.

Clearly Borough were in dire trouble and Bennett sent on Fleet in place of Briscoe in the 67th minute. Almost immediately Borough equalised. Timmy Smithers sent over a corner, Roger Jones had a header kicked off the line – and Dave Lewis scored with a shot that took a deflection.

That would have flattened most sides, but not Bridgend. Winger Gary Jones and Bekker continued to cause Nuneaton all kinds of problems and the

Manor Park side's hopes of more cup glory were out on a limb.

The tie could have gone either way in the last 20 minutes before Fleet sent a wave of joy – and relief – flooding across the terraces. Extra time looked a certainty as Timmy Smithers picked up the ball and ran at the Bridgend defence.

He slipped the ball to Fleet, who controlled the ball superbly on the edge of the box – and hit a low, right foot shot just inside the post to score a goal to remember and win a match Borough will want to forget.

## Banbury United – 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Banbury United to Manor Park to play a FA Trophy 1st Round Proper tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Bennett, Phillips, Lewis, Jones, Fleet, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.

Banbury: Thomas, Hastie, Casey, A. Kearns, Matthews, Day, Montgomery, Unitt, O. Kearns, Slaughter, Jarvis. Sub: Worthington.

Borough powered their way through to the second round of the Non League Cup – thanks to their fans. A few hours before the kick-off the chances of the match being played were remote. But a small army of supporters worked feverishly on the slush-bound pitch to make it possible.

And they were rewarded with an



**Timmy Smithers raises his arms in triumph to salute his second goal, which sunk Banbury with just nine minutes of the memorable tie left.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

incident-packed, six-goal cup tie that was a credit to both teams. The fans saw Borough dominate the first half – and then fall behind to a shock goal just before the break. They saw them hit back in a thrilling five goal second half which confirmed their obvious superiority over the Southern League First Division North side.

They saw the influence player-manager Stan Bennett and skipper Dave Lewis have on the side. Both returned, Lewis from injury and Bennett after a three match suspension – and it made all of the difference.

Lewis was again superb as a stand-in striker and Bennett held the midfield together as well as scoring a spectacular goal. And they watched in admiration as the skills of Gary Fleet shone through the clinging mud.

Fleet proved that if you are good enough you can play under any

conditions. He was magnificent and received a richly deserved ovation from the crowd when he went off with a leg injury ten minutes from the end.

Kirk Stephens was another player worthy of a special mention – along with Banbury midfielder Paul Day. But all of the players deserved credit for the way they tackled the tie on a boggy mess of a pitch.

A combination of poor finishing, near misses and some good saves from an often shaky and sometimes spectacular goalkeeper, in Martin Thomas, kept Borough at bay for 40 minutes

Then Banbury broke quickly, took advantage of a slack Nuneaton defence – and Steve Slaughter prodded them in front. But that goal was wiped out by Timmy Smithers with the second half less than a minute old.

Bennett then hit a spectacular volley and a goal from Roger Jones after a Lewis shot had been blocked put Borough 3-1 up.

Another “bad” goal put Banbury back in the game. Slaughter was again the scorer with a shot that somehow squeezed itself in between Bob Knight and his near post.

But Smithers finally knocked all of the fight out of the brave Banbury with his second, nine minutes from the end.

And a match to remember ended with Borough in complete command – and through to the last 32 for the first time in five seasons.



**More problems for Banbury goalkeeper Thomas as Roger Jones hits Borough's third goal, after a shot from Dave Lewis had been blocked.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Spennymoor United —2nd Round Proper

Borough welcomed Spennymoor United to Manor Park to play a FA Trophy Second Round tie..

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Briscoe, Peake, Walsh, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Goodwin.

Spennymoor: Rowell, Simpson, Vickers, Kell, Robson, Hickman, Hunter, Banks, Reilly, Hart, Curry. Sub: Arthur.

Brendan Phillips shot Borough into the last 16 of the Non League Cup amid scenes that captured the magic of Wembley. Jubilation greeted his dramatic last minute goal.

Team mates mobbed him and fans spilled onto the pitch. But for Spennymoor there was only heartbreak and disbelief. Their players sank to the ground in despair while Borough celebrated.

No-one felt the anguish more than goalkeeper Steve Rowell, led from the pitch with tears streaming down his face. For no-one did more than him to keep his side's Wembley dreams alive.

It was easy to see why he is rated the best goalkeeper in the Rothmans Northern League. One of his saves from Timmy Smithers in the first-half was nothing short of sensational. But he was powerless to prevent the goal that won an all action cup tie. Spennymoor looked certain to have forced a replay when Phillips moved on to a left wing



**Timmy Smithers, cheeks puffed and eyes transfixed on the ball, launches himself into a diving header during a period of Borough pressure.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



**Spennymoor winger Dave Curry hooks the ball clear as both Dave Lewis and Roger Jones wait to cash in during the first half.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

cross from Steve Briscoe. He brought the ball down with his left foot, burst past two defenders – and beat Rowell with his right. The goal followed almost continuous second half pressure from the Manor Park side.

They virtually camped out in Spennymoor's territory, but the Northerners showed them how to defend under duress. Often they had their whole team in the 18 yard box as Borough searched for a goal. And whenever they managed to find a way through there was Rowell to keep them at bay. The tie went just as Borough player-manager Stan Bennett predicted – it was hard, bruising and physical.

Three players were booked, Billy Robson and Dave Curry of Spennymoor and Borough's Arthur Walsh. Others were fortunate to escape. Walsh was

drafted into the Nuneaton side in a last minute reshuffle when Roy Cross cried off with flu. He took over in midfield and Ian Goodwin, who has not played since last October, had to go on to the subs bench.

The changes upset Borough's balance and it showed in the first 20 minutes when the visitors made the running. But Nuneaton managed to organise themselves and should have been in front at half-time. Then came the second half onslaught and the tension built towards breaking point in a nail-biting finish.

Goodwin, clearly not fit, went on in place of Walsh in the final 15 minutes without being able to make an impression. But just when it looked as if Borough would face a 400 mile round trip to Durham on Wednesday, Phillips changed their destination – and kept them on course for Wembley.

## Willington — 3rd Round Proper

Borough welcomed Willington to Manor Park to play a FA Trophy 3rd Round tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Owen, Smithers (Goodwin 85) .

Roger Jones, who makes a habit of appearing at Wembley, took Borough a step nearer the twin towers last night. And Jones is today more determined than ever to return there.



**Goal number one coming up for Roger Jones and Nuneaton, as he neatly flicks a Derek Owen through ball past a Willington defender.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

“I want to get back to Wembley – and win,” says Jones.

Jones hit both goals to book Borough’s passage into the quarter final stages of the Non League Cup – three games away from the final. He struck in the 37th and 79th minutes to sink a stubborn resistance from plucky Willington. And the two goals from the big striker came at crucial stages in the gritty cup-tie in the Manor Park mud.

Goal number one came after Borough had been forced back on the defensive by an adventurous Willington team. Borough answered manager Stan Bennett’s call for a goal and Jones shot home past Willington keeper Maurice Short from a Derek Owen cross.

But Borough almost made the fatal mistake of sitting back and dreaming of the next round – at the start of the second half. Northern Leaguers Willington snapped up on Borough’s relaxation and brought the home side down to earth with a bump when they grabbed an equaliser.

David Pearson attacked the Borough back four and crossed for Tommy Holden to crash the ball past Knight in the 54th minute. But Nuneaton soon regained their firm footing after a 20 minute bumpy ride. Gary Fleet had a

shot blocked by a mass of Willington defenders. Jones had a header well saved by Short, and a Lewis effort was scrambled away.

It was a piece of sheer magic from Brendan Phillips that put Borough firmly in the driving seat – and kept them on the Wembley trail. Phillips, who had been overshadowed for most of the game by some fine marking, broke through in the 79th minute. He raced 30 yards with the ball beat two men, and sent over a pinpoint cross.

Jones hit a first time shot, it took a slight deflection off the head of Willington’s Colin Coulthard and sailed in. Jones’ goal finally ended Willington’s hopes of cup success. But they left the Midlands respected by many fans at Manor Park. They were admired by the crowd for their willingness to attack away from home – a policy that many sides fail to adopt.

Willington club officials said they came to Manor Park to attack, and admitted that class and experience finally beat them.

As for Borough the dream of reaching their first-ever Wembley final is still bright. But as Roger Jones can testify, it’s going to be a tough fight.

## Scarborough — Quarter Final

Borough made the journey to Scarborough Athletic to play a FA Trophy Quarter Final tie.



**Borough director Noel Kelly makes his own inspection of the waterlogged Scarborough pitch.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Fate reached out to pluck Borough from the jaws of defeat. Their Wembley dreams had been eroded by two goals inside 30 minutes from impressive Scarborough. But the quarter final was brought to a bizarre end at half-time by the weather. Incessant rain had turned the pitch into a paddy field. Pools of water lay inches deep. Home supporters and officials, sensing the tie would be called off, invaded the pitch as the teams walked off at the interval.

They used towels, mops, buckets, their red and white scarves – and even the second team kit – in an attempt to soak up the mess. But that only served to convince Scunthorpe referee Mr Tony Jenkins that the tie could not continue. He decided it would have been farcical to go on – and he was right.

## Scarborough — Quarter Final

Borough made the journey to Scarborough Athletic to play a FA Trophy Quarter Final tie.



**Anxious faces tell the story as Scarborough fans and officials use buckets, towels, scarves and the second team kit in a bid to mop up the rain.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Peake, Goodwin, Cross, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Briscoe, Jones, Fleet. Sub: Smith.

Borough battled magnificently at Scarborough to keep their dreams of Wembley alive. They hit back from behind and defied all the odds to earn a replay. John Woodall shot the Yorkshire side in front after only fifteen minutes. But Timmy Smithers, recalled after being dropped on Saturday, headed an equaliser seven minutes from half-time.

And the stage is now set for another meeting between the two clubs next Monday that could lift the roof off Manor Park. Reprieved on Saturday when the game was abandoned with

Scarborough two goals up, Nuneaton went back as “no hoppers.” But it was a different Borough who took on the cup holders for the second time. .

Four days, another 350 miles, and a roasting from manager Stan Bennett – changed all that. They responded to the call for an all out effort to a man. Everyone fought, everyone battled, no-one let them down – the character returned to the side.

At times they lived dangerously. Scarborough hit the woodwork three times and Bob Knight made some brave saves. Scunthorpe referee Tony Jenkins played six minutes over with Borough under pressure.



**Timmy Smithers gets in a header - and the ball is on its way into the net for Borough's 38th minute equaliser which kept them on course for Wembley.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But they refused to give in with a defiant display that made their fans proud. From the start, it was clear Nuneaton were a changed side.

But when Woodall scored the signs were ominous. Borough's defence was caught square. He outpaced Ian Goodwin and found the net, despite a brave attempt by Knight to repair the damage. A minute later, Brendan Phillips was booked and Tony Aveyard, Scarborough's danger man in the first game began to threaten.

Roger Jones was booked for dissent as Nuneaton pulled themselves together and started to hit back. But it took a superb save from Knight to deny the home side another goal on the half-hour. He turned a shot from Woodall around the post after Trevor Peake had slipped on the greasy surface. Then came the goal that stunned Scarborough.

Jones played a part. Steve Briscoe pulled the ball back from the line – and there was Smithers to head his 15th goal of the season. The tension built as the action continued and Scarborough launched more pressure.

Borough pulled players back into a crowded goalmouth. Peake was magnificent at centre-half and Goodwin was a tower of strength. Woodhall headed against the post and Knight made another breath-taking save. A post again saved Borough as Scarborough launched their last ditch assault. But Borough had done too much, worked too hard to throw it away.

Ninety minutes came and went and still the tie went on. Then, at least six minutes over time, the whistle signalled the end of a game to remember.

Borough's players hugged each other, assistant manager Stan Marshall and substitute Graham Smith ran on to the pitch unable to contain themselves any longer. For the Manor Park side had come through what could have been a nightmare – to keep a dream alive.

## Scarborough— Quarter Final Replay

Borough welcomed Scarborough to Manor Park for a FA Trophy Quarter Final Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Peake, Goodwin, Cross, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Briscoe, Jones, Fleet. Sub: Smith.

Wembley disappeared from Nuneaton Borough's horizon after 90 minutes of heartbreak at Manor Park. Heartbreak for the fans, who flocked back in their hundreds. More than 5,000 of them watched a disappointing replay.

Heartbreak for the players, who had been given every chance of staying on the glory trail – only to fail at the crucial time. Heartbreak for Gary Fleet, stretchered off and taken to hospital early in the second half. And, above all, heartbreak for Ian Goodwin, whose own goal, decided the tie after a split second of confusion in the goalmouth.

Yet Borough pounded them for half an hour without being able to find the net. But the longer it went on, the more obvious it became that Nuneaton were not destined to score.

Their football, played at a frantic pace, was riddled with misplaced passes and always lacked conviction. Scarborough on the other hand, were superbly organised, kept their heads and always knew what they were doing. Their experience and the influence of manager Colin Appleton showed in everything they did.

Borough fought. No-one could condemn them for lack of effort. But they never reached anything like the standards they have set this season – they froze at the critical time.

Brendan Phillips spurred them early on with his skills. They pulled Roy Cross back behind the defence to cater for the quick breaks which Scarborough are so good at. Scarborough faced pressure, but they soon began to show the coolness, skill and composure that has taken them to Wembley three times in four seasons.

Full-back Sean Marshall hit the woodwork following a free-kick in the 40th minute, and Bill Ayre, a superb centre-half, robbed Steve Briscoe. Briscoe sent in the only on target effort for Nuneaton before the break – a header comfortably saved by goalkeeper Dave Chapman.

Chapman looked far from happy under pressure, particularly in the air. But Borough were never able to cash in and they went behind only a minute into the second half.

It was a moment of tragedy for Ian Goodwin. Gerry Donaghue sent over a left wing corner, Jeff Barmby headed goalwards, the ball hit Goodwin – and flew off into the other corner of the net. That silenced the crowd and, four minutes later, there were incredible scenes in the Scarborough goalmouth.

Kirk Stephens crossed, Steve Briscoe headed in and the ball disappeared as chaos and confusion reigned. Players hacked and kicked on the goal-line amid scenes that resembled a street fight. In the middle of it all lay Gary Fleet, who was stretchered off.

Graham Smith went on as substitute and two minutes later, Chapman denied Phillips a goal. The Borough midfield player lobbed the ball towards the net, but the keeper arched backwards to force it over the top. Smith shot wide and Smithers headed into the side netting as Nuneaton made a desperate bid to save the game.

Roger Jones caused problems and Chapman looked shaky. But the North Yorkshire side were not to be denied. Doubts crept into the fans' minds as Scarborough showed Borough how to defend. They were fortunate to survive, however, when Marshall cleared off the line 15 minutes from time. Smithers chased, Chapman dropped the ball, Smithers played it back and Phillips again lobbed it towards the net – only for the full back to save.

Time began to run out for Borough. Realisation dawned and an air of disappointment settled over the ground. Wembley became a dream for yet another season – and Scarborough took another step towards their fourth final in five years.



**Chaos and confusion reigns as players hack and kick at the ball almost on the Scarborough line.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Nuneaton Borough 1976-77

Back: Kevin Barnett, Steve Briscoe, Trevor Peake, Roy Cross, Bob Knight, Roger Jones, Dave Lewis, Graham Smith, Stan Marshall (Assistant Manager).

Front: Keith Evans, Bob Turpie, Brendan Phillips, Gary Fleet, Kirk Stephens, Timmy Smithers, Colin Holder (Reserves Manager).

### Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1976-77

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.07	Altrincham	A	PSF	0-1		
08.10	Bilston Town	A	PSF	2-0	Fleet, Goodwin	
08.12	Stourbridge	H	PSF	1-1	Phelps	
08.14	Bangor City	H	PSF	1-0	Phillips	
08.16	Northwich Victoria	H	PSF	3-1	Lewis, Turpie, Stephens	
08.21	Bromsgrove Rovers	A	SLC1-1L	0-0		
08.23	Bromsgrove Rovers	H	SLC1-2L	2-0	Phillips, Turpie	1485
08.28	Dartford	A	L	4-2	Turpie (3), Hutchinson (o.g.)	1509
08.30	Bath City	H	L	1-2	Goodwin	1032
09.04	Racing Club Warwick	H	FACP	2-1	Goodwin, Turpie	1149
09.10	A.P.Leamington	A	L	2-1	Goodwin (pen), Turpie	843
09.14	Redditch United	A	L	1-3	Phillips	
09.18	Brierley Hill Alliance	H	FAC1Q	2-0	Smithers (2)	1146
09.25	Wealdstone	H	L	2-0	Smithers, Jones	1556
09.27	Tamworth	H	MFC	3-1	Phillips, Phelps, Vincent (pen)	869
10.02	Kettering Town	A	L	0-1		2018
10.05	Atherstone Town	A	MFC	0-0		904
10.09	Lye Town	H	FAC2Q	2-0	Phillips, Smithers	1180
10.11	Corby Town	H	SLC2	5-0	Phelps (2), Jones, Turpie, Peake	790
10.20	Milton Keynes City	A	MFC	0-2		
10.23	Bromsgrove Rovers	H	FAC3Q	2-0	Phillips, Jones	1180
10.25	Burton Albion	H	L	0-1		1368
10.30	Margate	A	L	0-0		
11.01	Maidstone United	H	L	1-0	Smithers	1309
11.06	Barton Rovers	A	FAC4Q	3-2	Smithers, Turpie (pen), Bennett	1500
11.08	Gravesend & Northfleet	H	L	3-0	Phillips, Jones, Briscoe	1320



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
11.13	Minehead	A	L	1-1	Jones	
11.15	Milton Keynes City	H	MFC	2-0	Jones, Bennett	785
11.20	Crook Town	A	FAC1	4-1	Jones (2), Briscoe, White (o.g.)	1880
11.23	Telford United	H	L	2-1	Bennett, Lewis	1565
11.27	Chelmsford City	A	L	1-0	Lewis	1154
11.29	Dover	H	L	2-1	Lewis, Smithers	1827
12.06	Stourbridge	H	SLC3	5-0	Briscoe (3), Smithers, Smith	982
12.11	Lincoln City	A	FAC2	0-6		7058
12.13	Willenhall Town	A	BSC2	0-0		891
12.18	Bridgend Town	A	FAT3Q	0-0		c200
12.23	Bridgend Town	H	FAT3Qr	3-2	Phillips, Lewis, Fleet	789
12.27	Bedford Town	A	L	1-0	Jones	
01.05	Willenhall Town	H	BSC2r	2-0	Briscoe, Jones	495
01.08	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-1		
01.10	Tamworth	H	BSC3	0-0		627
01.15	Banbury United	H	FAT1	4-2	Smithers (2), Bennett, Jones	1051
01.19	Wellingborough Town	A	MFC	4-0	Vincent (2), Phillips, Lewis	
01.22	Maidstone United	A	L	0-0		687
01.24	Wimbledon	H	L	1-0	Lewis	2544
01.29	Bath City	A	L	0-0		1406
02.05	Spennymoor United	H	FAT2	1-0	Phillips	2437
02.07	Atherstone United	H	L	0-0		2229
02.12	Wimbledon	A	L	0-4		1894
02.14	Worcester City	A	SLCQF	1-0	Phillips	2219
02.17	Tamworth	A	BSC4	5-0	Jones (2), Smithers (2), Owen	
02.19	A.P.Leamington	H	L	3-1	Jones (3)	1666
02.21	Wellingborough Town	H	MFC	4-0	Fleet, Briscoe, Lewis (pen), Martin	579
03.01	Willington	H	FAT3	2-1	Jones (2)	2545
03.03	Burton Albion	H	MFC	0-0		616
03.05	Wealdstone	A	L	1-1	Phillips	741
03.07	Redditch United	H	L	0-0		1713
03.09	Yeovil Town	A	SLCSF-1L	0-2		1283
03.12	Kettering Town	H	L	0-0		1833
03.14	Yeovil Town	H	SLCSF-2L	1-1	Jones	1423
03.23	Scarborough	A	FATQF	1-1	Smithers	4152
03.26	Weymouth	H	L	3-0	Smithers, Southern (o.g.), Smithers	1792
03.28	Scarborough	H	FATQFr	0-1		5203
03.30	Alvechurch	A	BSCQF	0-1		300
04.02	Dover	A	L	0-0		
04.04	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	1-2	Jones	1031
04.09	Atherstone Town	A	L	0-0		1800
04.11	Bedford Town	H	L	1-1	Phillips	892
04.13	Burton Albion	A	MFC	1-1	Phillips	
04.16	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	L	4-0	Jones (2) Vincent (2),	572
04.18	Tamworth	A	MFC	0-1		
04.20	Weymouth	A	L	1-3	Vincent	
04.23	Minehead	H	L	1-2	Lane	1149
04.25	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	1-1	Vincent	672
04.30	Telford United	A	L	2-1	Vincent (2)	640
05.02	Grantham Town	H	L	3-1	Vincent (2), Gardiner (o.g.)	1026
05.04	Grantham Town	A	L	0-2		509
05.07	Chelmsford City	H	L	2-0	Owen (2)	1059
05.09	Yeovil Town	H	L	1-0	Benn	787
05.11	Burton Albion	A	L	1-0	Phillips	512
05.14	Yeovil Town	A	L	2-3	Owen, Lewis	1489
05.18	Margate	H	L	1-0	Vincent	887
05.20	Dartford	H	L	3-0	Smithers, Phillips, Owen	688
05.23	Coventry City	H	Dave Lewis Benefit	1-0	Gooding (o.g.)	1466

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



## Alf Up For Re-election

Borough President Alf Scattergood will be seeking to stay on the Southern League management committee at the annual meeting. He is standing for re-election as a vice-president of the League, a position he has held for two years.

Telford United will be keeping a close watch on the Football League annual meeting on Friday. For if Wimbledon are elected to the Fourth Division it will save them from relegation – only three clubs would then go down from the Premier Division.

## Bennett Set To Sign Marsden

Nuneaton Borough manager Stan Bennett is all set to sign a player who has already impressed the Manor Park fans. He has agreed terms with former Macclesfield goalkeeper Ian Marsden and expects to finalise details later this week.

Marsden played in the Dave Lewis Testimonial match at the end of last season and did well. Still only 21, Marsden was with Manchester City before moving into the Northern Premier League.

## Alf Opens Appeal Fund

Alf Scattergood has opened the Nuneaton Borough Appeal Fund with a £500 cheque – and a challenge. He says: “If anyone else does the same I will double it.” The donation is the first reply to an appeal by chairman Noel Kelly for help in reducing the club’s £20,000 debts.

## Southern League More Expensive

Fans at Manor Park and Sheepy Road will have to pay more for their football next season. Minimum admission charges for the Southern League Premier Division have been increased from 45p to 50p. Clubs approved the price rise at the League’s annual meeting in London at the weekend. The increase is the first for two years, although some clubs have been charging more for some time.

## Borough To Explore Sponsorship

Nuneaton Borough could take to the field next season with the name of a local firm emblazoned on their kit. For the Southern League has given its official blessing to sponsorship. And clubs are now investigating way of bringing in much-needed extra cash.

Said Borough secretary John Evans: “Clearly this is something we will have to look into. Every possibility of raising more money has to be explored.”

## New Steps To Form Alliance

Talks aimed at resurrecting the idea of an Alliance League are now likely following a shake up of the Southern League “Old Brigade”. The shake up has resulted in the election of a new chairman, vice-chairman – and a virtually new management committee. Out has gone chairman Alan Cherry, his second

in command Jack Skinner and several long serving members of the executive. In has come new chairman Jim Thompson from Maidstone, new vice-chairman Roger Easterby from Gravesend – and five new members on the management committee

Significantly, all of them have been involved at one time or another in moves to form a Football Alliance. They have committed themselves to the progress of non-league soccer. And their first move will be to re-open talks with the Northern Premier League about the Alliance.

One influential observer described the elections as the “most important 20 minutes in the history of non-league football.” He has predicted that the Alliance will be set up within two years. Talks on the new league, a fifth division of the Football League with automatic promotion and relegation links with the fourth division, reached deadlock some time ago.

The Northern Premier League has always been in favour – but the Southern League dragged its heels. Now the whole climate has been changed and the course of non-league football altered...

## Kirk Stephens Helps With Improvements

Kirk Stephens took on a new role at Manor Park – behind the wheel of a JCB. For the Coventry firm he works for is helping the first ground development scheme paid for by the fans. An area of the ground between the main stand and the Beaumont Road gates is being levelled and tarmacked.

## Borough Agree Terms With Lang

Nuneaton Borough have agreed terms with former Burton and Telford winger Gavin Lang. He is expected to sign when the players report back for training. Lang, an outside left, was released by Burton last season when relegation and financial problems forced them to cut their wage bill. Still only 22, he has previously been with Newcastle, Stafford Rangers and Telford. Lang can operate in midfield, but Bennett sees him as a left winger.

## John Mason Back As Reserves Manager

Former Nuneaton Borough forward John Mason is back at Manor Park, as player manager of the reserves. The appointment fills the remaining gap in the club’s coaching staff. Said manager Stan Bennett: “Everything has now fallen into place. John fits the bill perfectly. I have known him for a long time and have a lot of respect for him. He lives in the area and should be the ideal man for the job.”

## Dave Lewis On Transfer List

Dave Lewis, Nuneaton Borough’s long serving skipper, has been placed on the transfer list. He has refused the terms offered to him for next season and manager Stan Bennett said today: “I have told him he can go.” Borough will want a fee for the tough-tackling midfield player who joined them from Atherstone six and a half years ago.

1977-78

## Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 06-08-1977

**Bedworth:** Davies, Harkus, Brookes, Hall, Ashley, Loveridge, Jackson, Harris, Usher, Phelps, Setchell. **Sub:** Manning.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Bennett, Phillips, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. **Subs:** Briscoe, Smith, Fleet, Owen, Gilmore.

Borough made the journey to The Oval to face Bedworth United in a pre-season friendly game.

Borough player-manager Stan Bennett, carried off with a broken leg after just nine minutes, missed seeing his side dominate this match for almost 90 minutes. Timmy Smithers, hitting the Bedworth post in the opening seconds of the game, set the standard that was followed throughout with almost constant Borough pressure.



The agony on the face of Nuneaton Borough player-manager Stan Bennett tells the story. Bennett was stretchered off the field after suffering a double break of his right leg. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But Bedworth must take some credit for the way they defended with Mick Loveridge playing the anchor role in Bedworth's tight defensive network. As far as scoring was concerned, Brendan Phillips was always the man most likely to – and for 90 minutes he was easily the best player on the park. It was difficult to keep count of the number of times he picked up the ball 20 yards inside the Bedworth half and beat three or four Bedworth defenders before shooting.

Phillips finally got his much-deserved goal ten minutes before half-time, scoring from the penalty spot after Alan Harkus handled a Smithers' cross. If Phillips dominated play down the right hand side of the park, then it was young Timmy

Smithers who mirrored him down the left. As the match progressed, Smithers became increasingly dangerous and the inevitable goal came from him in the 67th minute.

Borough made four changes in the second half with Briscoe, Smith, Owen and Gary Fleet all coming on. Fleet, returning to football four months after a knee operation, looked as fast and skilful as ever early on.

Bedworth fielded new signings Len Harris, Ray Usher and Jim Hall, but in such a one-sided match it was impossible to assess their future contribution.

### Bennett: My Playing Career Is Over

Stan Bennett confined to his hospital bed with a double break of his right leg, confessed today: "I think my playing career is over." The 32-year-old Nuneaton Borough manager was talking for the first time since an incident on Saturday afternoon left him with a broken tibia and fibula.

"I feel sick. I was so looking forward to another season of football in the Southern League," he said. Bennett crashed to the ground after just nine minutes following a challenge involving Bobby Brookes.

## Racing Club Warwick v Nuneaton Boro' 08-08-1977

Borough made the journey to Racing Club Warwick to play a pre-season friendly game.

Nuneaton Borough assistant manager Stan Marshall's first match in charge ended on a winning note last night. Dave Lewis, Borough's transfer-listed skipper, was the matchwinner in a pre-season friendly at Racing Club Warwick. Lewis grabbed the winner midway through the second half to give the Manor Park side another victory in the preparations for the Southern League season.

Racing Club took the lead in the first half, but this was wiped out when striker Bobby Vincent hit home just before the interval. Borough substituted Vincent in the second half when the striker sustained a bang on the head, but minutes later Lewis found the net.

## Sterling Metals v Nuneaton Borough 10-08-1977

Borough visited local club Sterling Metals to play a pre-season friendly match.

Crowd pleaser Bobby Vincent scored his first-ever hat-trick for Borough. Striker Vincent was in fine form as the Manor Park side romped to a comfortable victory.

"As you can imagine, the hat-trick was the talk of the dressing room, as far as Bobby was concerned," said club secretary John Evans. "But the match was a good training session for the lads, and although they dominated the match, Sterling made them run about," he added.

Borough's reserve team manager John Mason also got his name on the scoresheet – finding the net twice.



## Willenhall v Nuneaton Borough 11-08-1977

Borough travelled to Willenhall to play a pre-season friendly match.

Youngsters Chris Chinn and Steve Harrison turned out for Nuneaton in a friendly against Willenhall last night, but Borough were defeated 2-0 by the West Midlands League side.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wigan Athletic 13-08-1977

**Borough:** Knight (Marsden), Stephens, Smith, Briscoe, Peake, Thomas, Fleet, Phillips, Jones, Vincent (Owen), Lang (Smithers).

Borough welcomed Wigan Athletic to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly game.

Wigan Athletic gave Borough a lesson in how to play simple, controlled and effective football. Although it was two bad mistakes that gave the northerners the edge, they looked a polished, complete side. Wigan were always looking for a quick break from defence and the strikers, especially tricky Mick Worswick, posed a few problems for Borough.

But the Manor Park side were not altogether overshadowed in front of their own fans and exposed what flaws the Northern Premier side have. Play swung from end to end in the opening minutes, but it was always the visitors who looked more capable of breaking the deadlock. Bob Knight, back in the Borough goal after injury, had to dive bravely at the feet of Eric Machin to stop the striker taking a simple chance.

Wigan took the lead after 19 minutes and it was a moment of anguish for Borough's Steve Briscoe. Machin sent over a harmless-looking left wing cross, but the ball bounced awkwardly and Briscoe could only control the ball with his hand. Knight made a superb save from Worswick's penalty kick, diving to his left to punch out the ball, but the striker followed up to slam the ball home.

Borough gradually fought their way back into the game. Long balls aimed at Roger Jones stretched the Wigan defence and better distribution to the big striker could have been more rewarding. But Borough drew level in the 27th minute. Jones crossed from the left and full-back Billy Stiles, in a vain effort to clear the ball, could only steer it past his own keeper.

New keeper Ian Marsden replaced Knight at half-time and started confidently enough, but after 53 minutes he made a tragic error of judgment. He delayed too long in coming out to a high back pass, then hesitated, and substitute Steve Rimmer had the simple task of chipping the ball over the young goalkeeper's head.

## Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 15-08-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross (Goodwin), Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Jones (Lang), Smithers.

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park to play a pre-season friendly game.

Borough wound up their pre-season programme – and left a lot of questions still unanswered. The main one was: How are they going to score goals? For they never looked like doing so against a Stourbridge side who are well below Southern League Premier Division standard.

The pattern was painfully familiar. Borough were firm in defence – they are not going to concede many goals. Their approach work was skilful, but everything fell flat when they reached the penalty box. Efforts at goal were restricted to two headers from Roger Jones, two from Trevor Peake and two shots each from Brendan Phillips and Bobby Vincent.

And only one, the Jones header in the first-half, stretched the Stourbridge keeper, Moore, into anything like a save. Assistant manager Stan Marshall unveiled his plans in the first-half. He fielded the team he thought would open the season at Oswestry on Saturday.

But injuries to Roy Cross and Roger Jones, and the performance of the attack must leave him with plenty of food for thought between now and Saturday.

## Borough Receive Bid For Lewis

Nuneaton Borough are considering a four figure bid for transfer listed Dave Lewis. AP Leamington have offered £1,000 for the Borough skipper, who is in dispute with the Manor Park club. Bedford Town are also reported to be interested, but the Brakes are the first to make a firm move.

Borough chairman Noel Kelly today confirmed Leamington's interest. He said: "We are considering an offer for Dave Lewis, but nothing has been settled."

## Peake Staying At Manor Park

Trevor Peake, Nuneaton Borough's talented defender is to stay at Manor Park – for the time being. Coventry City have shown a keen interest in the 20-year-old centre-half, rated the best in the Southern League. He has played three times for the Coventry reserve side in private practice games and manager Gordon Milne admitted he was "very impressed." But Peake intends to finish his apprenticeship with the Nuneaton-based firm of Clarkson International before he decides his soccer future.

## Oswestry Town v Nuneaton Borough 20-08-1977

**Oswestry:** Parry, R. Edwards, Beddoes, Woolley, Swinnerton, Pryce, Griffiths, Evans, Jones, Blakemore, Nantcurvis. Sub: B. Edwards.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.

Borough made the journey to Oswestry Town to play a Southern League Cup first round first leg game.

Roger Jones flashed out an early warning to Southern League defences with a two goal performance. The centre-forward shot Borough in front after only seven minutes and restored their lead in the closing stages. And in the meantime he

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



provided a constant threat to his former club as Borough won with more ease than the scoreline suggests.

Jones, who scored more than 90 goals for Oswestry took twelve matches to score when he joined Nuneaton last season. But he showed as early as the second minute that he did not intend to wait as long again with a header that was forced over the top. Jones was on the end of nearly every attack as Borough outplayed the first division north side in the first half-hour.

Inspired from midfield by Gary Fleet, they looked a class above their opponents and could have been four goals in front at the break. Jones cashed in on a defensive mix up to grab his early goal and should have had two more before half-time. He volleyed one shot over from close range and failed with a header set up by Bobby Vincent, who should also have scored with a header that skimmed the bar.

Oswestry simply had no answer to the midfield skills of Brendan Phillips, Wayne Thomas and Gary Fleet. The first half-hour set the pattern of the play. By that time Oswestry knew they were up against it.

Borough's game fell away after half-time when the midfield "died", but they were never in any real trouble. Even a stunning equaliser from Steve Blakemore, Oswestry's best forward, failed to rattle Borough's confidence. Blakemore hit a free-kick from 25 yards that went in off the underside of the bar to give the home side hope. But that soon died when Kirk Stephens found Jones at the far post and the centre-forward scored with a header that goalkeeper Parry tried to scramble out. Parry's desperate bid failed – and Borough have a one goal lead going into the second leg.

The second half fade out must have presented assistant manager Stan Marshall with food for thought about his midfield, but the steel of Ian Goodwin and Dave Lewis was missing. But Borough will concede few goals, the back four will see to that. Trevor Peake and Roy Cross gave nothing away and Kirk Stephens looks set for another superb season.

## Lewis Off Transfer List

Nuneaton Borough have taken club skipper Dave Lewis off the transfer list – only hours before he was due to leave the club. Lewis was scheduled to have signed for AP Leamington, but a statement issued by the board today announced the dramatic developments. Club secretary John Evans announced the decision on behalf of the directors.

**Nuneaton Borough v Oswestry Town 22-08-1977**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Thomas, Fleet, Phillips, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.**

Borough welcomed Oswestry Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Borough scraped into the second round after failing to match the aggressive determination of their First Division North

opponents, they lost their way. And it took a late equaliser from Brendan Phillips to spare them the embarrassment of a replay. Phillips scored in the 83rd minute to cancel out a first-half effort from Oswestry defender Derek Pryce.

Five players were booked, four from Oswestry and Borough's Bobby Vincent, and Pryce was helped off injured. A mixture of superb goalkeeping and bad play kept Borough on tenterhooks until the closing stages. Oswestry keeper Alan Parry pulled off a string of magnificent saves to emerge as man of the match.

But Borough should have done better against a side way below the standard of opposition they will meet as the season develops. Leading 2-1 from the first leg, they started off in style. Parry was the busiest man on the field as Nuneaton went for an early goal that would have killed off the visitors. It never came. Borough flattered to deceive and their game went to pieces.

Only youngster Wayne Thomas maintained any sort of consistency as the midfield again "died" and the tie deteriorated. Oswestry centre-half Ken Swinnerton was booked in the 21st minute, the first of the five cautions handed out by the referee, who left a lot to be desired.

The Shropshire side levelled the aggregate in the 29th minute when Pryce scored from a Tony Nantcurvis corner. Vincent then joined Pryce in the book for a foul on the goalkeeper, who immediately pulled off a magnificent save from the Borough forward. Embarrassment turned into frustration for Borough in the second half. Pryce was booked during a period of aimless play, followed by Oswestry full-back Richie Edwards, who had been a persistent offender.

Oswestry's confidence grew, boosted by another great save from Parry, who somehow managed to reach a goalbound shot from Thomas. Roger Jones then had the ball in the net – only for the goal to be ruled out for a foul by Vincent. Oswestry pulled players back to defend their goal and Parry made another breath-taking stop from Vincent and Ian Woolley became the fourth visiting player to have his name taken. Then, just when it looked as if a replay would be needed, Borough scored. Oswestry failed to clear a corner, Fleet played the ball out to Timmy Smithers, he hit it into the middle – and Phillips drove a shot into the net.

## Brakes Accuse Borough

Nuneaton Borough have been accused of bringing the transfer system and game in general into disrepute. The condemnation came in a strongly worded statement issued by AP Leamington.

Leamington's attack follows the break-down of the Dave Lewis transfer to the Windmill. Their statement reads: "AP Leamington FC are disturbed to learn that a very implicit agreement between the chairman and secretary of Nuneaton Borough FC to negotiate the transfer of the player Dave Lewis to AP Leamington has been broken.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



“Nuneaton Borough were aware of their playing strengths when the negotiations were conducted and we feel this sort of behaviour warrants the strongest condemnation, as it brings the transfer system and the game in general into disrepute.”

## Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 18-08-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Phillips, Lang, Vincent, Jones, Fleet. **Sub:** Smithers.

**Hillingdon:** Phillips, Davies, Pearce, Millett, Gelson, Smith, Hullett, Wainwright, Reeve, Burge, Cleary. **Sub:** Basey.

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

Dour Hillingdon almost drove the fans to distraction in a sad start to the Southern League season. Sad, because Hillingdon, well organised, but mediocre, made no attempt whatsoever to make a game of it. They made their intentions abundantly clear from the start. They had travelled for a point – and would do anything to preserve it.



**Roger Jones raises an arm in triumph as his 56th minute header beats the Hillingdon goalkeeper for the first Southern League goal of the season.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Thankfully a Roger Jones goal wrecked their plans in the 56th minute to give Nuneaton both points. Jones sent them scurrying back to Middlesex with nothing to show for their trip – and deservedly so.

No-one travels away to be beaten and Borough have played more than their fair share of defensive football in the past. But Southern League football is going through a critical period. Attendances have dropped – and will fall even more with teams like Hillingdon around.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bath City 29-08-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Jones, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

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

On the face of it, the scoreline points to another grim goalless struggle – another night of frustration for the fans. You can picture the all too familiar scene. One team content to defend, the other unable to do anything about it. But nothing could be further from the truth. For Borough and Bath staged a match to remember. There will be few better ones at Manor Park this season.

Played a breath-taking pace, it contained skills, colour,

drama – and a superb shop window for Southern League football. Almost the entire second half was played in the City penalty area as Borough piled on tremendous pressure. But Bath defended magnificently to keep Borough at bay and the outcome was in doubt until the last kick. Borough missed chances. Their finishing still falls a long way short of their promise. No-one could grumble at the entertainment, however. It was worth every bit of the extra cash the fans have to pay this season.

Borough set the pattern early on when they attacked City down the flanks to give them a taste of what was to come. One five-man move ended when Bobby Vincent shot over the top, Timmy Smithers went close and then his sheer persistence almost forced a goal. He went past two defenders and City goalkeeper Ken Allen brought off a full-length save from Roger Jones.

Bath survived until half-time and then faced even more intense pressure after the break. Andy Provan had the ball whipped away from him by Brendan Phillips in a rare City raid. Bath defender Glyn Broome, magnificent in the heart of their defence, was then booked for a foul on Jones. Moments later he kicked the ball off the line – amid protests from fans that it was a goal.

A shot from Phillips rebounded off the City defensive wall and Northampton referee Mr Vic Wood, always in control, waved away appeals for a penalty when Broome appeared to climb on the back of Jones. The battle continued and the tension built as the end approached with Bath still defiant and Borough in full cry.

Allen saved from Kirk Stephens, who with left back Wayne Thomas, never stopped working. Thomas, one of the most exciting young prospects Borough have produced, had another fine game. Bath, forced to defend for so long, decided to hang on in the final pulsating minutes. They gave up trying to break clear and settled back to preserve their point. And, try as they might, Borough could not force the goal they needed – and deserved.

## Minehead v Nuneaton Borough 03-09-1977

**Minehead:** Macey, Brown, Clausen, Carter, Boyd, Burns, Freeman, Bryant, Leitch, Wiltshire, Durbin. **Sub:** Burden.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Briscoe.

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

Borough's assistant manager Stan Marshall was pleased with his side's performance at Minehead and described it as “our best result so far.” The acting manager has yet to taste defeat after five matches in charge. But he admitted he was apprehensive about the 350 mile round trip to the West Country. Runners-up in the Southern League last season, Minehead have a ground that is hardly conducive to

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



attractive football. Three sided and small, Marshall knew it would cramp Nuneaton's style as few sides win there.

Caught repeatedly in Minehead's frustrating offside trap, Borough refused to be rattled. And their coolness, organisation – and skill – often put them in a class above their opponents. In the end, Minehead were just as happy to emerge with a point which sums up Borough's achievement.

Marshall's misgivings appeared to be justified early on when the defence went through a shaky spell as lanky Minehead forward Andy Leitch threatened in the air.

Things looked black when the home side went in front from the penalty spot after only 18 minutes. Kirk Stephens handled to prevent what would have been a certain goal by Leitch and Brian Durbin scored from the spot. But Borough were back on equal terms ten minutes before half-time with a goal that delighted the team. Wayne Thomas, a revelation at left-back this season, equalised from a deflected free kick for his first goal for the club.

The teenager, who celebrated his 19th birthday the previous day, could hardly conceal his joy. Borough went on to dominate the attacking play in the second half against a Minehead side, who surprisingly played a 4-4-2 system. That meant that Nuneaton were always outnumbered in the middle of the park – but it was there where their great strength lay. And no-one was more impressive than Gary Fleet, who added another dimension to his already undoubted skills.

Fleet has never been known for his discipline on the field. Often, he is dragged out of position by his eagerness to be involved in every move. But he played his role as anchor man in the centre of the middle three to perfection. Fleet did the job superbly, flanked by Dave Lewis and Brendan Phillips.

Phillips was equally ready to take people on or chase back and help out. And Lewis showed just why Marshall was determined to prevent his move to AP with a display tailor made to the circumstances. Determined, aggressive and inspiring he made the £1,000 offer look laughable.

Fleet, Lewis and Phillips formed the backbone of a performance that kept the Borough among the early pace setters in the premier division. They have problems up front where they need more bite and pace, but the foundations have been laid, the confidence is there – and certainly the spirit.

## Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 05-09-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Benn, Goodwin, Chinn, Vincent, Owen, Briscoe. **Subs:** Fallon and Smithers.

**AP Leamington:** Burton, Kavanagh, Taylor, Jones, Brown, Boot, Keeley, Wilcox (Mason), Stewart, Southeran (Conway), Morton.

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

A classic goal from midfield man David Benn was the highlight of a solid performance by a second-string Borough side last night. Benn's superb goal set the Manor Park side

on the road to victory. And acting manager Stan Marshall's gamble to make changes, and give the youngsters a chance paid off handsomely.

He left out Bob Knight, Dave Lewis, Brendan Phillips, Gary Fleet, Timmy Smithers and Roger Jones and in came Ian Marsden, David Benn, Ian Goodwin, Derek Owen, Chris Chinn and Steve Briscoe – and each of them played their part in the win. "I have 18 professionals on the books and these are the games to use them in," said Marshall.

A deep cross from Briscoe which was cleared by Roger Brown and a mis-hit effort from Leamington's Adrian Stewart were the first moves of the match as both sides battled for possession. But Borough went ahead after 18 minutes with one of the finest goals seen at Manor Park. A bad clearance from defence was picked up by Bobby Vincent who shielded, controlled and finally crossed for Benn to slam the ball home from 30 yards with a right-foot volley.

Benn was denied minutes later when Burton punched away another Briscoe cross. And the youngster had yet another chance before the interval but his shot was kicked clear by Dennis Taylor. Benn's zest and enthusiasm was one of the high-spots in the game as the Borough youngsters attacked the Leamington side. Kirk Stephens tidied up after Roy Cross made a rare mistake to deny Malcolm Southeran.

Leamington keeper Colin Burton pulled off a great save from Derek Owen as Briscoe raced in. AP gradually forced their way back into the match after the break – and young Borough keeper Ian Marsden was in fine form. He twice saved within minutes from a Roger Brown header and then Southeran. Stewart missed AP's best chance when he blasted wide from a relatively simple chance.

AP's confidence grew, led by the impressive Micky Boot, and Borough did well to stay solid at the back. The Manor Park side came back towards the end of the match and were unlucky not to go further ahead. Peake had a powerful shot brilliantly saved by Burton, Vincent had two shots blocked and then in the last minutes the striker brought the best out of Burton with a low drive.

## Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 10-09-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Benn.

**Kettering:** Horne, Lucas, Wood, Glover, Suddards, Dixey, Felton, Mortimer, Kellock, Clayton, Phipps. **Sub:** Ashby.

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

Borough kept their unbeaten record afloat when it almost sunk without trace. An equaliser from Roger Jones and a winner in the dying minutes from Brendan Phillips earned Borough both points. But it was a match that had swung in Kettering's favour for so long that Borough's task looked virtually impossible after an hour.

The Manor Park side were always pushing forward with good approaches, but never troubled the Kettering defence in front of goal. And two bad mistakes – from Roy Cross and then Trevor Peake – could have easily sealed Borough's fate before the interval. Borough's attacks became tired and listless with Brendan Phillips almost redundant and Gary Fleet concentrating on defending rather than creating. And Kettering swooped on the opportunity when Billy Kellock headed them into a 63rd minute lead.

Graham Felton's corner was nodded on by Roy Clayton and Kellock headed the ball past Knight with a powerful effort. Borough got back on level terms with the first really worthwhile cross from the Manor Park side. Kirk Stephens sent over a high ball and Roger Jones dived superbly to head the ball past the astonished Horne. The keeper could only get a hand to it and helped the ball into the net.



**Roger Jones powers forward to put Borough level – and give them new hope. His 71st minute header put the Manor Park side back into the game.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough were back in the game, and their moves became more penetrating and for the first-time in the match the Kettering defence were put under pressure as Borough found new confidence. But time looked to be against them. Then three minutes from the end Brendan Phillips grabbed a dramatic winner. Timmy Smithers and Roger Jones combined well with some accurate passing before Smithers crossed and Phillips finished off the move.



**Brendan Phillips slams the ball past Gary Wood and Borough are home three minutes from time.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough had beaten the Southern League title favourites when it looked only a dream after Kettering had taken the lead. Borough's acting manager Stan Marshall summed it up: "It was two points for us and that was the only thing concerning me. But our character showed through in the end and we got what we wanted," he added.

## Borough Aim To Wipe Out Hooliganism

Nuneaton Borough is planning tough action to wipe out soccer hooliganism at Manor Park. Chairman Noel Kelly was having talks with police officers today to discuss the situation. And it could mean a "keep away" message to

travelling supporters who Borough suspect were involved in Saturday's trouble between Nuneaton and Kettering fans.

"Kettering come to us on September 26 and I will be telling my stewards if they recognise anyone who was involved in the trouble to turn them away," said Mr Kelly. "We have the right to refuse admission – and we shall do so. These hooligans are spoiling it for everybody else – and it has got to stop. The talks with the police should determine what action we can take. I want to meet all the parties concerned before we make any firm rules. But something has got to be done," declared Mr Kelly.

## Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough

17-09-1977

**Weymouth: Iles, Lawrence, Tunbridge, Dyer, Morgan, Iannone, Courtney, Henderson, Gregory, Dove, Hawkins. Sub: McCafferty.**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. Sub: Briscoe.**

Borough travelled to The Rec to play Weymouth in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough gave Stan Marshall a rousing send-off to his spell as acting manager by stretching their unbeaten record in the Southern League to six games. And Marshall, who will make way for the return of Stan Bennett next week, ended his undefeated managerial stint watching Borough's most complete performance to date.

Nuneaton dominated the game for so long that Weymouth did not put one telling move together until the final ten minutes. Borough failed to break the deadlock and that was Marshall's only worry. "We had chances to stick the ball away, but they are a good side and I am over the moon about the result," he said.

Borough went at Weymouth from the start and soon had the edge in midfield. Skipper Dave Lewis, back from injury looked steady and solid in the middle. Gary Fleet, under Stan Marshall playing a deeper role in midfield, seemed to be enjoying his new style of play. But the Borough performance revolved around the superb Brendan Phillips. It is often unfair to pick out one player in a complete performance, but Phillips was at the centre of every move Borough created.

He was always busy, creating space, beating two or three players before setting up a chance for either of the twin strikers Roger Jones and Bobby Vincent. The latter slammed the ball into the side-netting from an awkward angle after Phillips had beaten four players in one of Borough's best moves. Phillips was not the only player on form. Vincent looked very sharp – and had two chances to seal the game.

Kirk Stephens also had a fine game in the back four. Borough's defence was not really troubled until the last ten minutes. A few of the 70 strong contingent that made the long trip to Dorset watched anxiously as Weymouth pressed forward. Brian Gregory brilliantly picked up a Hawkins corner on the volley and shot inches over the top.





## Borough Need £1,000 This Week

Nuneaton Borough Football Club must find £1,000 inside a week – or have their electricity cut off. Borough owe £1,500 to the EMEB and have been told that two thirds of it has to be paid by next Wednesday. The remainder must be found by the end of the month.

Other creditors are pressing the cash troubled Manor Park club, whose debts still amount to around £20,000. Chairman Noel Kelly said today: “We have got to find a substantial amount of money very quickly – it’s as simple as that.”

The latest financial crisis has come about through what Mr Kelly described as “serious cash flow problems.” He said: “All businesses have these sort of problems and let’s face it £20,000 of debts don’t disappear overnight.

“We have £2,500 from advertising in the pipe-line, and other plans in mind, but we have to find money now. Some people have been owed money for two and a half years and they want paying.”

Only last week the club paid £550 to the Borough Council in rates to avoid court action. A hefty VAT bill is also being cleared, but the chairman said: “We have a small board and we can’t do it without help. Surely there are people in this town who can come forward and help the football club...”

## Vice-Chairman Resigns

Keith Johnson, vice-chairman of Nuneaton Borough Football Club has resigned from the board. Mr Johnson, a director for the past two years, announced his decision today. He said: “Quite simply, I have taken on other commitments and no longer have the time I would like to devote to the football club. I will miss the involvement – but I have to think of my own future...”

### Nuneaton Boro’ v Gravesend & Northfleet 24-09-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Briscoe, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Jones, Vincent, Smithers. **Sub:** Owen.

**Gravesend:** Smelt, Idle, Sargent, Finch, Priestley, Jacks, Woon, Brown, Fusco, Dudman, Glozier. **Sub:** Bostock.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough put in a bitterly disappointing display. While all around them people were battling to keep the club alive, they failed to compete – and lost their unbeaten home record. Their performance never matched the determination of the supporters.

Strangely lethargic, the side that has made such a bright start to the season, surrendered to well organised, but not that impressive, Gravesend. Even the presence of player-manager Stan Bennett failed to inspire them. Bennett, still on crutches after breaking a leg seven weeks ago, watched from the touchline as they tossed away a first-half lead. A superbly brave goal from Timmy Smithers after only 15 minutes gave

them the start they needed. And they dominated the first half-hour as Gravesend defended in depth. But warning signs began to flash just before the interval. They started to lose their way and looked a different side in the second half.

Their midfield became virtually non-existent, the Kent club gradually took over – and two goals inside four minutes changed the face of the game. Andy Woon grabbed a 68th minute equaliser, presented to him by goalkeeper Bob Knight. And Bobby Dudman hit a spectacular winner before Borough had time to draw breath. Woon’s goal resulted from a long right wing cross by Steve Brown. Knight went for the ball at the far post. Then, having committed himself, he failed to take it and Woon planted a header into the net.

Dudman’s goal raised doubts about Borough’s defence. Norman Fusco touched a free-kick shot to him on the edge of the penalty area and he drove a hard, low shot through the wall. From then on, there was no doubt about the result as Gravesend, much more professional than Nuneaton, tightened their grip. There was nothing Nuneaton could do about it. They were a spent force, and their attitude appeared strangely out of character after the performances they achieved this season.

The determination, discipline and commitment that has been a hallmark of their play was somehow missing. Borough rarely go down without a fight, particularly in front of their own supporters. But they did against Gravesend, who had never taken a point in the premier division at Manor Park. Defeat had to come sooner or later, but it was the way it came about that was disappointing.

## Kettering Match Could Be Borough’s Last Game

Noel Kelly, chairman of cash crisis club Nuneaton Borough, today issued a chilling warning to the fans. He said: The Kettering match on Monday could be our last game.”

Unless the club pays £1,000 off its electricity bill by Wednesday, Manor Park will be plunged into darkness. There is not enough money in the kitty to meet the demand – and other creditors are pressing.

Today the chairman offered to sell one of his most prized possessions in a bid to buy more time. He recently bought a solid sterling silver Jubilee commemorative bowl issued through the Football League. The bowl is worth around £500 – and its value will increase

Said Mr Kelly: “The only reason I am letting it go is because it’s for the football club. I am looking for a businessman who is interested in the game to come forward with an offer. If I can’t get something for nothing then I am prepared to give them something for their money.”

He is also prepared to throw in five silver-plated goblets. “I can’t think of anything else to do,” he said. “We have appealed for help without much response and unless we pay this electric bill the lights will go out and the club will not be able to continue.”



## Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 26-09-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Briscoe, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Smithers, Owen, Jones, Lang. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Roger Jones brightened Borough's Southern League Cup hopes with a superbly taken goal. But their hopes were dimmed in the 74th minute when Roy Clayton equalised for Kettering. And they now face the daunting prospect of a second round replay at Rockingham Road with the odds stacked against them.

Again, Borough fell away in the second half when the Poppies took control. An equaliser was always on the cards as Nuneaton lost their way. Extra precautions were taken to prevent a recurrence of the violence that flared when the clubs met a fortnight ago. But the only hooliganism was on the pitch where four players were booked – two from each side. Only the leniency of Kidderminster referee Mr A. J. Elcock kept both teams at full strength.

He allowed Kettering centre-half Sean Suddards to escape after a tackle that almost cut Timmy Smithers in half. And the Poppies defender butted Borough's Derek Owen in an incident off the ball. There were enough police on the ground to arrest both sides for assault – but Mr Elcock, astonishingly allowed them to escape with bookings.

Kirk Stephens and Steve Briscoe were booked for Nuneaton in a tie that contained a lot of action – but not that many constructive ideas. Borough, backed by the biggest attendance so far this season, did well early on. But both teams struggled to control the ball on an awkward, rock hard playing surface.

Jones had snatched at two chances before he put Borough into a 36th minute lead. Under pressure, he still managed to steer a Brendan Phillips cross past goalkeeper Graham Horn with his head for his fifth goal of the season. Almost on half time Dixey somehow managed to thwart Owen on the goal-line to prevent a second.

So Borough went into the second half with a slender lead, their hopes high and their sights firmly set on a place in the third round of the Southern League Cup. But they soon began to struggle and it became clear that they were heading for trouble. Terry Mortimer should have equalised for Kettering from a Roger Ashby free-kick as the Poppies stepped up their challenge and "needle" began to creep into the play. Referee Elcock should have clamped down. He didn't and almost lost control.

Then, with 16 minutes left, Nuneaton conceded the goal that could signal the death knell for their Southern League Cup chances this season. Mortimer took the ball to the line and pulled it back. Len Gover got a touch – and Clayton ran on to make sure.

## Roger Jones Transfer Shock

Roger Jones, Nuneaton Borough's centre-forward and leading goalscorer, has left Manor Park in a shock move. He has rejoined his former club Stafford Rangers for what is described as a "substantial" fee. The deal went through after the Borough v Kettering game – despite opposition from manager Stan Bennett.

Bennett insisted: "I didn't want him to go. He is a good pro and an important part of the team we have built. We waited a long time to get him – but I suppose it's all about money."

Chairman Noel Kelly defended the decision which is sure to cause unrest among the fans. Borough are believed to have picked up around £2,000 from the transfer and the chairman said: "It was an offer we could not refuse. We accepted it because of the financial position. When you are in our position and someone comes in with an offer for your top scorer what do you do? We are not talking about our top scorer – we are talking about money..."

## Mystery Businessman Loans Club £5,000

A mystery Coventry businessman has come to the aid of Nuneaton Borough with a £5,000 loan. He has handed over the money to the cash stricken club and told them: "Pay it back when you can."

Borough chairman Noel Kelly announced the news this afternoon. "It's unbelievable," he said. "What can I say – I nearly dropped on the floor. I walked out of his office with the cheque in my hand and I still can't believe it."

The businessman, who refused to be named, has given the loan interest free. And it means that Borough, whose plight became desperate when they were ordered to pay off £1,000 from an outstanding electric bill, will be able to survive...

## Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 28-09-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Briscoe, Harrison, Peake, Thomas, Smith, Owen, Vincent, Phillips, Lang. **Subs:** Ebrey, Ison.

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

Nuneaton crumbled to a disappointint defeat. Three first half goals gave Burton a comfortable victory, and Borough, despite a spirited revival after the interval, never really looked capable of pulling themselves back into the game. Albion, relegated from the Premier Division last season, included no fewer than ten reserves yet matched Nuneaton in virtually every department. And while Brendan Phillips pulled a goal back in the second half, Borough's forwards posed few problems for the Burton defence.

Phillips' goal, a brilliant solo effort, came seven minutes after the interval when he wriggled past three tackles inside the Burton area and slotted the ball home from 12 yards. But by then the damage had been done. Albion struck the first blow after Steve Briscoe handled inside the penalty area. Referee

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Peter Reeves had no hesitation in awarding a penalty and Shaun Jennings sent Marsden the wrong way with his spot-kick. Just three minutes later Mick Fletcher hammered home a 25-yard free-kick which took a deflection off Borough's defensive wall.

Then Burton increased their lead shortly before the interval when Fletcher cracked a free-kick to Thompson whose 30 yard drive left Marsden flat-footed. Gavin Lang saw a shot go narrowly wide and Smith headed over, but the best chance of the half fell to Derek Owen. He should have scored when he was put clear by Lang but then sliced his shot straight across the face of the goal.

Borough dominated the second half. But scoring chances were few and far between. The closest they came was when a Lang free-kick was almost headed in by Albion defender Pegg. Owen had a header pushed away by Mackerel but was later booked for an unfair challenge on the keeper.

## Borough Raise £8,000 In A Day

Cash troubled Nuneaton Borough have collected the staggering sum of £8,000 – in just one day. And chairman Noel Kelly announced this afternoon: "The club has been saved." Money has poured in following last week's announcement that Borough were in danger of folding. One Coventry businessman has loaned £5,000 interest free, another £1,000 – and the sale of striker Roger Jones has also boosted the kitty. The £1,000 demand from the electricity board that brought the crisis to a head will now be paid.

Other debts will be settled and Borough will be able to make inroads into the £20,000 they owe. And chairman Kelly has still to sell the £500 solid silver bowl that sparked off the response. "It will now go to the highest bidder," said chairman Kelly.

## Cheltenham Town v Nuneaton Borough 01-10-1977

**Cheltenham:** Berry, Murphy, Edwards, Foster, Dean, Rice, D. Berry, Lewis, Dangerfield, Hehir, Davies. Sub: Hall.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Briscoe, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Owen, Smithers. Sub: Lang.

Borough made the journey to Whaddon Road to face Cheltenham in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Flagging Borough were denied a point by a sucker punch of a goal. With only three minutes left, Cheltenham were given a free-kick for dangerous play by Brendan Phillips. They massed at the far post as Dave Dangerfield shaped up to hit the ball into the middle. But he dropped it short and Robins' striker Dave Lewis darted in to grab the winner at the second attempt. The goal stripped Borough of their unbeaten Premier Division away record and rounded off an eventful week.

While the club has amassed nearly £10,000 off the field to halve their debts, the team struggled. Three defeats and a draw at home to Kettering knocked a hole in their bright start to the season. Clearly their confidence is not what it

was – and there was a lot in their attitude at Whaddon Road that raised question marks. They struggled at the back where Steve Briscoe needs a better understanding with Trevor Peake. The effort was there, but he lacks the experience and composure of Roy Cross.

Dave Lewis apart, the midfield never got to grips with the game and acting manager Stan Marshall has to decide whether he can afford the luxury of Brendan Phillips and Gary Flett in the side. Phillips drifted out of the game for too long and Fleet had his worst match of the season. He flinched at too many tackles and shirked too much responsibility for his own good. It would be easy to say they missed the presence of Roger Jones up front – but it would be true.

Derek Owen, Bobby Vincent and Timmy Smithers worked hard enough, but were never effective. Dave Lewis always looked more likely to score – and it was the club skipper who put them back into the match after a bad start. Lewis headed an equaliser after 31 minutes after a Phillips corner had been nodded on by Vincent. His goal wiped out a 16th minute effort from Cheltenham striker John Davies.

A long ball out of defence caught Borough pushing up and Davies left Briscoe for dead to score from 20 yards. But Nuneaton pulled themselves together and, despite a desperate goal-line clearance from Wayne Thomas, were well in contention at half-time. They did not maintain their effort, however. For some reason they tried to close up the game and handed the initiative to the home side.

Dave Lewis almost saved the game in the last minute with a shot that Robins' keeper Nigel Berry did well to save. Had some of the other players followed Lewis's example, perhaps that unbeaten away record would still be intact.

## Borough Sign Dale

Nuneaton Borough have completed the signing of Gareth Dale from Redditch United. The striker joins Borough in a player plus cash deal that see Steve Briscoe join the Worcestershire club.



Signing on the dotted line – Gareth Dale puts pen to paper watched by Stan Marshall and John Evans.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 03-10-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. **Subs:** Owen and Smith.

**Atherstone:** Hall, Stockley, Bosworth, Shotton, Tidman, Smith, Kiernan, Tomkinson, Drew, Shore, Jennings. **Subs:** Brown and Franklin.

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

Bobby Vincent reached back into his flamboyant past for his first goal of the season. He put Borough in front with a cheeky back heel after 68 minutes of intensely competitive football.

But Nuneaton's joy was short lived. Gary Brown equalised for Adders thirteen minutes later and the match ended all square. So Borough failed to break their lean spell – and lost new signing Gareth Dale in the process. Dale was helped off with a gash on his head after a challenge for the ball with Brown two minutes after half-time.

Bob Stockley forced goalkeeper Ian Marsden to push the ball over the bar. And Steve Tomkinson hit the woodwork just before half-time. The start of the second half was marred by the injury to Dale before Ken Hall denied Borough with two brave saves. Then Borough broke the deadlock. Gary Fleet supplied the pass, Derek Owen made the running – and Vincent scored his spectacular goal. He greeted it with a joy and relief that could make all of the difference to his form.

Brendan Phillips scooped a shot over and Hall pulled off another superb save. But Adders were not to be denied and they grabbed a well deserved equaliser in the 81st minute. Player-manager Joe Kiernan hit a free-kick into the middle, the ball broke loose and Brown darted through to slam it past Marsden from close range.

Brown had gone on in place of injured Malcolm Shotton at the start of the second half. After Brown's goal, there was no real doubt about the outcome of a match that must have pleased Kiernan much more than Stan Marshall. Kiernan's youngsters did well, particularly Colin Bosworth in the heart of the defence. But Marshall is still struggling to restore the sparkle to a Borough side that started the season with such promise.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dover 08-10-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Lang.

**Dover:** Blake, Reynolds, Keeley, Brown, Wilson, Brooks, Wiltshire, Hamshire, Horsden, Rodgers, Lloyd. **Sub:** Christie.

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

Bobby Vincent inked his name back into the Southern League goal charts – and then talked about the pressures of playing for Borough. Clearly relieved after a two goal display that sank Dover, he said: "The pressure here is tremendous. Everyone wants us to do well and every defeat is treated

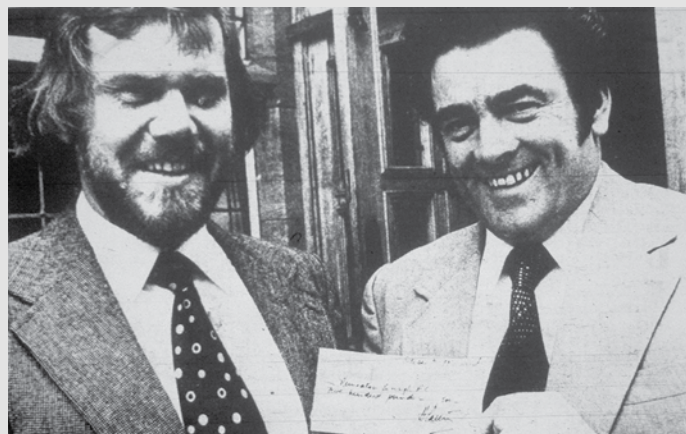
like a disaster." Vincent badly needed a goal and Borough desperately needed to win after the events of the past fortnight. And everything worked out well in the end after a match played in torrential rain. The Borough centre-forward summed it up when he said: "It's all about confidence. Had I not scored the first, I don't think I would have taken the second like I did."

His first goal was given to him by a rash back-pass from Dover midfield player Bob Wilson. But the second bore all the hallmarks of the Vincent of old. He controlled a Gavin Lang cross at the far post, left Dover full-back Kenny Reynolds for dead and planted the ball in the net. But Nuneaton were never as convincing as the scoreline suggests against the bottom of the table club. They should have beaten them out of sight in the first 20 minutes, but let them off the hook.

And the Kent club staged a second half rally that had Borough in all kinds of trouble. Vincent's first goal, on the half-hour, was cancelled out just two minutes later by an equaliser from Dover striker Kenny Rogers. At half-time they were back at square one when they should have had an unassailable lead. The Kent club then made a determined start to the second half as Borough's problems grew.

But skipper Dave Lewis, again an inspiration in midfield, put them back in front with a superb header in the 62nd minute. That should have been the signal for Nuneaton to tighten their grip on the game, despite the atrocious conditions. Yet they again allowed Dover to come back and began to struggle. Holes appeared in the defence and only two excellent saves from Bob Knight denied the visitors another equaliser.

Then with only 20 seconds left, Vincent wrote a happy ending to a dismal afternoon. Borough lost Lewis, their best player, with a suspected pulled muscle late in the game. He had a superb match in conditions he loves and there were more encouraging signs of a good partnership between Vincent and newcomer Gareth Dale. Borough have had to change their style of play which takes time, but they are back on the winning trail – and that's what matters. Ask Vincent.



Nuneaton businessman Harvey Pallett hands over a £500 cheque to Borough chairman Noel Kelly – one of the many donations that helped the club to survive.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Bedworth Directors Help Borough

Bedworth United's directors are to help Nuneaton Borough – out of their own pockets. They have decided to present the cash trouble Manor Park club with a “no strings attached” loan. No amount has, so far, been disclosed, but every member of the ten man board at the Oval has agreed to contribute. The latest development comes after United decided to withdraw an offer to pay £700 for a rose bowl owned by Noel Kelly.

But the offer was withdrawn after United heard that Borough had handed over a small fee for Gareth Dale. While they wanted to help Nuneaton pay off debts, they did not think they ought to help them buy players. But after hearing more of the facts, the Bedworth board decided they again wanted to help Borough.

## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 11-10-1977

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to play AP Leamington in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Gareth Dale added the finishing touch to a magnificent Borough performance. He won a free flowing game with his first goal for the club in the 29th minute of a Nuneaton dominated first-half. And Borough lifted themselves back among the Southern League leaders after a fortnight in which they had threatened to falter. Confidence oozed back into the Manor Park side as they over ran Brakes in a superb start.

Outclassed, and under intense pressure, Leamington struggled to compete and stay in the game. Bobby Vincent went close, Dale put a shot over the top, and Gary Fleet had a goal bound shot deflected for a corner as Borough put together a string of exciting attacks. Goalkeeper Vincent O'Keefe and former Borough defender Alan Jones battled to hold Leamington together as the pressure built.

Ironically, it was a mistake between the two of them that led to the vital goal. Gavin Lang hit a low cross into the goalmouth, O'Keefe and Jones hesitated for a split second – and Dale darted in to score. The determination that manager Jimmy Knox injects into all his sides clawed Leamington back into the game and they began to attack as half-time approached. But they discovered that Nuneaton can be just as competitive and skilful when they defend, and came up against what has to be the best back four in the Southern League.

Trevor Peake was a giant alongside Roy Cross, whose work often goes unnoticed but his contribution was again immense. And there can be few better full-backs than Kirk Stephens and Wayne Thomas, who combine skill with determination and can build attacks from the back. When Leamington did get through, which was not often, they had to contend with Bob Knight, who once spread his huge frame to push a shot from Willie Wilcox around the post with effortless ease.

Leamington continued to attack at the start of the second half, but their inability to penetrate began to dampen their enthusiasm and Nuneaton slowly regained control. Fleet and

Brendan Phillips, always involved, again began to show their skills alongside tireless Timmy Smithers. Lang had his best game since joining Borough and Dale and Vincent were ever dangerous. Malc Southeran wasted Leamington's best chance when he put a free header over the top 20 minutes from time and Stephens and Smithers cleared off the line in one period of pressure from the Brakes.

## Borough Want £2,500 For Lewis

Nuneaton Borough have put a £2,500 price tag on club skipper Dave Lewis. But Weymouth manager Graham Carr today accused them of “living in dreamland.” He said: “It's a bloody ridiculous fee for a Southern League player.”

## Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 15-10-1977

**Hillingdon:** Toogood, Ryan, Pearce, Millett, Gelson, Smith, Hullett, Wainwright, Reeve, Davies, Cleary. **Sub:** Basey.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Fleet, Smithers, Phillips, Vincent, Dale, Lang. **Sub:** Smith.

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

Borough reached towards the top of the table – only to be slapped down. For the first 20 minutes they played like a team inspired by a championship dream. But they failed to score and third from bottom Hillingdon brought them back to earth in no uncertain fashion. Midfield player Graham Smith went past Brendan Phillips down the left. His centre came off the head of Roy Cross and fell to Barry Davies, who lashed an unstoppable shot across Bob Knight and into the net. Seventy minutes later that goal still separated the teams who had started the match almost a league table apart.

And Hillingdon had sent yet another Nuneaton side packing from the Leas Stadium where Borough have won just once in ten years. But there was no jinx, hoodoo or bad luck story for the Manor Park outfit to hide behind. Quite simply, they were not good enough up front to put away the chances when they were on top. Never decisive or positive enough in the box, they could point to three superb saves from Hillingdon second string goalkeeper John Toogood.

But Borough played into his hands. They always made that one pass too many, took that half a stride too much, or a split second too long. Their football was skilful, their attacks frequent and there was quality in their approach work that Hillingdon could not match. But they fell short of the Londoners in organisation and team work. They never really mastered Hillingdon's ultra-cautious 4-4-2 formation and the home side were able to grow in stature.

Hillingdon approached the game like a bottom of the table side badly needing a victory. Manager Jim Langley organised them to take a point, they realised they could get both – and took full advantage. Borough went into the match in a state of gay abandon, no doubt brought about by their sparkling performance at Leamington just five days earlier.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



They attacked without taking the opposition by the scruff of the neck. And while they were entertaining the crowd, and each other, Hillingdon had time to develop. Borough tried to turn the match into a practice game while their opponents knuckled down doggedly to the job in hand.

Skilful as Borough were their football lacked bite and inspiration that separates a team with talent from the ones that win titles. Bobby Vincent summed it up seconds from the end with a chance that should have brought the equaliser. Put clear by Gareth Dale, he tried to make absolutely sure, took too long, and Toogood, relying only on anticipation, reached the shot in time to push it out. As it ran loose, defender Kenny Millett quickly banged it over his own net. The corner was cleared, the whistle went – and Borough lost two more points on a day when one would have made a tremendous difference to their league situation.

## Nuneaton Boro' v West Midlands Police 17-10-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Smith, Thomas (Lang), Phillips, Fleet, Vincent (Dale), Owen, Smithers.**

Borough welcomed West Midlands Police to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Borough moved into the third round in easy style. They turned a first half full of problems into a second half romp with five goals in 34 minutes. Bobby Vincent and Wayne Thomas each grabbed two and Derek Owen, Timmy Smithers and Gavin Lang completed the rout. What became a farce in the fog opened with a shock for the Manor Park side when the Police went in front.

After only 13 minutes, Trevor Peake missed the ball just outside the box and Holmes hammered in a spectacular goal for the visitors. The fog started to close in as Borough began to build pressure and panic the Police defence. And Bobby Vincent hit two goals in eleven minutes just before half-time to put them ahead.

Conditions worsened after the break. From the stands it was almost impossible to see across the pitch. Borough began to rain in shots from all angles at Police goalkeeper Morris as the gap between the two sides became a gulf. Wayne Thomas hit Borough's third after 55 minutes with a superb shot that went in off an upright.

Another spell of shooting practice was followed by the fourth, also from Thomas with a shot high into the net. Derek Owen then added his name to the score sheet with a tremendous 18 yards power drive that Morris reached but could not stop. That was in the 79th minute and Nuneaton rounded off the spree with two in the last three minutes. Timmy Smithers notched the sixth and Gavin Lang, on as substitute for Thomas, curled the seventh past Morris, with only seconds left.

## Borough In Lottery Talks With Ladbrokes

Nuneaton Borough are on the threshold of the most staggering financial deal in their history. They are to have

talks with Ladbrokes, Britain's biggest betting chain. And the outcome could be a money spinning lottery that would almost certainly make them one of the wealthiest clubs in non-league football. Said chairman Noel Kelly: "The prospect is staggering. I get butterflies just thinking about it.

"If it comes off it will secure the financial future of the club." Ladbrokes, backed by the expertise that has built a multi-million pound empire, would set up, promote and organise the lottery. Top prize would be no less than £1,000 with Borough taking a percentage that would run into thousands of pounds a year...

## Nuneaton Borough v Bedford Town 22-10-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Lang.**

**Bedford: Peacock, Skinn, Folds, Gould, Cooley, Roberts, Earle, Adams, Newson, Greenhalgh, Goodeve. Sub: Lawson.**

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

Borough climbed closer towards the top of the table with their most impressive win of the season. They crushed Bedford to move into third place, more than doubled their goal difference – and could easily have trebled the score. Long before the end, the Eagles were a totally dispirited side as Nuneaton romped home. And Borough are now just one point behind leaders Kettering in the closest battle at the top for years.

A 26th minute goal from Dave Lewis transformed the game after Bedford had threatened to make another dent in Borough's home record. They attacked the Nuneaton defence from the start, something few teams do at Manor Park. But their performance was a carbon copy of Borough's display at Hillingdon last week.



**Goalkeeper Peacock fails to cut out a superb Gareth Dale cross and Bobby Vincent pounces to grab the goal that makes him Borough's leading scorer.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

They failed to take their chances when they were on top – and never managed to get back into the game. As soon as Lewis had altered the course of the match, there was never any doubt about the result. And the club skipper went on to inspire his team with a magnificent display. Not far behind him was Gareth Dale, the newcomer from Redditch, who has made such an impact since his move from Redditch. Dale showed the class, pace, skills and intelligence that

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



suggest Borough have picked up one of the biggest bargains in their history.

He was only a fraction away from a goal in the first minute and was always involved. It was Dale who set up the second goal for his front running partner Bobby Vincent three minutes into the second half. He took advantage of a defensive error with his quicksilver speed and played a superb early ball into the path of Vincent, who scored from close in. That ended any faint hope Bedford might have had of saving the match.

With Lewis powering them forward, Brendan Phillips showing his skills and Dale so effective up front, Borough took total command. And it came as no surprise when they increased their lead from the penalty spot in the 62nd minute. Trevor Gould, the best player in a panicky Bedford defence, clashed with Lewis and Phillips tucked the ball into the net from the spot. After that, it was one way traffic as Borough virtually laid siege to the Eagles goal. At least half-a-dozen chances were set up and missed as Bedford faded out of the match.

They made a half-hearted attempt to salvage something in the dying seconds. By that time though, they were a spent force – beaten out of sight by an exciting Borough side that will surely have a say in the championship this season.

## Tamworth v Nuneaton Borough 24-10-1977

**Borough: Marsden, Sahota, Fallon, Harrison, Tysall, Singh, Ison, Chinn, Owen, Ebery, Postin. Subs: Gary Smith and Knowles.**

Borough made the journey to Kettlebrook to take on Tamworth in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough's youngsters had their enthusiasm dampened by a goal in each half at Kettlebrook. And they would have lost by a much heavier margin, but for some heroic work by the back four. But second team manager John Mason, who looks after the teenagers in the West Midlands League, was far from dismayed. He said: "I was not too disappointed. They were playing against a full Southern League side and one or two of them did very well."

Borough, with four sixteen year olds on view, had little chance to show their attacking strengths early on. Tamworth put them under pressure and it was the defence that was put under severe test. But with Dahl Sahota playing well at right back and Tom Fallon and Steve Harrison willing to risk everything in the middle of the back four, they looked as if they would keep the home side at bay.

Then a tragic error by goalkeeper Ian Marsden, one of two professionals in the side, presented the home side with the lead. He was badly positioned to face a cross-cum-shot from Tamworth striker Neil Perry and the ball went over him into the far corner of the net.

Borough's youngsters then began to attack with John Singh prominent in midfield. But they rarely looked like scoring and the goal still separated the teams at half-time. Borough

launched the second half with a flurry of attacks and both Les Ebrey and Derek Owen went close. Ebrey and Dave Postin went off to be replaced by Gary Smith and Steve Knowles. The two newcomers added more fire to the attack, but Tamworth were well in control and put the Borough defence under more pressure. And they grabbed their second goal in the 73rd minute when former Borough player Kevin Lane touched a free-kick to Doug Devlin, who hit a 25 yard shot that dipped into the net.

Harrison cleared over his own goal and Marsden saved from Ian Barber and Perry as Tamworth tried to press home their advantage. In the end, though, Borough escaped with a two goal defeat, although some of the youngsters clearly found the gap between the West Midlands League Second Division and the Southern League too wide to bridge.

## Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 26-10-1977

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Peake, Smith, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Owen.**

Borough travelled to Rockingham Road to play Kettering Town in a Southern League Cup second round replay.

Bobby Vincent shot Borough into the third round with a dramatic injury time goal. He steered the ball into the net 30 seconds from the end to win a fiercely contested second round replay. And league leaders Kettering must now be wondering how long they can reign at the top with Borough breathing down their neck.

For Nuneaton showed courage, character and skill in abundance in a free-kick littered tie. Their courage carried them through when Kettering tried to intimidate. Their character kept them going long after the Poppies had "died." And their skills often outshone anything that the Northamptonshire side could offer. Kettering had no-one to match the velvet smooth football of Brendan Phillips. Clearly a marked man from the start, he rode the tackles and took the knocks. And fittingly, he played a part in the goal that dealt a savage blow to the Poppies' pride.

But the player who took the man of the match away was Graham Smith, magnificent in the heart of the Borough defence. Smith took over from injured Roy Cross in the middle of the back four – where he played eight seasons for Atherstone. He filled the gap superbly to curb Roy Clayton, one of the most feared forwards in the Premier Division. But it was a team triumph for Borough, who had to re-shuffle their side after losing Kirk Stephens early in the second half.

The injury demonstrated the depth of Borough's squad when Kettering might have been expected to cash in. Derek Owen went on a substitute, played briefly at right back – and then went up front to cause problems for the home side's defence.

Two players were booked. Kettering defender Richard Dixey and Trevor Peake, in a match that needed a much firmer referee than Mr S. A. Robertson from Peterborough. He



should have stamped on the “needle” early on, but allowed it to build and it was a miracle no-one was badly hurt. Shots at goal were few and far between, although a rugged first half ended in a narrow escape for Borough.

Bob Knight managed to block one header from Gary Wood with his body – and saved again as Wood had a second attempt from the rebound. Jeff Faulkner then shot over for Kettering soon after the break as the strength of the tackles increased. Wood was involved in a clash with Phillips and then went in for a challenge with Stephens which left the full-back in agony and forced him out of the match.

Dixey was then booked for an over the top tackle on Gareth Dale and Peake had his name taken as Mr Robertson tried to regain control. Faulkner missed the best chance of the tie when he fluffed a header with the Borough defence in trouble and then Clayton and Bobby Kellard went close.

But Kettering began to fade long before the end as the battle headed for extra-time. Borough stayed the pace far better as the minutes ticked away with the tie still deadlocked. Then Vincent started a move with a ball out to Thomas, who swung it into the middle. Phillips went in with two defenders and the goalkeeper, the ball broke loose – and Vincent was there to drive it hard and low into the net to add the finishing touch.

## Evans Joins Borough Board

Coventry businessman Alan Evans has joined the board of Nuneaton Borough football club. His appointment increases the number of directors to four and he said today: “I intend to get involved. I am not one of those people who join things just for the sake of it.”

Mr Evans, managing director of Progressive Roofing in Coventry, was born in Hinckley and has always taken a keen interest in Borough’s affairs.

### Nuneaton Borough v Hastings United 29-10-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Lang.

**Hastings:** Armstrong, Sheridan, Morris, Streeter, Barry, Turk, Westburgh, Thomas, Gill, Simpson, Angel. **Sub:** Partridge.

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

Borough signposted a route to the Southern League summit as Bobby Vincent lined the path with two goals inside 25 minutes, and the stage was set for a Royal Blue takeover at the top. Even Hastings manager Bobby Drake was convinced that the climb was under way. But Nuneaton lost their way and the Sussex side altered the course of the game with a second half fight-back that cost Borough a point.

The Manor Park side were left to dwell on the fact that if this was to be their year they cannot afford to let any team off the hook. Sloppy play cost them dear. They thought they had it made, and didn’t work hard enough. Whether they had left a

lot of their effort and determination at Kettering three days previously, was debatable. They certainly did not play well, even when they were two goals in front. Having said that though, Hastings deserved credit for the way they came back from the dead.

Manager Drake, who played for Borough in the 1968-69 season, slammed his players at half-time. While he was laying down the law, Borough’s dressing room was a scene of re-organisation. Kirk Stephens, who had started the match carrying an ankle injury, was clearly unable to continue. Graham Smith was moved to right back, Timmy Smithers dropped back and Gavin Lang was pushed up front.

The reshuffle upset Nuneaton plans and, while they were trying to recover, Hastings hit back. Midfield player Steve Gill put them back into the game with a 55th minute goal, and Borough began to struggle. Then winger Micky Angel notched a 77th minute equaliser and the face of the game changed.

Instead of strolling to a comfortable victory, Borough were in trouble. They looked far from a top of the table side, as a team they should have beaten out of sight caused them problems. Only in the dying minutes did Borough show anything like the character that carried them to victory at Kettering. But the chance had gone and the disappointment showed in the Borough dressing room at the end.

They knew they had blown it, although the atmosphere was eased by the news that Kettering and Maidstone, the two clubs above them, had drawn. Those results left them still in third place when the leadership and all that goes with it should have been theirs.

## Kettering Want Phillips

Brendan Phillips, Nuneaton Borough’s brilliant midfield star is wanted by Southern League leaders Kettering Town. They are prepared to offer two players – plus cash – in a bid to persuade Borough to part with him. But the answer from Manor Park will be an emphatic: “No deal.”

### Barnet v Nuneaton Borough 01-11-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Smith, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Chinn.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough strengthened their claim to Southern League honours with a fine point at Barnet. Two points would have given them top spot – and they had a sprinkling of chances to give them victory. For most of the first half they looked probable winners with Gary Fleet repeatedly setting up promising raids.

Indeed, they should have taken the lead as early as the sixth minute following a Barnet error when Bobby Vincent fired wide of an unguarded net. Though the busy Brendan Phillips once shot narrowly past the post, and Gareth Dale saw a header





hit over the bar, Nuneaton had their backs to the wall either side of the interval. A thunderous 25-yard drive by Les Eason leapt into the air off the bar and after doing well to hold a John Fairbrother header, keeper Bob Knight did even better to divert a Gary Borthwick effort to the safety of a corner.

But Barnet, with former Borough forward Ray Aggio replacing the absent Jimmy Greaves, and with player manager Billy Meadows in an unfamiliar role as defender, could not break down the impenetrable Nuneaton back line, which emerged unscathed from the best their opponents had to offer.

For the final half-hour a goalless draw seemed inevitable, though Nuneaton nearly snatched a 74th minute winner when Barnet goalkeeper Wilf Woodend raced out of his area to fly-kick clear. The quick thinking Dave Lewis struck the ball straight back from about 40 yards, only to see Meadows head it for a corner with Woods stranded.

## Peake Attracts Interest

Trevor Peake, rated the best centre-half in Southern League football is attracting more attention from top clubs. Tottenham are the latest to show a keen interest in the 20-year-old defender. They had Vic Potts, the former Villa full-back and now on the White Hart Lane scouting staff, at Manor Park last Saturday. Clearly impressed, he had a long chat with Borough's acting manager Stan Marshall about the player.

## Lottery Go Ahead

Nuneaton Borough are all set to sign a lottery contract with Ladbrokes that could bring them a staggering £200,000 a year. Britain's biggest betting chain today confirmed their offer which was described by Borough chairman Noel Kelly as "beyond all our expectations."

Ladbrokes have offered to set-up, promote and organise the lottery which could make Borough the wealthiest club in non-league football. Projected figures give them a £200,000 a year cut – if all of the tickets are sold.

### **Maidstone United v Nuneaton Borough 12-11-1977**

**Maidstone: Watling, McVeigh, Merrick, Hill, Fraser, Kinnear, Gregory, Budden, Fogarty, Coupland, Stonebridge. Sub: Wallace.**

**Borough: Knight, Thomas, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Lang.**

Borough made the journey to Kent to face Maidstone United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Two give-away goals and missed chances pulled the ladder from beneath Borough's feet. They slipped down to eighth place after another inconsistent display in a billowing wind. At times their football was far superior to anything Maidstone – the new Premier Division leaders – could manage. But they suffered from the same complaint that has affected them since the start of the season – missed chances.

Two uncharacteristic errors by goalkeeper Bob Knight

presented the Stones with the points. He missed a cross in the fifth minute and Phil Stonebridge scored with a glancing header. The ball barely trickled over the line and into the net. Then, on the hour, the goalkeeper dropped the ball and a shot from Billy Fogarty was touched over the line by new signing Brian Gregory from Weymouth. Knight hung his head in disappointment as the second goal went in.

But the goalkeeper has saved Borough on countless occasions. They are through to the first round of the FA Cup because of three brilliant saves against Hednesford last week. His team mates could have spared some of his blushes had they put away the chances that fell their way. Brendan Phillips should have equalised, Trevor Peake scooped one shot over the top and others went begging.

Too often this season Borough have flattered to deceive. They have weaved pretty patterns without supplying the end product. It has become increasingly evident that Dave Lewis needs more support in midfield. That is a problem the return of Ian Goodwin would solve – it's up front where the real worry lies.

Gareth Dale had his most ineffective match since he joined the club and Bobby Vincent worked hard with nothing to show for it. Only Timmy Smithers looked as if he might make something happen and he was denied a goal by a superb save from Maidstone player-manager Barry Watling. The situation improved when Dave Lewis was pushed forward in the closing stages. Borough brought off Vincent, sent on Gavin Lang to play wide and Lewis joined Dale in a 4-2-4. Lewis presented the Maidstone defence with as many problems as they had faced all game.

By that time, though, it was too late and the Stones were on top of the table, but they will have to improve to stay there. Borough will also have to improve if they want to make any real impression on the title race. On their day, they are more than a match for any team in the Premier Division. But the balance looks wrong and that had led to inconsistency. The foundations are sound, no club can have a better back four. They win almost everything – only to see chances missed at the other end.

## Lottery War

Noel Kelly today fired the first salvo in what could become a lottery 'war' between Nuneaton Borough and the Council. The football club chairman said: "There is no room for two lotteries in the town. But if the Council want to take us on – then let the best man win." Borough are due to launch their Ladbrokes backed lottery in the New Year. March has been pencilled in as the possible starting date.

But the council announced yesterday that they are to run the town's first civic lottery in three weeks time. The venture is a pilot scheme and the proceeds will boost Nuneaton's Silver Jubilee Appeal. Depending on the response the council will then decide whether to make it a regular thing and use the money to benefit recreational facilities.

## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 15-11-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Thomas, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Chinn, Lang (Phillips 75), Fleet, Owen, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Fallon.

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to face AP Leamington in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Stand-in keeper Ian Marsden produced a marvellous performance to save Nuneaton from suffering a heavy defeat. He was beaten only once as on-song AP clicked into gear to enjoy long spells of supremacy and in the process chalk up their first win over Borough in their last five encounters.

Marsden made four super saves from Stewart, Boot, Carr and Morton, and must have given assistant manager Stan Marshall plenty to contemplate for Saturday's game. Marsden's display was one of the few bright spots for Nuneaton on a night when they were allowed to play only in spasms. They enjoyed early dominance against an uncertain home rearguard, and Lang and Dale both had efforts brush the woodwork. But AP gradually found their rhythm and a four-man move saw Stewart's final effort immaculately turned round the post by Marsden.

Then, in the 41st minute, Wilcox switched the flow of AP's attack, Mason flighted in a right-wing cross and tiny Roy Morton nipped in to head past Marsden. Borough had a peach of a chance to get back on terms seconds later, when Lang found Dale in space at the far post. But the Borough number 10 wanted too much time and eventually shot wide.

Marsden superbly parried Boot's snap shot six minutes after the break, and then his opposite number, Burton, saved a swerving drive from Lang. But Borough were forced to concede the midfield battle and as AP moved on top Marsden saved expertly from Carr's glancing header and then Morton's drive.

Borough brought on Phillips in the last 15 minutes and they enjoyed one of their best spells, but AP's defence, where Brown was dominant, really didn't look like being breached.

## Oxford All Ticket

Nuneaton Borough's FA Cup tie against Third Division Oxford United will be all-ticket. They will be on sale later this week – at increased prices. Terrace tickets will cost 70p and a seat in the stand £1.20 with pensioners and children paying 40p and 70p. The all-ticket decision and the price rises were agreed after discussions with the Third Division club.

Oxford secretary Jim Hunt was at Manor Park yesterday to inspect the ground and facilities. He said: "Our minimum admission charge is 80p and our directors think that 70p is reasonable for the Cup game."

Extra security precautions will also be in force for the First Round tie – the first visit of a League club to Manor Park for a competitive match in ten years. Rival supporters may be partitioned off in an exercise in crowd control that could stand Borough in good stead for the future.

## Youth Team Drawn Away At Villa

Nuneaton Borough have been drawn away to Aston Villa in the second round of the FA Youth Cup. The draw makes history for the Manor Park teenagers – it will be the first time they have faced opposition from a First Division club. Borough teenagers reached the second round after a 2-0 win over Northampton Town last Saturday.

## Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 19-11-1977

**Grantham:** Gardiner, Brindley, Chamberlain, Norris, Harrison, Hodgson, Gulson, P. Jackson, Platt, Taylor, Benskin. **Sub:** J. Jackson.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Chinn, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Vincent.

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

Borough left Grantham on Saturday with a point – and Oxford on their minds. They were never impressive against the division's bottom club. They must know they will have to do a lot better if they are to upset Oxford in the FA Cup. Nothing they did would have struck fear into any Oxford observer who might have been watching.

They struggled for long periods against the Gingerbreads, only a pale shadow of the side they once were. Even when they did manage to get on top, they failed to stamp any real authority on the match. There were bright spots; teenager Chris Chinn did well in midfield on his debut. The defence, as ever, was as sound as a rock, on an exposed, sloping switch-back of a pitch that can easily become a nightmare.

But the decision to push Dave Lewis up front did not come off and they are still searching for the blend that will bring goals. Lewis will play anywhere, but the switch cannot have done much for his dignity or his morale. A player most clubs would dearly love to have in midfield was left to struggle ineffectively up front.



**The bravery of Grantham goalkeeper Chris Gardiner denies Chris Chinn a goal that would have crowned a superb debut.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Chinn, still only 18, provided the one bright spot to emerge from the match. Still only 18, he showed as much patience

on the field as he has shown off it. The youth team skipper has waited a long time for his first team chance. He did the simple things well with a surprisingly mature performance for a player of such tender years. Chinn is just one of several youngsters in the club waiting for their chance.

Five days from their FA Cup First Round match Borough are still looking for the right combinations in midfield and up front to make them a balanced, consistent side. And this time they can hardly point to a series of injuries as a contributory factor. Uncertain and inconsistent, they can take on and beat the best sides. Oxford could well discover that.

Borough's players are the envy of the Southern League – the team is not. Trevor Peake is almost a one-man defence, and the people alongside him, Roy Cross, Wayne Thomas and Kirk Stephens have few peers in the Premier Division. They pick themselves, and Lewis would be snapped up tomorrow as a midfield player. Then comes the question marks that hang over players with undoubted talent, but uncertain temperament. Fortunately the Southern League is so wide open this season that any one of a dozen sides could win it.

Borough are still one of them, although they must beat teams like Grantham if they are to make an impression. It was a point lost rather than a point gained against a poor side that has won only two games since the start of the season.

## Nuneaton Borough v Stourbridge 21-11-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Chinn, Vincent, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Tysall.

Borough welcomed Stourbridge to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup third round tie.

Gareth Dale steered Borough into the quarter finals of the Southern League Cup, with two second half goals. He brought a glow of warmth to the freezing terraces with an equaliser and the match winner inside nine minutes after the break. But Dale, who ended Borough's goal famine will have to sit out the FA Cup tie against Oxford on Saturday. He has played in the competition with Redditch this season and manager Stan Bennett will have to find someone else to fill the gap up front.

And that's where Nuneaton's problems arise after another game of missed chances. The first-half belonged to Stourbridge after an incident-packed start. They took the lead and Borough missed a penalty – all in the space of eleven minutes. Centre-forward Steve Cooper put Stourbridge in front in the second minute. Kirk Stephens tried to clear, but the ball had already crossed the line.

Nine minutes later Brendan Phillips drove a spot kick wide – and Borough were in trouble. They missed chances and could have gone further behind when John Chester crashed a shot against the foot of a post. A half-time roasting from Manager Stan Bennett shook them into action after the break.

They began to look like a Southern League Premier Division side and a superb ball from Roy Cross set up the equaliser in

the 63rd minute. His pin-point pass found Dale, who showed his speed and then forced the ball over the line. Stourbridge, whose back four had done well, began to show signs of panic and a hurried back pass was saved by goalkeeper Moore as Dale again darted in.

But Borough were in front in the 72nd minute when Dale rose to meet a near-post corner from Bendan Phillips and scored with a glancing header from the six yard box. After that, the Manor Park side were in complete control as Stourbridge faded out of the picture.

They offered a mild threat on the break as Borough pushed everyone forward. But the confidence they had gained in the first-half had been drained away and Borough moved into the last eight.

## Cup Heroes Look Down



Cup heroes from the past look down on Borough chairman Noel Kelly (right) and director Ken Storer. The mural in the Manor Park Social Club contains a record of faces and glories from years gone by. Who knows? there might be more to add after Saturday's Cup tie against Oxford.

Whatever happens, Borough are already selling tickets for an after the match "celebration" dinner dance at Stockingford Pavilion in aid of the Appeal Fund.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Borough Cup Match Flop Danger

Nuneaton Borough's biggest match for ten years is in danger of being a flop. With the Oxford Cup tie only four days away, barely 2,500 tickets have been sold. Said club chairman Noel Kelly: "We would have hoped to be doing a lot better than that. Many people may be leaving it late before they get their tickets, but all we can do is hope they rally round."

Borough have laid plans for an 8,000 gate for the first round tie. "We need the people to turn up. It's vitally important," said Mr Kelly. "This is the biggest sporting event in the town for ten years and they could make all the difference."

## Barriers Go Up At Manor Park



Youngsters peer through the six foot chain link fence that will partition rival fans at Manor Park tomorrow. The fences will stay as a permanent fixture on the ground in an attempt to make it a safer place to watch football. "If the arrangements go as planned everyone will have a safe, enjoyable afternoon," said club chairman Noel Kelly. Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Borough Fans Can Pay At Turnstiles

Nuneaton Borough supporters will be able to pay at the turnstiles for tomorrow's FA Cup tie against Oxford United. But all gates will be locked at 2-30pm – fifteen minutes after the kick-off. Originally, the club decided to make the match all ticket, but that decision was reversed by the board last night.

### Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 29-11-1977

**Atherstone:** Higgins, Stockley, Brown, Bosworth, Tidman, Montgomery, Tomkinson, Kiernan, Drew, Neale, Shore. Subs: Smith and Flannagan.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Owen, Chinn, Thomas, Dale, Smith, Knowles. Subs: Nardiello and Vincent.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to take on Atherstone Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup match.

Borough overpowered Atherstone at frost-bound Sheepy Road. Both teams did well in the treacherous conditions, but

it was Nuneaton who snapped up the chances. Gareth Dale headed them in front from a Graham Smith free-kick after only four minutes when goalkeeper Gary Higgins hesitated.

Mark Neale equalised ten minutes later before Borough drew clear with goals from Steve Knowles, Gary Smith – and another by Dale. Both clubs gave their youngsters a chance and they provided more entertainment than some of the recent Southern League matches between the two sides.

After Neale had equalised there was a spell when the game could have gone either way. But only eight minutes from half-time Wayne Thomas provided a superb cross for Knowles to burst through to restore Borough's lead. Steve Tomkinson crashed a shot against an upright with Ian Marsden beaten, early in the second half. Then Adders' hopes of saving the game were wrecked by a spectacular goal from Gary Smith.

He lobbed the ball over Higgins from 35 yards out with the keeper off his line. Phil Nardiello, who arrived late after travel problems, replaced Derek Owen – and played a part in the best move of the match. Thomas found Knowles wide on the left hand side. The winger played a one-two off Nardiello and then sent over a centre for Dale to complete the scoreline with four minutes left.

## Borough Drawn Against Kettering

Borough have been drawn against arch rivals Kettering in the second round of the FA Cup. Borough have already beaten the Poppies twice this season and manager Stan Bennett greeted the news with the words: "It can't be bad."

## Borough Await FA Decision

Nuneaton Borough are awaiting a decision by the Football Association before they can confirm their plans for the Second Round of the FA Cup. Borough, 2-0 victors over Oxford, have been drawn at home to Southern League rivals Kettering Town. But Isthmian League side Tilbury, beaten 1-0 by the Poppies, have lodged a protest.

## FA Order Replay

Nuneaton Borough still do not know who they are to face in the Second Round of the FA Cup on December 17. Kettering Town have been ordered by the Football Association to replay their First Round tie against Tilbury on or before next Monday, at Tilbury. Kettering won the original match 1-0, but then Tilbury discovered that their Southern League opponents had fielded an ineligible player, Len Glover.

## Tilbury And Kettering Draw

A moment of controversy in the 75th minute kept Kettering in the FA Cup – and left Nuneaton still waiting to see who their second round opponents will be. With 15 minutes of the tie left and Tilbury leading 2-1, the Londoners looked poised for a famous victory. But Kettering were awarded a contested corner and Peter Phipps prodded the ball home, giving Kettering a draw and a replay at Rockingham Road



## Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough 03-12-1977

**Yeovil:** Parker, Thompson, Cuttle, McMahon, Dominey, Harrison, Herrall, Hickton, Plumb, O'Donnell, Clancy. **Sub:** Leigh.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lang, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Dale, Smithers. **Sub:** Graham Smith.

Borough made the journey to face Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Inquests raged in the dressing room about the goal that cost Borough two precious points. There were just 17 minutes left when Borough had the match snatched from their grasp. Chaos and confusion reigned as Bath referee Mr Bill Gumbleton penalised Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight.

Knight, despite the fact that he had a 60 mph wind behind him, had tried to pinch a few inches with a kick out of his hands. The referee spent several seconds forcing Borough's wall back ten yards. Two Yeovil players then ran over the ball, the wall broke and Roy Cross ran forward. He was about three yards away when Yeovil midfielder Frank McMahon swung his foot at the ball, more out of frustration than any positive intent. It went straight through and into the net as Knight dived despairingly in the middle of his goal.

Borough looked towards the referee – but he had already pointed to the centre spot. The goal was tragic for Knight, who had kept Nuneaton in the match before half-time. Assisted by the billowing wind, Yeovil had pounded the Borough defence. The back four performed heroics in the nightmare conditions and Knight pulled off three superb saves.

And then Borough, with the wind behind them, had taken over the second half. They had not managed to apply the same sort of pressure as the home side – although keeper Parker pulled off one breath-taking save from Gareth Dale. But they still had both points in their sights when the controversial goal wrecked their chances. Much of the fire and determination they showed against Oxford was missing from their play.

Borough did well enough to deserve a point – only to travel back with nothing. And they have now slipped down to half-way in the Southern League championship table.

Manager Stan Bennett knows he will have to tighten up their game if they are to clamber back among the leaders. Fortunately, though, the championship race has rarely been closer. Four points from their next two games – both at home – could put them back in contention.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wealdstone 05-12-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Lang, Fleet, Phillips, Smithers, Dale, Lewis. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough welcomed Wealdstone to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division game;

Borough lifted themselves back among the Southern League

leaders on the strength of a Brendan Phillips penalty. Phillips scored from the spot seven minutes into the second half. But the game, billed as the “Battle of the Cup Giantkillers,” fell flat. Borough beat Oxford and Wealdstone stunned Hereford at Edgar Street. Both would have cringed had they seen their conquerors muddle through an uninspiring clash. For the game was a sad reflection on the Third Division as Borough and Wealdstone struggled.

Wealdstone boasted they would come and attack – and never had a shot on goal. The only time they looked dangerous was when Bob Knight failed to hold a corner and Kirk Stephens had to make a near suicidal save on the line. Borough were not that much better, although they should have won by a much wider margin.

Fortunately for the North Londoners, former Atherstone goalkeeper Chris Lightfoot usually saves a good performance for Manor Park. Borough had appeals for a penalty ignored as early as the 32nd minute when Wayne Thomas was brought down. Referee Roy Jackson was only a yard away from the incident and awarded a free-kick on the edge of the box.

Lightfoot pulled off the first of his second half saves to deny Gareth Dale a goal three minutes after the break. Then came the penalty that decided the match, sparked off by a back pass from Wealdstone midfielder Griffiths. Dale ran on, was brought down by Lightfoot and Phillips sent the keeper the wrong way from the spot.

Watson was booked for a deliberate trip on Phillips – full-back Thomas had already had his name taken for a foul on Timmy Smithers before half-time. Lightfoot pushed a shot from Gary Fleet around the post and denied Lewis before Stephens made his brave goal-line clearance.

Then Lightfoot forced a shot from Phillips over the bar before Lewis had another chance in the closing seconds. But the penalty still separated the sides and Borough collected two vital points from a win that should have been more emphatic.

## Borough Plan For Tilbury

Stan Bennett will start laying plans for Nuneaton's important FA Cup tie against Tilbury on December 17. Manager Bennett is awaiting a report from club secretary John Evans, who watched last night's 3-2 win for the Isthmian League side at Kettering. “When I know what John has to say we can start to plan,” said Bennett today.

## Nuneaton Borough v Redditch United 10-12-1977

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Lang. **Sub:** Dale.

**Redditch:** Edwards, Grice, Taylor, Clements, Jones, Bruck, Dyer, Bastable, Tuohy, Hogan, Smart. **Sub:** Sykes.

Borough welcomed Redditch United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough renewed their championship challenge with

a scintillating performance. They powered through the Manor Park mud to climb into joint third place. And they set themselves up for their FA Cup tie against Tilbury as they turned on the style. Redditch, beset with problems this season, were a far better side than their league position suggests. United are now bottom of the table, but Nuneaton have played far worse teams this season.

But as soon as Brendan Phillips had given Borough a first half lead, there was no doubt about the result. They withstood a brave, but brief bid by Redditch to get back into the game. And they then confirmed their win with two goals in the last fifteen minutes to widen their goal difference in the tightest title race for years.



**Bobby Vincent, leg outstretched hooks a shot past former Borough goalkeeper Reg Edwards, just before half-time, only to be pulled up for offside.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough's performance oozed poise and confidence – at times Redditch were outclassed. Their display provided the perfect build-up to the Cup tie. Bob Knight had only one moment of danger throughout the whole of the 90 minutes and he made that look easy. But the most heartening part about Nuneaton's play was the way their attack slipped into gear.

They missed chances, but were always looking for goals and some of their approach work matched anything they have produced this season. Wayne Thomas had a superb match in midfield and skipper Dave Lewis was magnificent up front. They scored with two late goals that gave the scoreline a more realistic look.

Lewis made it 2-0 with a glancing header from a Gareth Dale cross in the 75th minute. Dale, on as substitute for Gavin Lang, then had a shot blocked which led to the third goal in the closing seconds. As the ball rebounded from a Redditch defender, Thomas ran on and hit a shot from 20 yards that scorched past Redditch goalkeeper Reg Edwards and into the net. Redditch suffered a second half set-back when they lost player-manager Dietmar Bruck early on.

He was carried off with a gashed calf muscle that needed six stitches after a challenge with Thomas. By that time, though Borough had already laid the foundations for their victory. They had to win to stay among the top clubs in the chase for the championship.

Now they can concentrate on Tilbury in a much happier frame of mind. And the stage is set for another historic afternoon at a ground that has been brought back to life by the Cup.

## Ladbrokes Announce Lottery Start Date

Ladbrokes, Britain's biggest betting chain, have announced the start date for the Nuneaton Borough lottery. Tickets will be on sale on February 17 – earlier than anticipated. And Borough could then start reaping the massive rewards that could make them the wealthiest non-league club in the country...

## Borough Youth Team Routed

Borough Youth team's dreams of producing a giant killing act against Aston Villa Youth last night turned into a nightmare on a heavy, muddy, Villa Park when the Borough side slipped to an 8-0 defeat. The FA Youth Cup Second Round tie made history for Nuneaton Borough Football Club. It was the first time that any side from the club had taken on First Division opposition.

## Kelly: Cup Win Could Have Wiped Out Debts

Nuneaton Borough were today counting the cost of their shock FA Cup defeat by Isthmian League underdogs Tilbury. Inquests raged over the weekend after one of the most incredible games seen at Manor Park. Club chairman Noel Kelly estimated the defeat cost the club as much as £18,000 – had they have won and been drawn away to Stoke in the Third Round like Tilbury. He said: "We could have wiped out all our debts in one day - and had money in the bank. There is so much money we could have made apart from the gate itself.

## Bennett Hits Back At Kelly

Nuneaton Borough manager Stan Bennett today hit back at chairman Noel Kelly in the aftermath of the club's shock FA Cup defeat. Bennett insisted: "He should be trying to help – not trying to knock us down. This is the time we need backing – not hammering."

Angered by comments from the chairman that the defeat against Tilbury cost Borough £18,000, Bennett went on: "What about the other Southern League clubs who never made it in the cup? They would have loved to have reached the second round and made the money we made."

## Sutton Coldfield Town v Nuneaton Boro' 20-12-1977

**Borough: Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent, Lang. Sub: Smithers.**

Borough made the journey to Coles Lane to face Sutton Coldfield Town in a Birmingham Senior Cup third round tie.

Brendan Phillips was sent off as Borough earned a replay in an explosive Birmingham Senior Cup match last night. Phillips and former Borough player Micky Warom received



their marching orders after an exchange of punches in the 54th minute. And Burton referee Ray Gaunt also booked Nuneaton's Trevor Peake and Gary Fleet as tempers flared.

Earlier Borough seemed to be heading for another shock cup exit. Compton Edwards fired the Midland Combination side into a fifth minute lead. He intercepted a bad back pass from Graham Smith and cheekily chipped the ball over young keeper Ian Marsden. But Borough, inspired by the skill and aggression of Gary Fleet, soon took control in midfield and slowly broke down Sutton's massed defence. And the Manor Park side were twice denied when Lang and Peake had goals disallowed. Fleet had a brilliant game and was well supported by the growing-in-confidence Wayne Thomas.

Borough equalised two minutes after Phillips' dismissal. Gavin Lang, one of Borough's FA Cup heroes, shot through a forest of legs to earn them a replay. Defender Peake was booked for a tackle on Edwards and Fleet was cautioned for dissent. Sutton's Steve Howkins was also booked.

## Board Discuss Bennett Comments

Nuneaton Borough's board is to meet to discuss comments made by manager Stan Bennett in the wake of the Tilbury Cup defeat. The matter was discussed "at length" by the directors last night – but no decision was taken.

Another meeting will now be held in the New Year to decide what action – if any – will be taken. Bennett was not present last night. Neither was director Alan Evans, who is on holiday.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 26-12-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Thomas, Fleet, Chinn, Vincent, Dale, Lang. **Sub:** Nardiello.

**Atherstone:** Hall, Stockley, Preston, Brown, Shotton, R. Smith, Minton, Tomkinson, Flannagan, Neale, Turpie. **Sub:** Tidman.

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

Borough and Adders shared the gate – and the points – in an incident filled Boxing Day clash. But the game was marred by a tragic injury to Adders goalkeeper Ken Hall just two minutes from the end. Injured in a challenge with Trevor Peake, he was stretchered off and taken to hospital with a damaged jaw.

The incident provided a sad end to a match that deserved a better fate. Borough, with Brendan Phillips under suspension and Bob Knight and Dave Lewis out injured, had the better of the first half. But they lost control after half-time when Adders took over as the more positive side. Ian Marsden, safe and solid in goal, and youngsters Chris Chinn and Gary Tysall all did well for Borough.

So too, did Gary Fleet, but Borough were unable to break down an Adders' defence superbly marshalled by Gary Brown. Mark Neale gave Trevor Peake more problems than he has faced all season and the game hung in the balance.

Fleet almost tipped the scales when he forced Hall into a breath-taking one-handed save after half-time. But it was Atherstone who finished the stronger side before the ninth Southern League derby between the two clubs ended like seven of the previous matches – in stalemate.

## Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 27-12-1977

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Thomas, Smith, Peake, Smithers, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Lang. **Sub:** Tysall.

Borough made the journey to the Buck's Head to face Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Gavin Lang shot Borough into a sixth minute lead against Telford. But their success was short lived as the Shropshire side stormed back to win. And Borough emerged from their Christmas matches with just one point – and their title hopes fading fast. Borough opened in sparkling style and put Telford under pressure from the start.

Then Lang an ex-Telford player, crashed in a shot from close range after Borough had stretched the home defence. Nuneaton continued to dominate the play with some impressive football as Telford struggled to stay in the match. But they equalised in the 18th minute through new signing George Andrews from Worcester. The former Walsall striker, making his home debut, was on target with a header.

Brendan Phillips and Gary Fleet were still impressive in midfield, but slowly lost control as Geoff Hurst and Nick Athey began to show their experience. Then four minutes before half-time, Keith Galley put Telford in front with his first Southern League goal for the club and the one that proved decisive. Telford applied strong pressure in the second half, although Bobby Vincent and Lang still looked dangerous.

Borough defended well and goalkeeper Ian Marsden spread confidence with two fine saves. He denied Martin Gavin a goal with his bravery at close range and then tipped a scorching 30 yarder from Galley over the bar. Again Borough fell down in front of goal and the game ended in disappointment for the Manor Park side after their bright start.

## Hastings United v Nuneaton Borough 31-12-1977

**Hastings:** Armstrong, Lambert, Petcovic, Streeter, Barry, Turk, Westburgh, Spray, Hill, Simpson, Salvage. **Sub:** Angel.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Lang. **Sub:** Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Kent to face Hastings United in a Southern League Premier Division match.

A second half fight back failed to save Borough from defeat against Hastings on New Year's Eve. Hit by two goals inside three minutes before half-time, they put the Sussex side under intense pressure.

Goalkeeper Terry Armstrong pulled off three superb saves and Borough turned the Hastings goalmouth into a battle



ground. Shots were blocked and the home side survived some amazing near misses.

But they hung on to the first-half goals from Barry Salvage and Malcolm Streeter, whose shot went in off Trevor Peake to take the points.

## Bennett On Sick Leave For Six Months

Nuneaton Borough Football Club was still in a state of confusion today about the future of manager Stan Bennett, who is recovering from a broken leg. Bennett has announced he will be on sick leave for at least six months. And he has told the players: "I don't expect to be back."

But the directors have not heard anything officially and chairman Noel Kelly today described the situation as "unhappy and confused."

Bennett dropped his bombshell when he called the playing staff together after a Christmas Eve training session. Afterwards he said: "I could not allow the situation to go on any longer. It has been building up for some time. I will be 'on the box' for at least six months and have been told I could wear irons for six months after that."

## Bennett: Come And Meet Me

Stan Bennett today issued a "come and meet me" challenge to Nuneaton Borough chairman Noel Kelly. He said: "if he still wants me as manager why doesn't he come and meet me face to face? I have a broken leg. What do they want me to do – walk across and see them?"

"All this business about them not being able to contact me is rubbish. The club knows my address and have at least three telephone numbers where I can be contacted. But no-one has phoned me or tried to get in touch."

## Nuneaton Boro' v Sutton Coldfield Town 02-01-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Thomas, Fleet, Dale, Owen, Lang. **Subs:** Vincent and Chinn.

Borough welcomed Sutton Coldfield Town to Manor Park for a Birmingham Senior Cup third round replay.

The injury jinx that has cursed Borough in the Senior Cup struck again last night. They beat Sutton to go into the quarter-finals – but they had to pay a heavy price. Gavin Lang was taken to hospital with concussion and Gareth Dale damaged ligaments in his right knee. And the injury situation facing acting manager Stan Marshall has now reached desperate proportions.

The 1-1 draw between the two clubs in the first game cost Borough the services of Roy Cross and Dave Lewis and left Brendan Phillips with a suspension. But it was lack of form that troubled them through a goalless and forgettable first-half last night. Still lethargic, they struggled to put their game together, their finishing was poor, and they made mistakes at the back. One almost cost them a goal in the 12th minute when

Compton Edwards took advantage of a mix-up and lobbed the ball over Ian Marsden. It rolled towards the net before Kirk Stephens managed to get back and clear off the line.

Dale, injured in a tackle just before half-time, failed to re-appear after the break and Bobby Vincent took his place. Vincent gave the front line more impact, but the goal that put them in front in the 57th minute was scrappy. Phillips got a lucky bounce and then a rebound before he steered the ball into the net.

Sutton keeper Ward then made a superb save from a Derek Owen header before Phillips shot wide as the ball bobbed. Vincent then increased the lead in the 71st minute after Owen had challenged to a cross from Lang. The ball rebounded to Vincent who lashed it back into the net to ease Borough's problems. Five minutes later Sutton cut the arrears with a give-away goal that exposed the Borough defence.

O'Connell found Williams with a free-kick and his header went through the outstretched arms of Ian Marsden and into the net. But Borough managed to preserve their lead and now travel to Burton in the last eight.

## Bennett Future Still In Doubt

Stan Bennett's future as manager of Nuneaton Borough is still in doubt. And it could be at least a week before any decision is taken. The Manor Park directors had planned to meet tonight to discuss the situation that has arisen between Bennett and the club. But the meeting has been postponed – so that steps can be taken for Bennett to attend.

## Nuneaton Borough v Barnet

07-01-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Thomas, Fleet, Vincent, Owen, Lang. **Sub:** Smithers.

**Barnet:** Woodend, Oliver, Lees, Hinton, Underwood, Borthwick, Greaves, Brown, Fairbrother, Eason, Williams. **Sub:** Price.

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

Borough bounced back to form with a performance that brought a smile back to the face of acting manager Stan Marshall. They outplayed joint league leaders Barnet in a game that provided first-class entertainment for a 1,400-plus crowd. And they can now look into 1978 with renewed hope after their lean spell and the turmoil off the field. Marshall, given the task of steering the club through a difficult time, was clearly delighted.

He said: "They have proved to me they can do it. Everyone went out there and played. Now they have got to keep at it."

Borough took a grip on the game with two goals from Bobby Vincent inside the first 40 minutes. A second half goal then put the North Londoners back in the match, but Nuneaton were easy winners in the end. In fact, Barnet, their side sprinkled with ageing ex-League players, were fortunate to escape so lightly.



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Vincent could easily have had four goals and Derek Owen missed another. But Borough showed a vast all round improvement after their lean spell. The return of skipper Dave Lewis had a massive impact on midfield where they were always in control. Lewis was obviously short of match fitness after his injury lay-off, but his presence made all of the difference.



**Bobby Vincent steers a Gavin Lang cross into the net – and Borough are on their way to two points.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Wayne Thomas also had a fine match in midfield – but the player who stood head and shoulder above everyone was Gary Fleet. Enigmatic Fleet turned on his full range of skills with a magnificent performance. Given more freedom to play his own game, he won the acclaim of the fans with a man of the match display.

Barnet's experience showed early on, but Borough had victory in their sights as soon as Vincent shot them ahead after 16 minutes. He then shot against the woodwork when he should have scored before Dennis Brown hit a post for Barnet. Vincent struck again five minutes from the break and then missed another goal with the second half barely a minute old.

Borough were in absolute control before a goal from Brown following a quickly taken free-kick, put the visitors back in the match. What should have been a consolation goal from their opponents had the Manor Park side in trouble for a spell. Owen, always busy up front for Borough, should have restored the balance.

He tried a chip when he should have hammered the ball and the goalkeeper brought off a spectacular save. An entertaining game then ended with Barnet under fierce pressure and struggling to stay alive. Borough failed to increase their lead and the 2-1 scoreline was hardly a reflection on the play. But the two points will do them a power of good.

## Bennett Sends Letter To Club

Stan Bennett has contacted Nuneaton Borough – nearly a fortnight after his sensational decision to “go on the sick.” The club received a letter from the manager yesterday, just when they were drafting one to him. Bennett has outlined some of the grievances he has already aired in the Press. And the club now intends to call a board meeting as soon as possible.

Chairman Noel Kelly said: “We are writing a reply asking Stan to attend a meeting to discuss the situation with the board.

It is imperative we get this matter cleared up as soon as possible – there are other important things to do.”

Bennett has not been in contact with the club since Christmas Eve, but is clearly still unhappy. He said today: “If my contract is altered in any way I shall consult my solicitors.”

## John Moore Joins Borough Board

John Moore, East Midlands area manager for Ladbroke's, has become a director of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. He has been co-opted on to the Manor Park board after working behind the scenes for some time.

A Borough fan for 30 years, he helped to set up the Improvement Fund which has raised money to improve facilities on the ground. And he was also instrumental in setting up the Ladbroke's backed lottery which will be launched next month.

## Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone

09-01-1978

**Borough: Marsden, Stephens, Peake, Smith, Thomas, Chinn, Fleet, Lewis, Owen, Vincent, Smithers. Sub: Tysall.**

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

Borough's fading hopes of a championship challenge must surely have perished in the bitter cold at Manor Park. After their defeat against Maidstone they now appear certain to finish among the also rans for yet another season. They had to win to stand any chance at all, but plunged from the heights of their win over Barnet – to rock bottom.

To be kind, they have had more than their fair share of injury and upset. To be fair they can compete with – and beat – the best on their day. But, to be realistic, they are not going to make it for yet another year. For, to be brutally frank, they are simply not good enough to maintain anything like the consistency needed to make a serious challenge.

Maidstone confirmed those fears after 90 minutes of ragged, untidy football. They snatched an early goal and then settled back on their lead while Nuneaton struggled. Stones didn't win because they are a great side. Far from it. They won because they were better organised, more experienced, and – above all – more professional. They knew exactly what they were about. Borough looked as if they had never met each other. The Manor Park side have lost their way. Rarely do they play the same way for two matches running.

On Saturday, they outplayed Barnet with power, skill and style. Last night they were unimaginative – devoid of methods and ideas. And they played into Maidstone's hands with a constant stream of crosses that were gobbled up by central defenders Neil Merrick and Kenny Hill.

Merrick, son of former England goalkeeper Gil Merrick, scored the goal that decided the game in the 23rd minute. He beat Marsden with a glancing header from the six yard box after Ken Wallace had done well to get the ball across.

Borough then went on to make him man of the match with their stereotyped approach work. After his goal, commonsense gave way to panic in the Nuneaton ranks as they blundered on regardless. They attacked without creating chances and Maidstone always looked more likely to increase their lead than Borough did of getting an equaliser.

The Kent club had an ace up their sleeves in centre-forward Glen Coupland, whose speed and skill made Borough wary about pushing players forward. And the Nuneaton fans, heartened by the Barnet performance, waited impatiently for 74 minutes to see the first Borough shot on target – and that was from defender Graham Smith.

Not until the last minute did the Manor Park side look like saving the match. Gary Fleet unleashed a fierce shot from the edge of the box, only to be thwarted by a superb save from Maidstone player-manager Barry Watling, who dived to push the shot around the post, Merrick rose high to head the corner clear – and the final whistle ended another night of disappointment.

## Bennett To Meet Board

Nuneaton Borough's directors are due to meet manager Stan Bennett tonight in a bid to "clear the air." Bennett has not been to the ground for three weeks – since he told the players and the Press he was going "on the sick" for six months.

But efforts to arrange a meeting have now succeeded and a decision on his future could be taken after tonight's discussions. The Borough manager has attacked the board for the way he claims he has been treated since breaking a leg last August.

## Bennett To Leave Club Within A Few Days

Stan Bennett will be leaving Nuneaton Borough within the next few days. His contract, which has 18 months to run, will be cancelled by mutual consent. And Stan Marshall, who has been in charge of the team on a temporary basis, is expected to be confirmed as manager.

Bennett today disclosed he has accepted a financial offer from the club. He said: "They have offered me a settlement which I will accept. I will be leaving the club within the next few days."

## Stan Marshall: Borough Job A Privilege

Stan Marshall summed up his feelings about being appointed manager of Nuneaton Borough when he said: "It's a privilege." Following Stan Bennett's departure, the directors decided to look no further than the man who has been in charge all season. He has been acting manager since Bennett broke a leg, but now takes charge in his own right.

The decision is another step in a remarkable association between Marshall and the club he has served on and off for more than forty years. But he admitted: I am still a bit amazed – it never crossed my mind that one day I would become manager of Nuneaton."

## Borough Sign Steve Carr



Steve Carr brandishes the contract that makes him a Nuneaton Borough player and Stan Marshall's first signing as manager in his own right. His transfer from AP Leamington was completed last night and he makes his debut against Bath City at Twerton Park on Saturday. Borough have paid what secretary John Evans described as a "moderate fee" for the 21-year-old forward.

A former Leicester City player, he moved to Leamington last October from Grantham. He had an unsettled time at the Windmill, but showed signs of a return to form with two goals in his last two games.

## Lottery Money To Improve Manor Park

Nuneaton Borough are to plough the money they make from their lottery into improving Manor Park. Chairman Noel Kelly and his directors have already sketched out a blueprint. Their first objective is a new set of floodlights which will cost between £15-£17,000.

Other plans include:

- New dressing rooms, referees room and treatment room
- New vice presidents' bar under the main stand
- Improved terracing, particularly under the covered stand at the Cock and Bear end
- And a new boundary wall to replace the unsightly tins which now separate the club from the gardens in Beaumont Place

The aim is to bring the ground up to something like Football League standard – at only a fraction of the cost of the much grander schemes that have been announced in the past.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Borough Anglo-Italian Invite

Nuneaton Borough have again been invited to take part in the Anglo-Italian Tournament. They have been told there is a place waiting for them and are almost certain to accept.

Said chairman Noel Kelly: “We have already agreed in principle and it looks as if we will be taking part.” Plans have already been made for them to meet two Italian clubs at Manor Park over the Easter period.

### **Bath City v Nuneaton Borough** 28-01-1978

**Bath City:** Allen, Ryan, M. Rogers, Burns, Bourne, Gover, Wheeler, Gibbs, Provan, P. Rogers, Jenkins. **Sub:** Taverner.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Thomas, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Carr, Smithers. **Sub:** Tysall.

Borough made the journey to Twerton Park to play Bath City in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Magnificent Borough went within an ace of shattering Bath's proud unbeaten record. They ploughed their way through the West Country mud with a performance that made manager Stan Marshall proud. He said: “I know they don't like the word, but we battled today. The character of the side showed.”

Borough hit back from the shock of an early goal to rattle the league leaders in an incident packed clash. They missed a penalty and then equalised through Gary Fleet as Bath were cut down to size. For twenty minutes before half-time, the Manor Park side reached new heights.

City, heirs apparent to the Southern League crown, were made to look like pretenders as Borough took total command. Dave Lewis and Steve Carr were both booked as Nuneaton fought for every ball. And Kirk Stephens was sent off in an explosive finish to a game that kept the crowd on their toes. Stephens, booked earlier for a tackle on City forward Martin Wheeler, received his marching orders after a challenge on Martyn Rogers. But nothing could overshadow the overall team performance of a Borough side that refused to throw in the towel.

Bath, rattled by Borough's equaliser, struggled to compete in the mud where Stan Marshall's side battled for every ball. In trouble after only ten minutes when centre-half Richard Bourne put Bath ahead with a soft goal, they lifted themselves off the floor. Fleet and Phillips dominated midfield with sheer skill, particularly Phillips, who had his best game of the season.

Fleet set up the penalty after half-an-hour with a stunning ball to Phillips, who was brought down – only to see his spot kick saved by Ken Allen. Instead of hanging their heads, Borough showed even more determination. And Fleet equalised in the 38th minute when he steered a left foot shot into the net with City under intense pressure. At half-time, Borough should have been in front, but Bath had seen enough to know their unbeaten run was at stake.

They fought harder in midfield in a second half that always

hung in the balance. But when City attacked they found themselves up against a back four that refused to budge. Trevor Peake was again an inspiration in the middle of the defence – and Graham Smith had a superb match alongside him. Ian Marsden pulled off one superb save from George Gibbs, who hit a screamer towards the roof of the net from 25 yards and then shook his head in disbelief as the goalkeeper turned it over the top.

Borough could have snatched a win towards the end with better finishing from a front line that included newcomer Steve Carr who could not have had a tougher debut. But he always worked hard in a side that responded to Stan Marshall's call for all-out effort – and also showed skill.

### **Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough** 30-01-1978

**Burton:** Alcock, Lawrence, Hallsworth, Fletcher, Annable, Rawson, Harrison, Wright, Hehir, Blair, Fearn. **Subs:** Deakin and Coupla.

**Borough:** Knight, Thomas, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Chinn, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Lang. **Subs:** Fallon and Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to take on Burton Albion in a Birmingham Senior Cup quarter-final tie.

Key defender Trevor Peake was carried from the field after only five minutes of a brutal soccer battle. And that was only one blow to Borough in a fiery game. Striker Gareth Dale was sent off after a clash with Burton centre-half Phil Annable – and there were a string of injuries. Borough's winner came five minutes from the interval when the ball ran loose in the Burton penalty area. Bobby Vincent lashed the ball into the net as Burton defenders tried in vain to stem the talents of Brendan Phillips – who left The Brewers to become a Manor Park star two seasons ago.

From the outset, it was obvious that nobody was making allowances for the treacherous ground conditions. Ice covered part of the playing surface and made the top inconsistent and dangerous. Some doubted referee Eden's decision to allow play. Only three minutes had gone when Borough's talented Wayne Thomas gave a hint of what was to come. He received what normally would have been considered a safe ball from Phillips but, as he struggled to find his feet, Harrison left him flat footed and bee-lined for goal, only to shoot over.

The ball was cleared on the left and was won again by 17-year-old Burton debutant Lawrence. He thrust forward and tucked in a shot ball between Burton's Wright and Peake. Peake was there first but Wright's crunching tackle sent the Borough player writhing on the ice-bound surface. The force of the tackle had sent a stud straight through Peake's shin pad. Peake was replaced by Tom Fallon and taken to hospital where he received five stitches.

As half-time approached the ball ran through to Phillips about 40 yards from goal, and he jinked his way round two defenders before being halted by a third. While the Burton players hustled Phillips, the ball ran to Vincent, who put it away.

Early in the second half Thomas limped from the field with damaged ligaments. And, shortly after, came the incident that inflamed the sparse crowd. Gareth Dale received a short ball from Vincent on the left and had his legs hacked by Annable. Dales protests were met with what looked like an attempted butt by the Burton defender and Dale lashed out with his right fist. Referee Eden booked Annable and sent Dale off. The game then became an all defensive effort as far as Borough were concerned. And Burton never looked like erasing Borough's one-goal margin.

## Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro' 18-02-1978

**Gravesend: Smelt, Idle, Sargent, Burrett, Priestley, Jacks, Brown, Tomkins, Woon, Fusco, Glozier. Sub: Byford.**

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Smith, Carr, Dale, Lang. Sub: Vincent.**

Borough made the journey to Gravesend and Northfleet to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Trevor Peake brushed aside the controversy surrounding Borough's equaliser just four minutes from time and said: "They all count." Peake's first goal of the season led to angry protests from the Gravesend camp. Manager Tony Sitford described Stevenage referee Martin Dimblebee's decision to allow the goal as "diabolical."

Peake jumped with goalkeeper Lee Smelt to meet Wayne Thomas' pinpoint cross. Smelt seemed to hesitate and the centre-half bundled the ball into the net. Ken Burrett and Norman Fusco were warned about their protests by the referee. Both sides tested each others defences but a goalless draw always looked on the cards until the final, frantic six minutes. The match soon developed into a tense battle for possession with neither side taking any risks. There were only two clear-cut chances and both of those fell to Borough.

Gareth Dale should have scored on the edge of the box but mishit his shot. And then Gavin Lang fired straight at Lee Smelt after being put clear. The tight, controlled football gave time to reflect on performances in the Borough side. Roy Cross was immaculate in the back four, marshalling the defence alongside the ever-consistent Peake.

Gravesend had the edge in midfield, which was understandable as Borough were without Dave Lewis and Gary Fleet and Graham Smith moved into the middle. Smith's performance was not outstanding but he often added depth to the Borough side by doubling up as a defender. Youngster Gary Tysall also gave an inspired performance against tricky winger Steve Brown.

Brown, the joint top goalscorer in the Southern League with 17 goals, had scored a hat-trick in the week – and looked hungry for more. But Tysall dealt with the danger and although Brown was Gravesend's best striker, Tysall never allowed him a good chance. Up front, Borough looked impressive against a powerful Gravesend defence. Gavin Lang's recall to the side saw the winger tease and taunt the

hard-pressed Geoff Idle. But Borough's outstanding player was Steve Carr. The striker looked very impressive going forward and produced two dazzling runs to give his striking partner, Gareth Dale a chance. That combination is slowly blossoming. One move saw Dale knock down a Lang cross into the path of Carr and the striker's shot was narrowly wide of the post.

## Lottery Ticket Demand Startling

Nearly ten thousand tickets have already been sold for the Nuneaton Borough Ladbrokes backed lottery. And the man in charge of the operation for the giant betting firm today forecast a first week sell out. Tony Stone, East Midlands area manager for Ladbrokes Lottery Management, said: "There is no doubt we are going to sell the complete allocation by the end of the week."

Response to the lottery, launched at the weekend, has been astonishing. "The demand has been quite startling for a town of this size," said Mr Stone. "There were queues at our kiosk throughout Saturday and agents are coming back for more tickets. It's going very well."



The smile on the face of June Meacham tells all – and the sky's the limit for Nuneaton Borough. Their Ladbroke-backed lottery has already been launched with staggering success. And June is in charge of the new club shop – next to the Co-op butchers in Queen's Road.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Nuneaton Borough v Cheltenham Town 25-02-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Carr, Dale, Lang. **Sub:** Smith.

**Cheltenham:** Nicholls, Murphy, Edwards, Bayliffe, Foster, Paterson, Dangerfield, Davies, Lewis, Bryant, Mehir. **Sub:** Hall.

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

Borough collected their first Southern League win in six weeks amid a storm of controversy. Almost on time, Cheltenham, haunted by the threat of relegation, had what would have been an equaliser disallowed. Top scorer Dave Lewis had the ball in the net, but it was ruled out after Birmingham referee Mr Alan Corr consulted a linesman and awarded a free kick for offside.



**Cheltenham goalkeeper Laurie Nicholls dives in vain as the ball is turned past by defender Tim Bayliffe.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Mr Corr, who lost his grip on the game, booked five players – Borough's Steve Carr, Brendan Phillips and Gary Fleet and Cheltenham's Dave Dangerfield and Tim Bayliffe. Bayliffe had his name taken for a late tackle on Nuneaton skipper Dave Lewis. The others were cautioned for dissent.

Borough who went into the match just three days after their gruelling FA Trophy tie at Bangor, were presented with a sixth minute lead. Bayliffe turned what looked a perfectly harmless cross from Kirk Stephens past his own keeper. Fifteen minutes later Steve Carr crowned his home debut when he increased the lead with a shot on the turn as he was challenged.

Despite the bad start Cheltenham still looked dangerous with Lewis a big threat to Nuneaton. But the Manor Park side should have widened the gap at the start of the second half when they had the Robins under intense pressure. Phillips brought out a stunning save from goalkeeper Laurie Nicholls and Trevor Peake had a shot turned off the line. Then Cheltenham were presented with a gift goal that put them back in the match.

The ball was hit through the midfield and both Roy Cross and Bob Knight hesitated. They waited for an offside whistle that never came and John Davies calmly headed the ball into the net. Borough lost their way for a spell and were never as competent in midfield as they have been in recent games. But they kept their lead and survived a stormy finish to increase their chances of finishing in the top six.

## Nuneaton Boro' v Gravesend & Northfleet 27-02-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Fleet, Lewis, Dale, Carr, Lang. **Sub:** Vincent.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup quarter-final game.

Borough's hopes of success in the Southern League Cup hang in the balance after a depressing stalemate. Unable to break down competent Gravesend, they now face the daunting prospect of a replay. And their chances of a place in the semi-finals of their last major competition must now be remote. They struggled through a dismal tie that provided sparse entertainment for a 1,200-plus crowd.

Afterwards an air of calm resignation hung over the ground – they knew they had blown it. Only a dramatic improvement will salvage their hopes of their first major honour in 20 years of Southern League football. Their problems are all too familiar. Not since the heyday of the Bobby Vincent-Bob Turpie partnership three years ago have they regularly been able to score goals.

Gravesend were far too professional, far too well organised to be troubled by Borough's disjointed and often pathetic attempts to find the net. They came to close up the tie, did it without difficulty and could have won the match in the second half. That, in itself, is an indictment against the Manor Park club, once one of the most feared sides in the Southern League in front of their own fans.

Borough opened brightly and Lee Smelt, who has turned down £10,000 moves to Notts County and Northampton, showed his class with an early save. He flung himself full length to make a one handed save as Gareth Dale unleashed a fierce left foot drive. Smelt then smothered the ball at the feet of Dale and then made an equally brave save from Steve Carr.

Ken Burrett had to boot clear in a goalmouth scramble, but it was hit and hope stuff from Borough. There was nothing positive about their efforts to find the net and Gravesend were rarely stretched in defence or in midfield. Gravesend defender Dave Sargent had his name taken and Steve Carr, who is collecting an unimpressive number of penalty points, quickly followed him into the book.

The second half provided less entertainment than the first before Gravesend, sensing their task as not as difficult as they imagined began to express themselves. They threatened to take control, but were just as inept in front of goal. Just before the end Borough made one last effort to save themselves another trip to Kent. Carr just failed to connect with a cross from Dale and then ruined a good run by Brendan Phillips with a weak finish.

Phillips, busy in midfield, was one of the few successes in the Borough side – along with Roy Cross who had an immaculate match in defence despite a first half booking. But another blank scoresheet told it all.



## Borough Make Almost £4,000

Nuneaton Borough made nearly £4,000 from the first week of their Ladbrokes-backed lottery. More than 39,000 tickets were sold in the first seven days – and demand is increasing all the time. Tony Stone, East Midlands Regional Manager for the Ladbrokes Lottery Division, said today: “We have already signed up 18 new agents.”

## Stan Marshall Bombshell

Stan Marshall has decided to step down from the manager’s job at Nuneaton Borough. He has told the board he no longer wants to continue in the job he took on only two months ago. But he will stay until a successor is appointed, possibly before the end of the season.

Marshall broke the dramatic news to his players before this afternoon’s match at Dover. He said: “I have stopped enjoying it and I always said that when that happened I would get out.” Marshall, has been associated with the club on and off for more than 40 years. He was trainer and assistant manager under Stan Bennett, and has been in charge of the side for most of this season.

### Dover v Nuneaton Borough

04-03-1978

**Dover:** Blake, Reynolds, Keeley, Cook, Waite, Brooks, Wiltshire, Fogarty, Osborne, Brown, Rogers. Sub: Hare.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Carr, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Vincent.

Borough made the journey to The Crabble to play Dover in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough greeted the news of Stan Marshall’s impending departure with a gritty display that lifted them into eighth place in the table. On a ground where few teams like to play, they turned in a determined performance to set the scene for their trip to Gravesend in the Southern League Cup.

Bobby Vincent won the match in the 75th minute after watching most of it from the substitutes bench. On for Timmy Smithers, he broke the deadlock in the only way either side would score – with a penalty. Brendan Phillips was brought down and Vincent stepped up to beat goalkeeper Bobby Blake for a goal that increased his lead as Borough’s top scorer and one that pushed Dover closer to relegation.

Borough just about deserved the goal. They were always the better side – not difficult against the struggling Kent club. Dover were dreadful, which is the kindest word to describe their pathetic play. Right from the start, it was clear Borough were not going to lose – the only problem was whether they would find a goal to win. For a long time it did not appear that they would, and the match headed for a drab goalless draw.

Phillips missed the best chance just before half-time when he shot wide after Kirk Stephens had laid on the pass. The next time he, or any other Borough forward managed to get into the Dover box, he was brought down for the penalty. But he

had another busy game in midfield as did skipper Dave Lewis, who had his best match since returning from injury. Most of the other players found the Crabble too bleak and cheerless to raise their game. And manager Marshall could not have chosen a more appropriate place to announce that he is giving up the job because he “is no longer enjoying it.”

Few people can ever have enjoyed any match at the Kent club’s ground which is completely devoid of atmosphere. Perched on a plateau on the outskirts of the Channel port, it would drain the life out of any game. Players make more noise than the “crowd”, if an assembly of 244 people constitutes an attendance. That’s The Crabble, similar to a cemetery – only quieter.

Fortunately, Borough may not have to go there for a while. For Dover, certainly on the evidence of this display look doomed for the drop.

### Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro’ 07-03-1978

**Gravesend:** Smelt, Tomkins, Sargent, Priestley, Jacks, Burrett, Brown, Glozier, Woon, Fusco, Woolfe. Sub: Dudman.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Carr, Dale. Sub: Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Gravesend and Northfleet to play a Southern League Cup quarter final replay.

Nuneaton’s last chance of major honours this season disappeared in a bad tempered match. Nuneaton swept ahead with a Bobby Vincent goal five minutes after half-time, but an own goal handed Gravesend an equaliser and a bad back pass in extra-time finally sent Borough crashing out.

Borough had fought hard but the result hinged on an incident after 73 minutes when talented midfield man Brendan Phillips was sent off. Steve Carr, Vincent and Phillips had already been booked when Phillips roared into a 50-50 challenge with goalkeeper Lee Smelt and collided badly and Smelt was left injured on the ground. Players from both sides joined in the scuffle that followed and referee M. Bullivant of Cambridge spent some time sorting it out.

When he did, the referee indicated that Phillips had dived in with his foot far too high and showed him the red card. Phillips made no move to leave the pitch and assistant manager John Mason had to run 50 yards to pull the player away. From that moment on Nuneaton were up against it, and they fell to a bad back pass minutes from time, allowing Gravesend to march through.

In an evenly contested, cut and thrust cup tie neither side gave or asked any quarter. And the result was an exciting game for the spectators. Nuneaton defended well in the first half and must have been pleased with the goalless situation at the break, and they were certainly delighted when Vincent fired home five minutes into the second half. Phillips curled in a cross and Vincent dived at the far post to head home.

The lead did not last long though, because two minutes later

Gravesend levelled when Trevor Peake, under pressure from three forwards, turned a cross past Knight. And it was Peake who made the fatal back pass minutes into injury time that winger Steve Brown appeared from the half-way line to beat goalkeeper Knight. In the race for possession Brown ran round the keeper and lobbed the ball into the empty net.

Perhaps overall, Gravesend just had the edge and deserved to win the bruising tie but as Nuneaton travelled home they felt, probably quite rightly, that the game had gone in Gravesend's favour when Phillips had gone.

## Borough Reject Worcester Offer

Nuneaton Borough have turned down another bid from Worcester City for Gary Fleet. Their renewed cash offer fell a long way short of Borough's valuation of their midfield star. Fleet has been made aware of the situation and has already said that he does not want to leave.

## Kettering Enquire About Phillips

Kettering Town have renewed their interest in Nuneaton Borough midfield star Brendan Phillips. But so far, they have not made any firm cash offer for the player who is an established crowd favourite at Manor Park.

## Blades Told To Watch Peake

Trevor Peake, Nuneaton Borough's talented centre-half, was paid a huge compliment when Gravesend manager Tony Sitford phoned Sheffield United after the Southern League Cup quarter-final tie and advised them to take a look at the Nuneaton player, who he said was "wasting his time in the Southern League".

### Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 11-03-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Thomas, Fleet, Vincent, Carr, Dale. **Sub:** Smithers.

**AP Leamington:** O'Keefe, Kavanagh, Capewell, Jones, Kilkelly, Taylor, Morton, Gorman, Stewart, Conway, Keeley. **Sub:** Hughes.

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

Borough extended their unbeaten Southern League run to five games with a last gasp goal from Steve Carr, who scored in the fourth minute of time added on, as a result of a tragic injury to Leamington midfielder Tom Gorman. The goal brought at least some relief for the 1,200 fans, who must have been driven to distraction by the football served up by two jaded teams. For what should have been a fiercely competitive local derby was almost a non event.

Few games can have provided so little entertainment for so long. In the end, the result was overshadowed by Gorman's 76th minute injury. He challenged for the ball, flipped over team-mate Dennis Taylor and somersaulted on to his head. From the moment he landed it was clear he was in serious trouble and the game was held up for eight minutes.

An ambulance was driven on to the pitch to take him to hospital with a suspected broken neck. The injury interrupted a match that must rank as one of the worst of the season. Both teams lacked imaginative penetration – and determination. They choked each other in midfield, lacked width and whole periods of the game were spent with the ball pinging back and forth between the two back fours.

Ironically, Gorman had produced Leamington's best effort with a shot on the turn that Bob Knight did well to save. That apart, the Brakes never looked like making any impression up front. Neither did Borough, who offered Bobby Vincent as the only threat to the visitors' rearguard. But he lacked support from Carr and Gareth Dale and on the few occasions that Nuneaton managed to get through they were denied by goalkeeper Vincent O'Keefe.



**Bobby Vincent and Gerry Kavanagh, former team-mates at Atherstone, challenge for the ball during the derby game.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening News

The drab, colourless clash dragged on for what seemed an age before Carr finally hit the goal that brought relief. The blond striker, signed six weeks ago from Leamington, had struggled against his former team mates. But he managed to get a toe to a pass from Vincent and stabbed the winner past O'Keefe to lift Borough into seventh place in the premier division. The goal was greeted in comparative silence. By that time everyone had seen enough.

## First £1,000 Lottery Winner



Nuneaton Borough chairman Noel Kelly hands over the first £1,000 lottery cheque to lucky winner Alan Derrick and his wife Val. Mr Derrick, from Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, bought the ticket at the Jaguar factory in Brown's Lane, Coventry, where he works as an electrician. The ticket was sold through Mr Brian Woodiwiss of Hartshill Post Office, who became the first agent when the Ladbroke's backed lottery was launched three weeks ago.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 13-03-1978

**Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Thomas, Smith, Lewis, Smithers, Vincent, Fleet. Sub: Phillips.**

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to play Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough hit back from behind to take a point with a performance that confirmed the character of the side. Grimly determined, they shook off the effects of a chaotic journey. The game started 46 minutes late after Borough's team coach had been delayed by an accident that blocked the M6. Three players who travelled by car, Gareth Dale, Steve Carr and Brendan Phillips failed to arrive on time. Phillips just made the substitute's spot and manager Stan Marshall had to send out a hastily assembled team.

To add to that, they were punished for an early error when Norman Pemberton shot Worcester into an 18th minute lead. But they battled their way back into the game, equalised through Wayne Thomas and went desperately close to a win. Only an astonishing let-off for Worcester denied them both points in the closing stages. With 11 minutes to go, Bobby Vincent unleashed a scorching shot from 25 yards. The ball hit the inside of a post, rebounded across the face of the net – and went out for a goal kick.

Reshuffled Borough had a strange look at the start as they gathered their senses after the nightmare trip. Vincent and Gary Fleet operated up front, with Graham Smith anchoring midfield and Roy Cross back alongside Trevor Peake in defence. Smith, clubman supreme, did a superb job, and Vincent and Fleet were always willing to chase. Peake was

again majestic in the heart of the best back four in the Southern League.

And the equaliser from Thomas crowned a magnificent match in midfield by the Bedworth teenager, who was always involved. Worcester's goal followed a long clearance and Pemberton shot as Bob Knight came out to offer a challenge which left him needing treatment. Roger Shaw was only inches away from a goal as Worcester tried to cash in and Barry Williams then missed a chance. But Borough pulled themselves together to force a series of corners with Worcester under severe pressure. They forced seven flag kicks before the equaliser gave them their reward.

Peake and City defender Kevin Tudor went up to challenge, the ball ran loose and Thomas lashed it across the goal and into the far corner of the net. Smith was booked when he appeared to push Sutton Coldfield referee Maurice Robinson, and Vincent followed him into the book – for dissent – in the second half. Just after half-time Knight somehow deflected a shot from Shaw wide of his goal as Borough continued to battle every inch of the way.

Then came the let-off for City from Vincent's shot and a last-minute clearance by Roy Cross then denied Lionel Martin a glimpse at goal. At the final whistle Borough left the field with a richly-earned point that lifted them into fifth place in the Premier Division.

## Cross Out For Six Weeks

Nuneaton Borough defender Roy Cross could be out of football for six weeks. Cross broke his arm during Monday night's draw at Worcester City. He fell awkwardly during the match, but played on, and it was only yesterday that the extent of the injury was known, when X-rays revealed that he had broken his right arm.

## Lewis To Stay At Borough

Nuneaton Borough have turned down a £2,000-plus bid from Weymouth for club skipper Dave Lewis. The directors met last night to discuss the offer from the Dorset club. Afterwards chairman Noel Kelly announced: "Dave is definitely not for sale. We discussed the situation at length and the decision was unanimous. There isn't anybody around to replace him – certainly not at that price."

## Ian Crawley Following His Father's Footsteps

Teenager Ian Crawley will be following in his father's footsteps at Manor Park tonight. For the centre-forward is all set to make his debut for Nuneaton Borough against Tamworth in the Midland Floodlit Cup. And watching him from the stands will be proud dad Tommy Crawley, whose name is part of the club's folklore.

He blazed a goal trail for Borough, Rugby and Bedworth for eleven magical years between 1957 and 1968 and was one of the heroes of the 1966-67 FA Cup run.



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 16-03-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Thomas, Lewis, Phillips, Carr (Vincent 60), Crawley, Lang.

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

Borough's hopes of a place in the Midland Floodlit Cup final were dashed. The scoreline tells it all – they again failed to score in a competition which is all about goals. And to qualify for the final they now have to beat Burton Albion by the impossible target of 13-0. One of the lowest crowds in living memory turned up on a cold, wet and windy night. There were just 149 people in the ground to see two teams who ten years ago drew the Floodlit Cup record of 5,000-plus on the same ground.

The brightest spot in the whole game was the impressive debut of striker Ian Crawley. The youngster brought back past memories with his darting runs and leggy stride. He was unfortunate not to score on several occasions and looked the best forward on the field. At eighteen he still has a lot to learn, but he certainly looks a prospect for the future.

Crawley almost scored in the opening seconds, then headed a Dave Lewis free-kick over the bar and was foiled by the bravery of Tamworth keeper Taylor another three times. The teenager always looked the most likely player to break the deadlock as another game dragged to a goalless close.

So the chance of winning yet another competition fell by the wayside, leaving Borough only the Birmingham Senior Cup to chase after a season which again promised great things and is again in danger of falling flat.

### Over 50 Applications For Manager's Job

Borough should know the name of the man they want as their new manager by the end of next week. The directors met this afternoon to draw up a short list for the job made vacant by Stan Marshall's decision to stand down. Interviews will then be conducted next Wednesday and Thursday.

## Bedford Town v Nuneaton Borough 18-03-1978

**Bedford:** Peacock, Goodeve, Folds, Gould, Robinson, Hewson, Mortimer, Lawson, Kettleborough, Roberts, French. **Sub:** Henderson.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Dale, Thomas. **Sub:** Smithers.

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

Borough built a 90-minute extension to their six match unbeaten Southern League run. A Bobby Vincent goal clinched both points against the relegation threatened Eagles. And Borough have now taken 12 points out of 14 – championship form if they had done it earlier. But this is "if only" time at more than one club up and down the country. The time when players look back in anger at points dropped

in games that should have been won. In Borough's case, a disastrous Christmas period, destroyed what hopes they had of a serious challenge for the title. Just a few more points and they would have been in with a shout. All they can do now is finish among the top clubs – and stay on course for the target Stan Marshall set when he took over.

Marshall aimed for 50 points which would make them the only Premier Division side to reach the half century mark for four seasons in a row. They need 16 points from their last 12 games – and, on the evidence of Saturday's display – they could make it. The game itself was patchy and Borough lived dangerously at times. Bedford fought harder than their league position would suggest – but Borough were also determined.

The match promised more goals than the one it provided. It could easily have ended in a 3-3 draw. Gareth Dale should have scored when he shot against the goalkeeper's legs after being put clear. Vincent could have added to the one that won the match and Bedford striker Elwyn Roberts might have had a hat-trick. But Borough always looked more positive, more professional and better organised than the determined home side.

The Eagles tried to play with two midfield players in an attempt to take the points they desperately needed. Eventually they had to change while Borough were able to continue with the pattern they set at the start. The unbeaten run has shown that, despite another dearth of goals, the new manager will have a sound basis on which to build. Borough are not that far short of being a championship chasing team.

For that, credit must go to Stan Marshall, who has kept the ball rolling through the turmoil and upheavals that have blighted the season. His brief reign in charge could go down as one of the most remarkable in the club's history.

## Nuneaton Borough v Treviso 22-03-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Thomas, Lewis, Phillips, Dale (Carr 63), Vincent, Fleet.

Borough welcomed Treviso to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Cup game.

Bobby Vincent put Borough on the victory trail with a twice-taken penalty. And a last minute goal from Gary Fleet confirmed their win. But they had to work hard against the fascinating, frustrating and superbly skilful Italians. Vincent's penalty broke the deadlock in the 72nd minute after Steve Carr had been pushed off the ball. Goalkeeper Luigino Mattarollo dived to his left to push out his first attempt. But Football League referee Peter Reeves ordered the kick to be retaken because the keeper had moved and Vincent made sure at the second attempt.

Before that Treviso had displayed the dark side of Italian soccer that has made their teams the most difficult in Europe to beat. They played five players at the back, four in midfield

and left just one up front. But the skills were there and lone striker Maurizio Zandegu, a pint sized number seven, won the hearts of the Manor Park fans. Against that sort of defensive play, sides need patience – and Borough, for once, had plenty of that. They refused to be rattled, kept on playing and deserved their win.



Five Italian defenders are in close attendance as Trevor Peake heads over the bar in the first-half of last night's Anglo-Italian Tournament match.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

After trying to pierce the supremely organised Treviso defence with high balls, they then changed their style. Carr was sent on in place of Gareth Dale to put pressure on the Italian's sweeper and Treviso began to look less happy. They lost the confidence, almost arrogance, they had shown in defence earlier in the game. Trevor Peake twice went close with headers in the first-half and Gareth Dale hit the woodwork.

Wayne Thomas worked tirelessly in midfield and Fleet was always willing to get involved up front, despite some harsh treatment early on. His last minute goal was well deserved. Brendan Phillips played a pass down the line to Kirk Stephens. The full-back drove the ball across the goalmouth, it slipped through Mattarollo's hands – and Fleet ran in to force it over the line.

Referee Reeves, determined to stamp on any nonsense booked five players, three Italians, Stephens and Carr. Treviso complained while Borough got on with their game to complete a win that sets the stage for Saturday's match against Reggiana at Manor Park.

## Vincent Suspended

Bobby Vincent is out of Nuneaton Borough's Easter Monday match against arch rivals Atherstone at Sheepy Road. The club's leading scorer has been suspended to two matches after reaching 20 penalty points. His suspension starts on Monday and he also misses the Southern League match at Kettering next Wednesday.

## Former League Keeper Is New Manager

Ian McKechnie, the former Arsenal and Hull City goalkeeper, is Nuneaton Borough's new manager. The appointment was officially announced and he is to take over full-time at Manor

Park. McKechnie, who is 36 and married with two children, made more than 500 League appearances in a League career that has spanned 16 years.

He was with Arsenal for six years, had a two year spell at Southend – and then spent eight years at Hull. McKechnie, a Scot, convinced the Borough board he was the right man for the job after 47 applications had been cut to a short list of ten. The short-list included at least two players with international experience and some household names.



Ian McKechnie – structure of the present side seems sound enough.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

The new manager has told fans not to expect too many changes, as he believes the structure of the side to be sound enough. His confidence and enthusiasm convinced the board that he was the right man for the job, and McKechnie said: "I was very impressed with the way they conducted the interview. I got the feeling they are totally committed to the club and I intend to be as loyal to them."

## Nuneaton Borough v Reggiana

25-03-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Thomas, Smithers. **Subs:** Carr, Lang, Dale, Marsden, Chinn.

**Reggiana:** Borsi, Bogani, Cattelani. Berta, Catterina, Maria, Nery, Mossini, Berdoni, Sena, Gasperini. **Subs:** Casini, Reverberi, Muruzzi, Romano, Anigoni.

Borough welcomed Reggiana to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Tournament match.

Timmy Smithers shot Borough into a ninth minute lead against Italian Third Division club Reggiana. But the Italians hit back to equalise through Mossini to crush Borough's hopes of a winning welcome for new manager Ian McKechnie. The equaliser from the skilful Italians made the Manor Park's side's hopes of qualifying for the final even more difficult and Nuneaton always struggled after a bright start.



**Borough President Alf Scattergood extends the hand of friendship to Reggiana President Carlo Visconti before the start of the Anglo-Italian Tournament match.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Vincent missed a chance for Borough in the first minute from a Smithers' cross. Torrential rain began to sweep the ground as Nuneaton continued to attack. And they went into the lead after only nine minutes with a goal from Smithers. Thomas crossed from the left, Peake controlled the ball and played it out to Phillips whose cross was curled into the net by Smithers with a right foot shot that gave goalkeeper Borsi no chance. Three minutes later, Thomas had the ball in the net, but the goal was disallowed for a foul by Smithers on the keeper.

Conditions improved and the rain eased with Borough still well in command and Borsi had to punch out a centre from Phillips as Vincent challenged. Lewis shot over and Phillips chipped the ball on to the bar as Reggiana pulled everyone back. But the Italians threatened when Mossini almost broke through and then Knight pushed a shot from Gasperini around the post for a corner.

Bertoni then scooped a shot over the top, but Borough were soon back on the attack as rain again lashed down. Pools of water began to appear on the pitch as the Italians continued to defend with confidence and show skill in attack. Knight saved Borough in the 34th minute after an attempted clearance by Stephens rebounded off Gasperini and left him clear through. But Knight left his line and flung himself full length to push the shot around the post for a corner.

Reggiana began to take control of the attacking play and their approach work was far more skilful than that of the Borough. But the conditions still played a major part as the sides battled against the wind, rain and the mud.

Lewis had a shot deflected for a corner in the opening seconds of the second half. But the Italians were still dangerous on the break and Borough's lead looked far from secure. Smithers almost increased the home side's lead with a shot on the volley from an identical position to his ninth minute goal, but this

time Borsi saved. Reggiana's skill continued to show through as Borough struggled to put their game together.

And the Italians equalised in the 60th minute. A through ball pierced the Borough defence and Knight raced out of his box in a bid to save the situation. He tackled Mossini, but the rebound left the Reggiana forward clear and he planted the ball into an empty net.

Thomas hit a scorching free kick across the face of the Reggiana goal. After 70 minutes Borough brought off Vincent and Thomas and sent on Lang and Carr. But Reggiana were still the more impressive side. Romano sent in a shot after Gasperini had again caused problems. Lang had a shot deflected wide for a corner. The Italians packed their goalmouth and then worked the ball clear.

The speed of Gasperini had Borough at full stretch before Knight left his line to save. The Italians were content to sit back and play while Borough desperately needed to win – and that suited Reggiana, who patiently waited for a chance to break and then did it at speed and with a lot of skill.

Phillips raised Borough's hopes when he chipped a shot over the bar after a free-kick from Lang had been half-cleared. With only minutes left, Lewis went desperately close to a goal when he hit the post with a superb shot from 30 yards. But it was the last chance Borough had of winning the match and the scoreline stayed all square.

## Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 27-03-1978

**Atherstone:** Hall, Stockley, Tidman, Bosworth, Brown, Kiernan, Turpie, Smith, Minton, Neale, Allcock. **Sub:** Flanagan.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Dale, Thomas, Smithers. **Sub:** Lang.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to play Atherstone Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Bob Turpie missed a 73rd minute penalty as his former teammates sunk Adders further into trouble. Turpie fired five yards over after Trevor Peake was harshly judged to have fouled Johnnie Allcock. And that was after Gary Fleet had given the Manor Park side 46th minute lead. But those two incidents apart, it was a local derby spoiled by driving rain and wind.

Both sides had selection problems. Borough were without suspended Bobby Vincent and Roy Cross, out with a broken arm. Adders had Malcolm Shotton, Mick Preston and Kirk Jennings all nursing injuries. Johnnie Allcock, who last played a Southern League game on December 9, and defender Colin Bosworth stepped into the Adders' side.

Both keepers had to pull off daring saves early on in the game. Bob Knight had an anxious moment when he picked up a Kirk Stephens back pass at the second attempt and then Adders' Ken Hall dived bravely to deny Fleet. Then, both of Atherstone's full backs, Bob Stockley and Lester Tidman, went close. Tidman fired across the face of the goal and Knight did well to hold an awkward cross from Stockley.

Borough hit back and Hall did extremely well to palm away a Phillips cross as Thomas waited. Adders were dealt a killer blow when they lost Mark Neale at the interval with a badly jarred shoulder. Neale and young Borough full-back Gary Tysall crashed to the ground after colliding in the Nuneaton box.

Borough swooped quickly and they went ahead after just a minute of the second half. Dave Lewis flicked on a Brendan Phillips cross and Fleet nipped in to shoot past Hall. A second half downpour affected both sides creativity even further – but Adders were quicker to adapt. Allcock brought Adders back into the game with some darting runs and he set up chances for Turpie and Roger Smith.



**Quicksilver Gary Fleet leaves Adders' keeper Ken Hall helpless as he swoops in to give Borough the lead.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Then came the penalty decision that could have kept Adders' pride intact. Allcock tumbled in the box after a tackle from Peake and the referee pointed to the spot amid protests from the Borough players. With regular penalty taker Malcolm Shotton absent, Turpie stepped up and fired over the top.

Tidman and Phillips were booked towards the end of the game after a clash on the half-way line. But at the end, the scoreline reflected the changing fortunes of the clubs. Borough are on the crest of a wave after stretching their unbeaten run to eight games.

## Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 29-03-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Fleet, Carr, Lang. **Sub:** Dale.

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road to play Kettering Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Dave Lewis added the finishing touch to a superb Borough performance with a late winner. Lewis swooped with sixteen minutes left – to give manager Stan Marshall a great send off. Marshall now hands over to new man Ian McKechnie and reverts back to being number two. He steps aside with a record from his brief, but successful reign that few managers can match. For Borough have now gone nine Southern League games without defeat and collected sixteen points from eighteen.

But they have rarely played better and their performance was a fitting tribute to the man who has steered the team through difficult times. They out-fought and often outplayed the Poppies who had won three matches in a row. At no time

were the home side allowed to take control and the win was richly deserved. Steve Carr shot them ahead in the 54th minute to spark off an explosive spell which saw Kettering draw level three minutes later.

Gary Fleet, who did another fine job up front, cheekily laid the ball back for Carr, who cracked a right foot shot that beat keeper Frank Lane and nestled in the back of the net. That brought Kettering to life and Borough struggled to clear a left wing attack before Poppies equalised. Roy Clayton turned in the box and laid the ball back to Peter Phipps who slammed it high into the net.

But Nuneaton hit back to regain control and Kettering clearly became frustrated. Only the leniency of Bury St Edmunds referee Mr Brian Taylor prevented a crop of bookings. Kettering full-back Bob Lee was one player who was fortunate to escape the yellow card. And it was his slip that led to the goal that gave Borough their fourth away win in a row.

He dithered for a split second after Gavin Lang had hit the ball into the middle. And Lewis was in like a flash to drive a shot hard and low through the narrowest of gaps.

Borough's defence, again superbly marshalled by Trevor Peake, showed just why it is the best in the league. And Graham Smith did another great job to quieten Roy Clayton, the most expensive forward in the division. Lewis inspired from midfield and Carr had his best performance for the club. But the player who impressed more than most was tireless Timmy Smithers. Switched to midfield, where Borough were without injured Wayne Thomas, Smithers showed skills he has rarely unwrapped, in a non-stop display.

Full backs Stephens and Tysall cut out Kettering's danger from the flanks and Phillips was busier than he has been in midfield. And, behind them all, goalkeeper Bob Knight was as steady as a rock. In short, it was a tremendous all round team performance which even the fiercely partisan Kettering fans grudgingly accepted their side could not match.

## Phillips Out For Rest Of Season

Brendan Phillips, Nuneaton Borough's midfield star, is out for the rest of the season with a broken right ankle. He will be in plaster for at least six weeks and could miss the trip to Italy in June in the Anglo-Italian Tournament. Phillips was injured in the last minute of Borough's 2-1 win at Kettering.

## Nuneaton Borough v Grantham Town 01-04-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Chinn, Fleet, Vincent, Lang, Smithers. **Sub:** Dale.

**Margate:** Gardiner, Shaw, Chamberlain, Bower, Harrison, Taylor, Horobin, Norris, Jackdon, Hailwood, Benskin. **Sub:** Gulson.

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

Borough greeted new manager Ian McKechnie with a win that extended their astonishing run of success. McKechnie saw

them outclass bottom club Grantham in a one-sided game. And they have now gone ten Southern league games without defeat – and taken 18 points out of the last 20. But the new manager also saw a performance that reflected the biggest problem he has to solve. Borough are undoubtedly one of the best organised and most skilful sides in the league, but the common factor throughout a turbulent season has been their lack of ability to put chances away.



**Grantham goalkeeper Chris Gardiner is left helpless as Bobby Vincent's match-winning penalty hits the back of the net.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

And Saturday's game against a side that appears to be destined for the drop was no exception. Grantham should have been beaten out of sight – their hopes buried by four or five goals. Instead, Borough had to rely on a Bobby Vincent penalty in another display that made a mockery of the scoreline. Vincent scored from the spot in the 41st minute after he had been pushed off the ball by centre-half Ron Harrison. By that time, the Manor Park side should have been two or three goals in front and they should have gone on to confirm their undoubted superiority.

Vincent, top scorer with 19 goals, could easily have helped himself to a hat-trick. And other chances went begging that could have made their goal difference a lot healthier. Grantham had only one shot of note throughout the match and that was a free-kick from full-back Colin Chamberlain. Inspired by Dave Lewis in midfield and with Gary Fleet buzzing up front, the points should have been wrapped up early on. But they never found the finishing touch to round off what was often superb approach work.

And while just the one goal separated the sides there was always the chance that Grantham would grab an equaliser.

As it was, Borough's most anxious moment came in the 78th minute when Trevor Peake was felled by a wild tackle from Grantham midfielder Dave Hailwood, who was the visitors' busiest and best player. He was sent off after angry Borough players had surrounded the referee.

Peake followed him to the dressing rooms on a stretcher in obvious distress. Happily, the injury was not as bad as at first feared. The centre-half had a damaged thigh and may miss only one match this week. Substitute Gareth Dale went on and almost set the match alight by scoring with his first touch of the ball. He then forced goalkeeper Chris Gardiner into a desperate save, but the narrow scoreline still separated the teams who are almost a league table apart.

## Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 03-04-1978

**Borough: Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Fallon, Tysall, Vincent, Chinn, Smithers, Dale, Crawley, Nardiello. Subs: Lang and Harrison.**

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

Borough presented their goal-starved fans with a sneak preview of their exciting potential as they blasted Burton to defeat. Youngsters Phil Nardiello and Ian Crawley set the scene for the rout with early goals. And Borough went on to romp home to their second biggest win of the season. Only a string of superb saves from Albion goalkeeper Chris Sewell prevented them from reaching double figures.

Nardiello and Crawley struck up their striking partnership as early as the 14th minute. Gareth Dale played a ball down the line to Crawley, who measured his pass to perfection for Nardiello to coolly beat the goalkeeper. Nine minutes later Crawley made it 2-0 with a diving header after Timmy Smithers had headed on a cross from Dale. And barely a minute after that, Smithers raced almost the length of the pitch and crossed for Dale to score with a stunning header.

Borough with Vincent spraying 40 yard passes from midfield, and Smithers, Dale, Crawley and Nardiello always involved, should have increased the lead before half-time. But the fans, who have waited so long to see their side grab a hatful of goals, loved every minute. They had to wait until the 68th minute for the fourth – and again Crawley played a part. He headed a Lang cross against the bar and Dale was in like a flash to score from the rebound.

Two minutes later, Dale's speed again destroyed Burton's cover. He got behind their defence, pulled the ball back from the line, Nardiello headed across the goal – and Smithers dived full-length to score at the far post. Dale was then denied a hat-trick by Sewell before Lang hit a stunning shot for Borough's sixth. The ball exploded from his left foot from 30 yards and rocketed into the net off the underside of the bar. That was in the 86th minute, and with seconds left, Burton grabbed a consolation goal when Hair beat Ian Marsden with a shot that went through a ruck of players.



## Steve Carr Emigrating

Striker Steve Carr is to leave Nuneaton Borough within the next month – to play in Australia. He has been offered a lucrative contract by a top Australian club and Borough have agreed to release him. Said Borough secretary John Evans: “We have told him we will not stand in his way.”

## McKechnie Plans For Next Season

Ian McKechnie, Nuneaton Borough’s new manager has wasted no time in laying his plans for next season. He lists a winger and a target man as his top priorities and is looking for more aggression in midfield. But the former Arsenal and Hull keeper does not envisage wholesale changes. He has quickly realised that he has inherited a good squad and does not intend to rock the boat.

### Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 06-04-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Fallon, Smith, Tysall (Thomas), Vincent, Lewis (Singh), Smithers, Fleet, Nardiello, Lang

Borough welcomed AP Leamington to Manor Park to play a Birmingham Senior Cup semi-final tie.

Borough face a Birmingham Senior Cup replay after a colourless semi-final that ended in sensational style. Chaos and confusion reigned following an incredible incident as the tie dragged to a close. With just seconds left Leamington striker Danny Conway was tackled by Wayne Thomas. He dragged himself to his feet clutching a dislocated finger and was clearly in some distress. Obviously angry, he said something to Northfield referee Mr B. M. Moberley as trainer Syd Hall tried to usher him from the field. Substitute Ronnie Mason went on – only to be waved back by the referee. Conway was still protesting as he made his way to the dressing rooms – and afterwards Mr Moberley confirmed he had been sent off.

The incident came at the end of an appalling tie in which three other Brakes’ players, Kevin Hughes, Mick Keeley and Tom Kilkelly were booked by a referee who left much to be desired. But the bookings and the astonishing finish were the only incidents of note in another rock bottom match between the two sides. From the start, it was clear that Borough’s 6-1 win over Burton last Monday was only a brief interlude in a season of goalscoring problems.

Phil Nardiello, playing his third game in four days missed a chance early on and Gavin Lang also went close. But on a playing surface that made ball control almost impossible, neither side seemed capable of constructive football. Conway almost caught Bob Knight off guard with a header that looped on to an upright. And then Hughes, Conway and Keeley (twice) had shots blocked in quick succession as Borough lived dangerously.

Nardiello again shot wide and substitute John Singh almost fought his way through as Nuneaton hit back. But if those misses make the tie sound exciting – forget it. Nothing could

be further from the truth. And next Thursday night’s replay is hardly likely to have the fans flocking to the Windmill. Unless the two teams show a remarkable improvement on their last two meetings it would be better off being played behind closed doors.

## Borough Face Misconduct Charge

Nuneaton Borough may be hauled before the Football Association to face a charge of misconduct arising out of the Steve Carr suspension wrangle. Carr played for Borough while he was banned by the County FA – one of the most serious crimes a club can commit. The penalty could be a heavy fine and a suspension for the officials concerned.

Carr had been booked three times when he was with AP Leamington and his ban came into force after he moved to Manor Park. But he played in the Southern League before the situation came to light. Said Borough secretary John Evans: “We were not informed by the player or by Leamington that he had been suspended. We are not blaming anyone. All we can do is put ourselves at the mercy of the FA and hope they treat the matter as lightly as possible.”

### Wealdstone v Nuneaton Borough 08-04-1978

**Wealdstone:** Cranstone, McVeigh, Fursdon, Watson, Parratt, Barwick, Moss, Brinkman, Ferry, Duck, Briscoe. Sub: Waymark.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Thomas, Chinn, Fleet, Smithers, Dale, Vincent, Lang. Sub: Fallon.

Borough made the journey to the Lower Mead stadium to face Wealdstone in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Borough extended their unbeaten Southern League run to eleven matches at a ground where they have never lost. But how times have changed since their first visit eleven years ago. That was in 1966-67 in the First Round of the FA Cup when the ground was full and expectancy stirred the senses. Wealdstone had the Amateur Cup on view behind their bar – and Borough had a side that scored goals. Afterwards, as the Wealdstone programme pointed out: “Nuneaton fans danced in the Trafalgar Square fountains at midnight as they celebrated in London.”

The attendance was 5,033 and Borough won 2-0 with goals from Richards and Cutler. What a contrast to Saturday’s grey, almost colourless game between two sides with nothing to win. Both Borough and Wealdstone had unbeaten records to defend – both sides had gone ten games without defeat. Wealdstone had former Nuneaton coach Alan Fogarty as manager and Steve Briscoe playing against the club he never wanted to leave.

But Fogarty demonstrated his willingness to win by playing five players at the back at home. And Briscoe’s frequent journeys to North London seemed to have drained much of the competitive edge that hallmarked his play at Manor Park. For much of the match Borough moved the ball round with skill, but without inventiveness. Wealdstone were less skilful,



yet more positive – and both sides lacked the spark needed to win championships. Borough are skilful – we all know that. They have the best back four in the Southern League – we know that as well. But they again left a lot to be desired in midfield where Timmy Smithers was the only player to emerge with any real credit.

And only a good performance from much improved Gareth Dale prevented them from being totally impotent up front. Dale, who has had a lean time, worked hard and showed skill and pace, but had no support. Ian Marsden provided new manager Ian McKechnie with food for thought with a sound, confident display in goal. He did everything that was asked of him in the game that was supposed to decide whether he gets the vote over Bob Knight on the retained list.

On chances, Wealdstone, who relied more on quick breaks than laborious build-ups, should have won. But that was only because Borough hardly created a chance, which is nothing particularly new. Fogarty's side hit the post through Jimmy McVeigh, had two efforts kicked off the line and centre-forward George Duck shot wide with only Marsden to beat.

Kirk Stephens, Trevor Peake and Gavin Lang were booked along with McVeigh, who was unfortunate. He caught Peake on the thigh where he had taken a knock a week earlier and his distress made it look worse than it was.

## Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 10-04-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Fallon, Smith, Harrison, Chinn, Thomas, Smithers, Dale, Vincent, Nardiello. **Sub:** Farndon.

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

Borough gave their fans another glimpse into the future with a performance that again demonstrated the depth of talent in the club. Stripped of more than half a team they plunged their teenagers into a match that would have tested the most experienced professionals. But the youngsters battled through a snowstorm on a treacherous pitch to rock second in the table Weymouth. At times their inexperience showed through, but the skill was there – and so was the determination.

No wonder manager Ian McKechnie wore a broad smile at the end of a game Borough must have entered with some trepidation. Bob Knight, Dave Lewis, Gavin Lang, Roy Cross, Brendan Phillips, Gary Fleet, Gary Tysall, Trevor Peake and Steve Carr all watched from the stands as Borough went desperately close to beating the Terras. They took the lead with a Gareth Dale goal after 21 minutes and then pulled themselves round as Weymouth hit back. And they had what would have been the match winner disallowed ten minutes from the end.

Dale glanced a Timmy Smithers corner into the net, but the referee ruled it out for pushing against Graham Smith. In the end a draw was a fair result. Borough extended their

unbeaten run and Weymouth stayed in the chase for the championship. And both teams emerged with tremendous credit after they had turned what could have been a farce into one of the most entertaining games of the season. Borough, with Steve Harrison at left back, Tom Fallon at centre-half, and Phil Nardiello up front, shaped up well early on.

They put the Terras under pressure as a near blizzard swept the ground. Then Dale scored his goal when he poked a low cross from Kirk Stephens under goalkeeper Bob Iles. With the youngsters showing skill and assurance they were more than equal to the visitors. And the 900 fans, huddled under the stands in the Arctic conditions, began to warm to the side.

But Weymouth's skill and experience began to show towards half-time and they equalised in the 38th minute with a super goal from Derek Courtney. He went on a run that took him past three tackles, collected a return pass from Tommy Henderson and smashed the ball into the net. Weymouth threatened to dictate the early stages of the second half, but Borough ran, chased and harried – and simply refused to give up.

Twenty minutes from time Bobby Vincent jogged the memories of the fans with a flash of superb skill and a shot that landed on the bar and looped over. Then came Dale's disallowed goal and a hectic finish to a match that more than made up for some of the recent drabness at Manor Park.

## Borough Face Fine

Nuneaton Borough will be heavily fined unless their disciplinary record improves between now and the end of the season. They have already received a warning notice from the Football Association. And if it is not heeded it could cost the Manor Park club up to £200. Borough players have accumulated more than 100 penalty points since last August.

## Carr Suspension Doubled

Steve Carr has had his Birmingham County FA suspension doubled to 28 days. The Borough striker was under a 14-day ban when he joined the club from AP Leamington. But Nuneaton were unaware of the situation and he played in the Southern League before the facts came to light. The Football Association are now investigating the matter and Borough could be charged with misconduct.

## Cheltenham Want Replay

Cheltenham Town have asked the Southern League to order their away match against Nuneaton to be replayed. They have discovered that Borough played striker Steve Carr while he was under suspension. And they have sent in an official protest which will be dealt with by the Southern League Management committee next week.

Borough beat Cheltenham 2-1 at Manor Park on February 25 and Carr scored on his home debut. But Borough were unaware that the centre-forward, signed from AP Leamington, had been suspended for 14 days by the Birmingham County FA.



## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 13-04-1978

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to face AP Leamington in a Birmingham Senior Cup semi-final replay.

Timmy Smithers shot Borough into the final with a superbly taken goal. Smithers, in tremendous form, added the finishing touch to another fine team performance by the Borough youngsters. And Nuneaton now go through to meet Redditch in the final on May 4 at Highfield Road.

Only the bravery and brilliance of Leamington goalkeeper Vincent O'Keefe prevented Borough from winning by a much wider margin. He pulled off a series of saves, including several at point blank range, to keep the Brakes in the tie until Smithers struck in the 69th minute. There was more action in the opening minutes than there was in the previous five meetings between the clubs this season. Only four minutes into the tie Brakes lost former Borough defender Alan Jones with a gash on his leg that needed seven stitches.

O'Keefe then blocked a Gareth Dale shot from three yards after Smithers had made a run down the left from midfield. A Graham Capewell header then crept through the Borough defence and hit the post and Adrian Stewart missed with a free header following a corner. Borough were denied a penalty after half-an-hour when Phil Nardiello burst through and was brought down by O'Keefe.

There seemed no doubt about the decision – but astonishingly the referee waved play on. The enthusiasm and skill of their young players had put Nuneaton streets ahead. But they needed a goal and it came as Leamington tried to break out of defence. Adrian Stewart lost the ball and Smith played it first time as the Brakes pushed out. Smithers was left clear and ran on to beat O'Keefe with a hard driven left foot shot.

Brakes came into the tie in the final 15 minutes as they tried to salvage their chances. But Borough held out to reach the final for the first time since 1960.

## McKechnie Quits Borough

Ian McKechnie has walked out on Nuneaton Borough for “private and personal” reasons – after only a fortnight as manager. He dropped his bombshell in a telephone call to Noel Kelly from his home in Hull last night. McKechnie told the Borough chairman: “I am not coming back. I have left the club.”

An emergency board meeting was immediately called and afterwards club secretary John Evans said: “We are still in a state of shock.”

Half an hour later, McKechnie told the Evening Tribune: “I am very, very sorry, but the reasons are personal and private.” He declined to go into details: “A situation has arisen that cannot resolve itself. It's one of those things,” he said.

“The decision was entirely mine. It has nothing to do with the board. I have every admiration for them. I could not have had

anything better. They are a terrific club with a terrific board and a terrific set of players. I am very cut up about it. You can say Ian is broken hearted. It was a very hard decision to make.”

McKechnie has already agreed to sell his house and move to Nuneaton with his wife and two children. He said: “I was very fortunate to get the job, but I am now in the worst position of my life. I have no home, no job, I'm skint and on the dole, but there's no way I could come back to Nuneaton. The situation has arisen that cannot resolve itself.”

Chairman Noel Kelly said: “We are very disappointed. We thought we had got the right man for the job. He boosted the confidence of several players in only a short time, but now we will never know.”

Stan Marshall, who stepped down to allow the new man to take over, now resumes control of the team – for the third time this season.

## Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 15-04-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Harrison, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Smithers, Thomas, Vincent, Dale, Nardiello. **Sub:** Fleet.

**Worcester:** Rose, Barton, Puncheon, Tudor, Phelps, Martin, Williams, Stephens, Lawrence, Kalewski, Deehan. **Sub:** Baker.

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

Borough, stunned by manager Ian McKechnie's sensational resignation, played like a side in a state of shock. And their problems piled as Worcester robbed them of their proud 12 match unbeaten run. While the terraces still buzzed with the news, the Manor Park side painted a familiar picture on the pitch. They failed to score when they were on top and gave away an early goal.

Skipper Dave Lewis attempted to head clear a Lionel Martin cross and midfielder Gary Stephens smashed an unstoppable shot past Bob Knight. Earlier Lewis had almost scored when he had a shot cleared off the line and they should then have equalised after more pressure on the Worcester defence.

But their problems began to mount as confidence drained from the side. And two further blows made bigger dents in their morale as they fell away. Timmy Smithers, their best player before half-time, failed to reappear for the second half. He collided with City goalkeeper Ken Rose and limped off for more treatment. Dale, whose form has improved dramatically in recent weeks, returned as a passenger on the left wing. Later, he was taken to hospital with a suspected broken toe.

City, more positive and more determined, sensed that two points were there for the taking. Borough lacked fire and inspiration, but still missed chances that could have saved the game. Bobby Vincent, who learned before the game that he is on a free transfer, allowed Rose to make a comfortable save when the goalkeeper should have been beaten. And



then City dealt another savage blow with their second goal in the 76th minute. Mirek Kalewski scored with a header that Knight reached but could not keep out of the net.



**Bobby Vincent beats goalkeeper Ken Rose with eleven minutes left. His shot hit the bar and Phil Nardiello scored from the rebound.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening News

Borough made a brave bid to salvage some of their confidence and pride and cut the arrears three minutes later. Vincent scooped a shot on to the bar from a few yards out and Phil Nardiello slammed in the rebound for his first Southern League goal. Significantly, few of the Borough players bothered to congratulate the youngster. They knew the game had slipped away from them. By that time their unbeaten run was beyond redemption.

The goal failed to repair their shattered morale. Too much damage had already been done. And a side that has shown courage, character and pride slumped to defeat. Caretaker manager Stan Marshall may have erred by playing Lewis and Fleet, neither of whom looked fully fit. Trevor Peake also played with a bandaged thigh, but Marshall, who has done so much for the club this season, faced an almost impossible task. In view of the circumstances he went for experience and it didn't come off.

But Borough really left the points in the dressing room – they were beaten before they went out.

## Vincent Given Free Transfer

Bobby Vincent, once the idol of the Manor Park fans, has been given a free transfer by Nuneaton Borough. The centre-forward Borough rated in the £25,000 bracket before his car crash, has been told his services are no longer required. And last night he said: "I'm shattered. I just can't believe it. How can a club release their leading goalscorer?"

Vincent heads the Manor Park goals chart this season with 19 goals, twice as many as his closest rival. "The decision has come as a complete shock. If someone else was scoring goals I could understand it," he said. "But there's nothing I can do. They have made their decision and that's it."

Vincent won the admiration of the supporters with an exciting burst of scoring power in 1974 which brought him 21 goals between August and November. League clubs flocked to Manor Park and he was on the verge of being sold when

tragedy struck. His thigh was shattered in a car crash on his way home from a match and he was in hospital for nearly a year. Everyone thought his career was over, but he came back to score goals.

Vincent is one of four players who have been released by the club. The others are goalkeeper Ian Marsden, defender Ian Goodwin and winger Gavin Lang. Midfield star Gary Fleet has been put on the open to offers list. He has been retained, but Borough are prepared to let him go at the right price.

## Dartford v Nuneaton Borough

18-04-1978

**Dartford:** Keen, Jones, Shovelar, Sampson, Dorney, Akers, Morrissey, Norman, Horsfield, Julians, Harrison. **Sub:** Embery.

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Harrison, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Chinn, Fleet, Vincent, Thomas, Knowles. **Sub:** Fallon.

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to play Dartford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

A controversial 70th minute penalty hit Nuneaton's hopes of matching the Southern League Premier Division leaders. Looking set for a share of the points after comfortably containing the home attack, Nuneaton were stunned when referee Len Archer awarded Dartford their highly debatable penalty winner. Skipper Dave Lewis was penalised for what appeared to be a perfectly fair challenge on pint-sized Dartford striker Johnny Harrison.

But Mr Archer thought otherwise and Pat Morrissey gave goalkeeper Bob Knight no chance with the resulting kick. Up until then, Borough had seldom looked in trouble against a side racked with internal problems and suffering a hangover from Saturday's 4-0 thrashing at Cheltenham. In a poor game, watched by a meagre 349 spectators, Dartford's lowest crowd for at least eight years, Nuneaton carved out the better chances but lacked finishing.

Too often, Bobby Vincent lacked support and was forced to go it alone against an uneasy home defence. He and Gary Fleet went close in the first-half while Trevor Peake volleyed wide a good chance eight minutes into the second half. Dartford's Eddie Jones was booked for a tackle on Steve Knowles and on an unhappy night Jones was later stretchered off with a back injury after the home side had taken the lead.

Jones had become involved in a tangle with his own keeper, Roger Keen, as they kept out a goalbound shot from Vincent. Vincent again went close in the 89th minute and even in the last minute of five minutes injury time Wayne Thomas blazed over a glorious chance from a Kirk Stephens cross.

## Roy Barry Favourite For Borough Job

Roy Barry, the former Coventry City, Hearts and Dunfermline defender as emerged as favourite for the vacant manager's job at Nuneaton Borough.

He was on the short list of ten before Ian McKechnie was appointed and has told the club he is still interested.



## Fans Petition Club

Nuneaton Borough fans, angered by the retained list, have handed in a petition urging the directors to change their minds. Nearly seven hundred supporters have signed the protest aimed at keeping Bobby Vincent, Gavin Lang and Gary Fleet at Manor Park. Both Vincent and Lang have been given free transfers and Borough are willing to listen to offers for Fleet.

Protest organiser Bram Deacon presented the petition to club chairman Noel Kelly last night. Mr Deacon, an Edward Street shopkeeper, described the retained list as an “insult to the fans.” He said: “We want Vincent, Lang and Fleet to stay. How can the club allow players like them to leave?”

## Drive Us Away

Come on Mr Kelly, Mr Marshall: Just what are you trying to do, drive us spectators away? Free transfers to the top goalscorer and the best winger on the books?

In Vincent’s case, if he can score 20 goals a season fighting a lone battle up front, how many would he score with a little help – help that has been desperately needed since the needless transfer of Roger Jones.

Despite the loss of skills Mort Birch says Vincent has suffered (for what he knows), he is still without doubt the best forward we have, scoring and making goals.

As for Lang – what he says about not getting a fair deal is true and if the talk is true, which is rife on the terraces about Mr Marshall and Lang, it’s about time this great servant to the club buried a few personal prejudices and played the best players in their proper positions.

Here’s to second thoughts about these free transfers for the good of the club.

**BRAM DEACON, Edward Street, Nuneaton**

## Save The Situation

I feel I must write on behalf of myself and other loyal supporters of Nuneaton Borough to protest about Gavin Lang being allowed to leave the club.

Against Oxford United Gavin Lang won the match for us, and he almost did the same against Tilbury. Since then every time given the chance he has proved to be the most skilful and enterprising player on the field, and in our opinion the best left winger seen at the Borough for many years.

So come on Mr Kelly and the board, step in and save the situation and salvage something from this turbulent season.

The amazing decision to let Lang go could be the straw to break the back. Let’s start off next season with a centre forward good in the air to feed off Lang’s great wing play.

**DAVE OLIVER, Woodside, Ludford Road, Nuneaton**

## Have They Gone Mad At Manor Park?

Who or what next? When Nuneaton Borough were in a desperate financial position earlier in the season one man’s efforts helped save the club, indeed offering a personal possession was but one generous gesture. Any man prepared to do this has the respect of any true supporter, but what has happened since?

At the time of the Jones fiasco he was top scorer, not the best centre-forward by far to wear a Borough shirt, but he scored goals. It is now history that he was transferred.

We signed Dale and Carr – the latter was supposed to have it “up top”, but after almost getting into the Guinness Book of Records for bookings, he went down under – what a wasted signing that was.

Now the retained list is published and Lang and Vincent are to go, and possibly Fleet. Have you all gone mad at Manor Park? Vincent who defied all odds even to kick a ball again is our leading scorer. Take his total from our goals tally and see what is left. Lang is the most skilful winger we have, yet Heaven knows why he is always out of favour, or his face doesn’t fit. Somewhere some idiot has his sums wrong and what we need to put them right is a manager.

Did someone say manager? – Now that’s another subject.

Stan Bennett was on the right lines until the backroom squabble spoilt things. Were not Bennett and more so Kelly big enough to swallow pride for the sake of the club and settle differences – apparently not. Stan Marshall stepped in an out after doing a good job.

Now wait for it – next came McKechnie. Just what yardstick did the board use in choosing him?

As we see it you have two options open to you which may help salvage your pride – either get Stan Bennett back or give Alan Batsford the chance. This time go for quality and above all let the manager manage and do what he is paid to do.

Don’t let Fleet go until you appoint one of the above, they can motivate players and their records prove it. The one serious question is “are the board good enough to know a manager when they see one?”

Finally, one thing is certain; you must move quickly to restore some sort of pride and confidence in the boardroom, team and supporters.

**K. A. JUKES, R. COTTON, T. FOX**

## Nuneaton Borough v Telford United

20-04-1978

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

Geoff Hurst, who only last night almost brought about the defeat of Brazil, returned to his day job with Telford United. The Bucks Head side ran out 2-1 winners against an injury hit Borough side, who had lost their last two games after going 12 matches without defeat.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 22-04-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Fallon, Tysall, Chinn, Peake, Fleet, Vincent, Crawley, Nardiello. **Sub:** Knowles.

Borough made the journey to The Valley to take on Redditch United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Redditch reached up from the bottom of the table to deal another damaging blow to Borough's pride. Again forced to call on youngsters, the Manor Park side plunged to their heaviest defeat of the season.

Their inexperience showed on an appalling pitch and Redditch romped home with an ease that must have astonished them. Before the match, caretaker manager Stan Marshall, took toll of his injuries, counted heads – and fielded the only side available. Dave Lewis, Brendan Phillips, Roy Cross, Timmy Smither, Wayne Thomas, Gareth Dale and Gavin Lang were all absent through illness or injury.

And try as they might, that threw a burden on the youngsters that was too heavy for them to bear. After a promising start, they fell behind and were soon beyond redemption. Redditch scored after 19 minutes when a long ball pumped down the middle – the only logical way to play on a playing surface below pub league standards – stripped Borough of their cover.

John Dyer waited for the bounce, went past Tom Fallon and drove the ball past Bob Knight as the goalkeeper dashed out of his goal. That was the beginning of the end for Marshall's minnows against a far from impressive, but more mature United. For yet another game, Borough had failed to score when they were on top. After 36 minutes Mick Tuohy was virtually unchallenged to a right wing cross and looped a header into the net.

Knight scrambled across his line in a vain attempt to save as the ball hit an upright and went in. Heads went down and spirits sagged as realisation began to dawn for Borough. And Redditch further increased their lead in the 66th minute with an Eddie Hogan penalty. Borough skipper, Kirk Stephens, who desperately tried to inspire his side, brought down Tuohy and Hogan made no mistake from the spot.

The Manor Park side were presented with a faint glimmer of hope a few minutes later when they were awarded a spot kick for handball. But transfer listed top scorer Bobby Vincent dug a deep divot in the sanded surface as he drove the penalty high and wide. Redditch then dealt Nuneaton another blow when former Bedworth United striker Nigel Bunt scored their fourth in the closing minutes.

And a dreadful game ended in embarrassment for Borough – and their fourth defeat in a row. Now they have four home games left to bring back some semblance of stability to the season. But too much turmoil, too many injuries and 76 matches have taken their toll. The season has been eventful. Unfortunately, most of the action has been off the pitch and Redditch, who should go down, were able to cash in.

## Nuneaton Borough v Minehead 24-04-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Chinn, Fleet, Lewis, Vincent. **G. Smith, Smithers.** **Sub:** Nardiello.

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

Borough halted their run of defeats with a determined performance against relegation worried Minehead. But they owed a huge debt to transfer listed Ian Marsden for a magnificent save on the stroke of time. There were barely seconds left when Minehead striker Kenny Brown headed on from midfield. Trevor Peake failed to cut out the ball and Andy Leitch, whose goals helped to lift the Somerset club into second place last season, was left with a clear chance.

Marsden had spotted the danger. He raced from his line, blocked the shot from Leitch with his legs. By that time most of the 600 fans had left, driven away by another drab goalless draw. The first half was almost a non-event and although the match improved after the break it rarely promised goals.

One bright spot for Borough was the performance of teenager Gary Smith, a surprise inclusion in the side. Smith, with the club earlier in the season, drifted back into amateur soccer where he has scored 15 goals in the last five games for Higham United and Attleborough Mills.

But he was brought back by Stan Marshall – and injected fresh enthusiasm up front. Smith improved as he adjusted to the pace and almost scored with one superb shot on the turn. Dave Lewis and Timmy Smithers returned to take some of the strain off the youngsters. But before half-time Borough were frustrated by Minehead's offside trap and often threatened by the speed of winger Steve Wiltshire on the flanks.

Pressure at the start of the second half almost brought Nuneaton a goal. Ken Mallender played a casual back pass that let in Bobby Vincent who hit a weak shot that rolled towards the net. It struck the base of an upright – and was cleared off the line by full-back Bobby Brown. Wiltshire was booked for throwing the ball away in disgust before Lewis flashed two headers wide, one from a Smithers free-kick and another from a Smithers corner.

Lewis then bundled the goalkeeper and the ball into the net from a Vincent free-kick, but the goal was disallowed. Youngster Smith went off with cramp four minutes from time to warm applause from the fans who had bothered to stay. Then came Marsden's save from Leitch, but the game ended with the scoresheet still blank – for Borough's eleventh goalless draw in all competitions this season.

## Nuneaton Borough v Cheltenham Town 26-04-1978

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

Borough, who have scoured the country for strikers, found one last night – on their own doorstep. Teenager Gary

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Smith, plucked out of amateur league soccer, scored the goal that beat Cheltenham. He crowned another impressive performance with his first Southern League goal to end Borough's run of five games without a win. And he again showed the exciting potential that makes him a player to watch for the future. The skills and raw courage of the blond-haired striker earned him a richly deserved moment to remember in the 61st minute.

Timmy Smithers lobbed the ball onto the bar and Smith headed the rebound into the net. And his performance, in only his second Premier Division match, has almost certainly earned him a place in the side against Dartford. Smith formed a teenaged strike partnership with 19-year-old Ian Crawley in a match that was ordered to be replayed. Borough beat the Robins 2-1 at Manor Park on February 25 but played Steve Carr while he was under suspension and the Southern League management committee insisted on another game.

In the first-half it looked as if Cheltenham would reverse the result. A headed clearance on the line by Graham Smith denied Tim Bayliffe a goal. Then, in a period of second half pressure from Cheltenham, Ian Marsden pulled off a magnificent save from Terry Paterson after some sloppy play at the back by Borough. Transfer-listed Marsden went on to complete a performance that strengthened his claims for a second chance with the club next season.

He was helpless when Cheltenham top scorer Dave Lewis hit a shot that struck the bar and flew over. Lewis, one of the most deadly finishers in Southern League soccer, was given the sort of chance he rarely misses by a casual back pass from Kirk Stephens. But Smith's goal injected fresh enthusiasm into the Borough side. Much of their confidence came back. They survived some goalmouth scrambles and another brave save by Marsden in the closing minutes kept their slender lead intact.

But the directors, who had earlier conducted interviews for the vacant manager's job, must have been alarmed at the attendance. Only 283 people, one of the lowest crowds for a Southern League match at Manor Park in living memory turned up. The youngsters deserved better. But the fans can hardly be blamed. For nearly four years now Borough have failed to produce the vital ingredient that excites the supporters – goals. But players like young Smith and Crawley have shown that the potential is there.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 29-04-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Graham Smith, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Fleet, Vincent, Smithers, Thomas. **Sub:** Gary Smith.

**Dartford:** Keen, Embery, Shovelar, Sampson, Dorney, Morrissey, Akers, Julians, Horsfield, Norman, Harrison. **Sub:** Bray.

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

Borough underlined the problems facing the new manager with a second-half performance on Saturday that plunged to

rock bottom. Before half-time they painted an all-too-familiar picture for their long-suffering fans. On top and in command, they failed to convert their attacking play into goals. There was always a chance they would score, but their finishing was so abysmal that hope soon died.

After the break they were dreadful and Dartford, well organised and determined, snatched the goal that sent Borough crashing to their fifth home Southern League defeat of the season. Again they fell to a sucker punch – just as they have so many times this season. They conceded a free-kick dangerously close to their own penalty area. It was played forward, knocked across the goal – and Gary Julians forced it over the line to complete a premier division double for the Kent club.

That signalled the end for the Manor Park side and only the skills of pint sized Dartford forward John Harrison saved the match from complete oblivion. Harrison, only 5ft. 2in. in his soccer boots teased and tormented Borough with a superb performance. He rode the tackles, shrugged off the challenges and played with the spirit and skill so badly lacking in the Nuneaton side.

They have promised much and produced so little – and this match was a perfect example.

## Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 01-05-1978

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

Roy Barry caught a glimpse of Borough's fighting qualities as the Southern League season ended on an exciting note. He saw Nuneaton grab a share of the points as they twice came from behind.

Wayne Thomas levelled the match with a goal four minutes into injury time after Borough had trailed for a long spell. Early on, Yeovil keeper Alan Parker stamped out Borough's fire with a succession of fine saves. He pushed away shots from Gareth Dale, Thomas and Gary Fleet in the space of three minutes. Slowly, the visitors gained their composure and went ahead with a lightning breakaway. Player-manager Stan Harland engineered the move with a superb right-wing ball to Morrall who crossed for Kenny Griffin to score.

Borough were knocked off balance by the goal and fought desperately to get back into the game. Teenager Gary Smith worked hard up front but received little support from his fellow strikers. But Borough slowly dragged themselves back into the match and Parker was again in fine form, keeping out a bout of pressure from the Manor Park side. Few clear-cut chances were carved out but Borough had the edge in aggression and skill.

But a small crowd had to wait until the 80th minute for Borough to score a deserved equaliser. Gary Fleet probed his way through the defence and hit a shot that skimmed off Russell and past Parker. Within 40 seconds as the crowd settled in their seats, Yeovil took the lead again.

Morrall and Griffin combined well before Clive Green swept the ball past Bob Knight. That goal looked to have killed off Borough's hopes but Roy Barry must have been pleased with the way they hit back. Borough kept persevering and snatched a point with a goal four minutes into injury time. Fleet again masterminded the move, crossing for Wayne Thomas to score with a glorious effort from 15 yards out.

## Former Sky Blues Defender Takes Over

Nuneaton Borough last night appointed Scot Roy Barry as their new manager. The former Coventry City defender will take over at Manor Park on Saturday. That leaves Stan Marshall in charge for Borough's last game – the Birmingham Senior Cup final on Thursday.



Chairman Noel Kelly, announcing the news, said: "After a lot of thought we knew we had the right man for the job." Barry was at Nuneaton last night and saw the 2-2 draw with Yeovil. And afterwards he said: "I am not making any promises to the fans. All I can promise is hard work from the moment I take over the club," he added.

Barry was immediately tipped as favourite for the job after the shock walk out by Ian McKechnie. But Barry was reluctant to discuss the past: "As a new manager I am looking to the future." Barry has returned to football just four months after walking out on the game. He resigned as manager of Scottish First Division side East Fife on "a point of principle."

## Nuneaton Borough v Redditch United 04-05-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Thomas, Dale, Fleet, Vincent, Smithers, Chinn. **Subs:** Fallon and Nardiello.

Borough made the journey to Highfield Road, Coventry, to play Redditch United in the final of the Birmingham Senior Cup.

Borough's hopes of their first major trophy since entering the Southern League were temporarily thwarted. A fervent crowd of almost 3,000 – mostly Nuneaton supporters – saw them outplay Redditch but fail to convert a number of chances. Both goals were scored in a fast-flowing first half and, after 120 minutes, the scoreline remained unchanged.

Borough started at a furious pace and, with Wayne Thomas particularly prominent in midfield during the early stages, their superiority paid dividends when they moved ahead after only nine minutes. Gary Fleet picked up a pass on the right wing and started on a typical run at the Redditch defence. He doggedly evaded three tackles before sending over a waist-high centre. Thomas lunged to meet the cross with a fine header which found Vincent unmarked in front of goal. Borough's top scorer had time to adjust his footing before joyously hammering the ball home.

Redditch – outplayed until this point – found themselves back in the match after 25 minutes when they stunned their opponents with a simple, but devastating goal. A high cross found lanky striker Tuohy who nodded the ball across the face of the Borough goal to Clements, who headed in from close range giving Marsden no chance.

But the shock goal failed to deter Borough who continued to cause problems for the Worcestershire side. Twice Dale crossed superbly only to find no-one to meet his centre and Vincent squandered a great opportunity when he brilliantly chested down an awkward pass only seven yards out. But he delayed his shot and the chance was gone. Borough hero Vincent limped off to be replaced by Nardiello.

## Barry Gives Transfer Listed Players A Chance

Bobby Vincent, Gavin Lang and Ian Marsden have been given a reprieve by new manager Roy Barry. The three, all released by former boss Ian McKechnie, have accepted short term contracts with the Manor Park club. And midfielder Gary Fleet, put on offer at around £1,500, has been taken off the transfer list.

## Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 13-05-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Stephens, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Thomas, Lewis (Chinn), Smithers, Dale, Vincent (Nardiello), Fleet.

Borough made the journey to Fellows Park, Walsall, to play Redditch United in the Birmingham Senior Cup final replay.

Timmy Smithers scored the goal that gave Borough the Birmingham Senior Cup, with almost the last kick of the season. There was barely a minute left when Smithers



stunned Redditch with a goal out of the blue. Chris Chinn gave him the ball from a short corner and he was only a yard in from the line when he decided to shoot from what looked an impossible angle. But the shot went through eight defenders and Redditch goalkeeper Reg Edwards and tucked itself into the far corner of the net. And Borough ended one of the most turbulent seasons in their history – in triumph.

Always a class above Redditch, Borough deserved their moment of glory. They dominated much of the match. Just as they did in the 1-1 draw at Highfield Road. But the game was hardly a classic. Played in a continual drizzle, it matched the drab surroundings of Fellows Park.

Redditch, clearly drained by their efforts to save themselves from relegation, seemed more content to shut up shop than play. And Borough were unable to find a way through a packed defence which United reinforced at every opportunity. Gareth Dale, who had threatened to destroy them at Coventry, was given few chances to shine.

His former team-mates tightened up on him and Borough lost much of their effectiveness. But with Trevor Peake and Kirk Stephens superb in defence and Wayne Thomas back to something like his best in midfield there was little danger Borough would lose. Bobby Vincent and Gary Fleet both went close in the first half and Phil Nardiello, who replaced Vincent after the break, should have had a penalty. He was quite clearly pulled back by Redditch defender Dave Clements, but the referee ignored the incident.

Redditch were also denied a penalty when Eddie Hogan, their best player, wriggled his way past two players and was brought down in the box. As the replay drew to a close Dale could have set up a goal for Nardiello, but chose to hang on to the ball and was robbed. Then, as extra-time loomed, Smithers struck with his dramatic goal and Borough won the trophy for the first time since 1960.

## Stan Marshall Leaves Borough

Stan Marshall, the man who steered Borough through a crisis torn season, has left Manor Park. He was offered a job by new manager Roy Barry, but intends to stand by the decision he made earlier this year. But he said last night: "I shall never leave the Borough in that sense of the word. I will always be a supporter – my heart will always be there."

## Alliance League Close To Reality

Nuneaton Borough's dreams of a semi-professional "Super League" have taken a step closer to reality. Dramatic behind the scenes developments have pushed it back into prominence after a period of cold storage. And there is now a real chance that it will be set up for the season after next.

Borough have long advocated an amalgamation of the top clubs in the Southern League and the Northern Premier into a Football Alliance. Many clubs were reluctant to push the idea

– unless there was an assurance of an automatic promotion and relegation link between the Fourth Division. But, after sweeping changes on the Southern League management committee, there has been a change of heart. They now feel the Alliance should be set up, built into a powerful force and then pushed as the Fifth Division of the Football League.

More meetings have been held between the Southern and Northern League managements and the committee that represents the Third and Fourth Division clubs. And there are signs that attitudes are softening towards the idea which could lead to a pyramid system throughout English soccer...

## Phillips Transfer Request

Brendan Phillips, Nuneaton Borough's talented midfielder player, has told the club: "I want to leave." He has slapped in a written transfer request which will be discussed by the board. Phillips, one of the most skilful players in Southern League football has been unsettled for some time. Twice last season his name was linked with Kettering Town, who made a firm cash offer. But the clubs failed to agree on a price and Phillips stayed at Manor Park.

## Kirk Stephens Joins Luton Town

Borough full-back Kirk Stephens has joined Luton Town in a £5,000 deal, and the club intend to spend the money on a striker. Borough will collect a club record fee for the 23-year-old, but the cash will not be allowed to lie idle for long. Manager Roy Barry has already been told that he can use it to strengthen his attack. He said today: "Everyone knows that is where our weakness lies. We are well off for defenders, but we don't score goals."

Borough have been searching for a top-class striker for some time. Last season they were linked with Roy Clayton from Kettering and Grantham forward David Platt. Platt, who is in dispute with Grantham, watched several matches at Manor Park towards the end of last season. But the Lincolnshire club have put a £4,000 price tag on his head – the figure they asked when Borough made an inquiry.

Clayton was leading scorer in the Southern League Premier Division last season with 26 goals. He, too, is looking for a move, but it would take a sizeable offer to persuade the Poppies to part.

Stephens, one of the most popular players to wear a Borough jersey, has his final training session at Manor Park before flying off to Spain for a holiday and will become a Luton player hours after he gets back. He has pulled out of Borough's trip to Italy for the Anglo-Italian Tournament at Luton's request.

The transfer, agreed yesterday, beats the previous club record sale which was the £1,500 they picked up when striker Roger Jones returned to Stafford Rangers last season.

## Graham Smith Player Of The Year



Graham Smith was voted Nuneaton Borough Player of the Year in the closest ballot of all time. He beat crowd favourite Bobby Vincent to the Evening Tribune poll – by just one vote. And he now holds a unique place in North Warwickshire soccer as the only man to win the Player of the Year awards at Borough and Atherstone.

### Reggiana v Nuneaton Borough 20-06-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Farndon, Peake, Smithers, Thomas, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Fleet, Vincent, Lang. **Subs:** Marsden, Fallon, Crawley and Nardiello.

Borough made the journey to Reggiana to play an Anglo-Italian Tournament game.

Borough broke the first seal on new manager Roy Barry's plans for the future with a bold performance against Reggiana in Southern Italy. Beaten by a goal in each half, their hopes of making progress in the Anglo-Italian Tournament disappeared. But there was dignity for them in a defeat that would have made their own supporters proud. Even the fiercely partisan Calabrians showed their appreciation by applauding them from the field at the end.

Barry sent them into the match with a fresh approach and new ideas and they responded with a performance that shook the confident Italians in their impressive concrete and steel municipal stadium. For 20 minutes in the second half, Borough were in complete command and their football matched the splendour of the surroundings.

Barry's professional attitude was evident in everything

they did. In the end, though, the manager was beaten by an opponent no-one can conquer – time. No manager could have been more thorough in his build up for the game, but he needed a little longer to change the habits of years. And he clearly will have to spend to solve his biggest problem – Borough's inability to snap up chances.

Brendan Phillips, who quickly became a favourite with the fans, could easily have helped himself to a hat-trick and other chances went begging. Timmy Smithers was also guilty of poor finishing and that was the major difference between the two sides. The Italians were always prepared to shoot on sight, and Smithers found that out to his cost after only 13 minutes when he got an unlucky bounce and Reggiana striker Snidaro scored from 20 yards.

Without as much as a glance towards goal Snidaro struck a shot that hurtled into the net as Bob Knight flung himself across his line. Many sides would have crumbled, but Borough fought back with a defiance that shook the Italians. They should have equalised when Gavin Lang made a run down the left and searched out Phillips with a pinpoint cross, only for the Borough midfield player to volley wide.

Caution over-ruled much of Borough's play early on in humid conditions and both Toscano and Condenni threatened their defence as they organised themselves to cope with Barry's plans. Mingrone tried a simple chance for Reggiana with the second half barely three minutes old before Borough pulled themselves together and to the astonishment of the home fans, began to take command.

Dave Lewis, who had a superb game in midfield, was booked for dissent and two timely tackles by Trevor Peake, magnificent at the back, prevented further problems. Both Lewis and Peake were impressive and so too was youngster Paul Farndon, making his debut at right back. The teenager played with skill and composure and could claim the place as his own.

Borough pushed forward in a bid to save the game in the closing stages and Reggiana took advantage with an 82nd minute goal from Mingrone, who scored from six yards with the defence stripped of its cover. That goal settled Borough's fate, but they emerged with a lot of credit from a difficult situation.

## Wayne Thomas Leaving Borough

Wayne Thomas, Nuneaton Borough's talented young defender is leaving the club at the end of next week. He plays his last game tomorrow against Paganese in the Anglo-Italian tournament and then goes to West Germany where he has a job – and hopes to find a club.

Thomas, still only 19, said: "I am going out there only because I have been offered a job in a bakery. But I am hoping to get fixed up with a German third or fourth division club and I will be aiming to go higher."

Thomas has been thinking about the move for some time. Two years ago he was voted best player in a youth

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



tournament in Marburg, near Frankfurt, and he has been back three times to take coaching and training.

Manager Roy Barry said: “I am very disappointed about losing a player of his ability – especially the way he played on Tuesday. He was in my plans for next season, particularly at left back.”

## Paganese v Nuneaton Borough 23-06-1978

**Borough: Marsden, Farndon, Peake, Smith (Fallon), Thomas, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Nardiello, Vincent (Crawley), Lang. Subs: Fleet, Knight.**

Borough made the journey to Paganese to play an Anglo-Italian Tournament match.

For a few fleeting minutes Borough trembled on the brink of one of the finest achievements in the club’s history. Trailing after 13 minutes, they staged a sensational finish to beat Italian third division side Paganese. Wayne Thomas equalised with a stunning free-kick and Timmy Smithers then scored twice – all in the space of the last 15 minutes. Borough knew that if the other English clubs had lost they were in the final of the Anglo-Italian tournament. Then came the news that Bath City, Southern League champions, had beaten Treviso 2-0, to earn the right to represent England. But even that failed to dampen Borough’s jubilation after a performance that earned them a standing ovation from the appreciative Italian fans.

Nuneaton showed skill, courage and, above all, pride and character. They suffered two early setbacks that would have upset the confidence of most sides. Graham Smith, the fans’ player-of-the-year, went off injured after just 12 minutes. And barely a minute later Paganese scored when Lannucci ran unchallenged onto a left-wing cross from full-back Lamonti and steered a header past the helpless Ian Marsden.

But the Manor Park side lifted their heads and Gavin Lang began to give them hope as he spread panic among the Italian defenders. Lang, one of the most impressive players on the tour, took on and beat defenders almost at will.

It looked as if Borough were heading for a similar defeat to the one they suffered at Reggiana. Their finishing was just as poor. Phil Nardiello missed an absolute sitter from six yards, others went begging and Paganese still led at half-time. But Borough’s confidence was unshaken. Thomas lifted a free-kick over the top, Bobby Vincent shot straight at the keeper and Nardiello hit a shot on the turn.

As the minutes ticked away it looked as if their efforts were destined to fail. Then Thomas provided the spark that ignited Borough’s impressive finish with a stunning goal from another free-kick. Paganese goalkeeper Sorrentino was penalised for handling outside his area and Thomas spotted a gap in the Italian defensive wall. He hit his shot with such power that Sorrentino, due to sign for Italian first division club Naples, hardly had time to move.

Vincent went off to be replaced by youngster Ian Crawley and in the 79th minute Borough took the lead. Trevor Peake played the ball forward for Brendan Phillips, who wriggled his way into the Paganese penalty area. Phillips pulled the ball back across the goalmouth and Smithers scored with a header. Paganese were shattered – and knew it – and Borough scored their third goal in the dying seconds.

Sorrentino failed to hold a powerful 25-yard shot from Nardiello and Smithers steered the ball home off one post and then the other. That put the seal on a Nuneaton performance in which so many players did well – none more so than youngster Tom Fallon, who went on for Smith and played with a coolness that spread confidence.

Phillips again delighted the Italian supporters with skills that earned him the nickname Pele; Lewis was again an inspiration; Thomas was superb at left-back – and the whole side deserved the highest praise. At the end the fans showed their appreciation with applause that provided a fitting finale to a memorable match – and a memorable trip.

## Southern League Premier Division 1977-78

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bath City	42	22	18	2	83	32	62
Weymouth	42	21	16	5	64	36	58
Maidstone United	42	20	11	11	59	41	51
Worcester City	42	20	11	11	67	50	51
Gravesend & Northfleet	42	19	11	12	57	42	49
Kettering Town	42	18	11	13	58	48	47
Barnet	42	18	11	13	63	58	47
Wealdstone	42	16	14	12	54	48	46
Telford United	42	17	11	14	52	45	45
Nuneaton Borough	42	15	14	13	38	36	44
Dartford	42	14	15	13	57	65	43
Yeovil Town	42	14	14	14	57	49	42
Hastings United	42	15	9	18	49	60	39
Cheltenham Town	42	12	14	16	43	52	38
Hillingdon Borough	42	13	9	20	45	54	35
Atherstone Town	42	10	15	17	41	56	35
Redditch United	42	15	5	22	40	55	35
AP Leamington	42	11	13	18	34	57	35
Minehead	42	11	12	19	43	48	34
Dover	42	9	13	20	41	63	31
Bedford Town	42	8	13	21	51	75	29
Grantham	42	11	6	25	40	66	28



## Hednesford Town — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Hednesford Town to Manor Park to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Thomas, Smith, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Owen, Smithers. Sub: Lang.

Hednesford: Baldwin, Handley, Turner, Birch, Perrins, Sweet, Jones, Dagg, J. Owen, Biggins, Brookes. Sub: Stremek.

Hednesford's valiant bid for a slice of FA Cup glory ended in a handshake that made Joey Owen proud. Immediately the whistle went, Stan Marshall, Borough's acting manager, went on to the pitch to shake his hand. Stan Bennett was waiting at the players' tunnel to do the same.

Both knew how close Borough had come to being beaten by the West Midlands League side. So did Owen, once Borough's record buy, and now player-manager of the Staffordshire side.

But he said: "I don't feel a bit downhearted. When Stan Marshall came on to the pitch and shook my hand it somehow took the edge off my disappointment. Perhaps I shall feel it later on, but at the moment I feel proud of my team."

But for the brilliance of Borough goalkeeper Bob Knight, Hednesford would now be in the first round. Nuneaton had to weather intense pressure from the unbeaten West Midlands Leaguers.

Said Owen: "Our lads were a bit overawed early on. They knew they were playing against one of the top

three non-league sides in the country. But at half-time I told them to be patient. We were two goals down and could have been in front, but I said it doesn't matter if we lose 4-0 as long as we go out and have a go."



**Hednesford keeper John Baldwin is only a finger tip away – but the ball is on its way from Gary Fleet for Borough's first goal after just nine minutes.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

They did just that and Borough, two goals up through Gary Fleet and Timmy Smithers, lived on a tightrope. Knight saved Borough in the 20 minute period between the goals. He denied Owen a goal with a breath-taking save and pushed a back header from Stan Brookes over the top. Somehow he reached a thunderous free-kick from

Clive Perrins that looked a goal all the way.

Fleet had scored in the ninth minute with a spectacular volley and Smithers rounded off the best move of the match after 38 minutes. Afterwards the game belonged to the visitors as they set up constant attacks. But they were up against the best defence in the Southern League and did not break it down until too late.

Stan Brookes scored with a similar effort to Fleet in the 87th minute and Borough managed to hang out. They knew they had been in a game and their relief showed at the end. That's why Stan Marshall made his gesture, out of respect rather than consolation.

He explained: "I knew how Joe must have been feeling, we've all felt it before. But they had done well. We will be in the same position ourselves sometime. It's all part and parcel of the game. If Knight had been in goal for them, they would have won."

Thanks to Knight and the defence, Borough prevented a major upset. Hustled out of their stride, they resorted to 100 mph football when they needed to show the patience Owen preached to Hednesford.

Forwards ran up blind alleys and they suffered in the middle of the park. But in the FA Cup, the result is always more important than the way it is achieved. The biggest crowd of the season saw Borough scrape into the First Round for the sixth time in seven seasons.

## Oxford United — 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Oxford United to Manor Park for a 1st Round Proper FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Thomas, Cross, Peake, Lang, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Owen.

Oxford: Burton, Taylor, Fogg, Bodel, Clarke, Jeffrey, Seacole, Berry, Foley, Curran, Duncan. Sub: McGrogan.

Magnificent Borough marched into



**The magic of the FA Cup drew nearly 2,000 fans to the Manor Park terraces on Saturday and they were able to acclaim a goal after only nine minutes.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



**Gavin Lang turns away in triumph after putting Borough ahead in the second minute, while Dave Lewis and Bobby Vincent are already starting the celebrations.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

the Second Round of the FA Cup with a performance that made a town proud. Grown men cried as the fans poured on to the pitch at the end – and memories of past glories flooded back. Champagne flowed in the dressing room and Manor Park went mad after an incredible match.

Few people gave Nuneaton a chance against their Third Division opponents. But Borough defied all of the odds, turned the form books upside down – and wrote another glowing chapter in the club's cup records.

Not only did they win, they outplayed, outfought and outran United in every department of the game. As soon as Gavin Lang shot Nuneaton in front with the tie barely two minutes old, the writing was on the wall. Lang, who had an inspired match, went off five minutes from the end with tears in his eyes. It was his pass that led to the second goal, a Brendan Phillips penalty in the 59th minute.

Borough took him off because he was totally exhausted. He had given everything – and that summed up the whole of the Nuneaton side. Only full-back Les Taylor and forward Jason Seacole showed anything like the effort Oxford needed.

But Borough's side was studded with heroes – all determined to wipe out the memory of last year's disaster at Lincoln. Players like Trevor Peake, still only 21, but a colossus of a centre-half whose talents are disgracefully wasted in the Southern League. Players like Wayne Thomas, who had a tremendous match at left-back.

People like Brendan Phillips, who never stopped running, Dave Lewis, so

committed to Borough's cause – and the rest. Every one of them walked from the pitch with their heads held high, their pride restored and the triumphant chants of their delirious supporters ringing in their ears.

Even the crowd trouble that provided a violent backcloth to an explosive tie was forgotten amid the scenes of joy.

Lang's early goal made all of the difference and gave Borough a dream start. Oxford, anxious and unsettled, became ragged while Nuneaton, superbly supported from the terraces, grew in stature. Bobby Vincent could have increased the lead before half-time, but the drama spilled over into the second half.

And, in the 59th minute, Borough were awarded the penalty that confirmed the result. Gary Fleet, who had played a part in the first goal, found Lang with a superb ball. He flicked it on and Phillips was brought down in the box by goalkeeper Roy Burton. The supporters held their breath as Phillips, who had missed a penalty just five days earlier, stepped up to take the kick. This time he made no mistake. The ball tucked itself into the net – and Manor Park went wild.



**The heroes Gavin Lang and Brendan Phillips, goalscorers supreme, celebrate their success in the champagne atmosphere of the Borough dressing room.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Tension built as Oxford hit back in a bid to salvage some of their battered pride. But Borough, whose back four would grace the Third Division, had their measure. The only time they had any problems was when Peake brought down Peter Foley in the first half and appeals for a penalty were waved aside.

Borough tired towards the end which was understandable – no team could have given more. But they had done everything expected of them – and more. Realisation that victory was theirs kept them going.

Then came the final whistle, the amazing scenes that turned back the clock to ten years ago – and the celebrations. Borough had turned another page in the sporting history of the town and repayed a debt they owed to their fans – in full.

## Tilbury – 2nd Round Proper

Borough welcomed Tilbury to Manor Park to play a 2nd Round Proper FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Smith, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Lewis, Lang. Sub: Smithers.

Tilbury: Armstrong, Partner, Marjoram, Sullivan, Barnett, Linton, Dennis, C. Wallace, J. Wallace, Gray, N. Smith. Sub: Russell.

Tiny Tilbury, the underdogs from the Isthmian League came to Manor Park on Saturday and destroyed a dream.

Glory beckoned Borough and an expectant town – but disappointment triumphed. And a pall of disbelief hung heavy over the ground at the end of an astonishing Cup tie. No team can have dominated a match so completely as Nuneaton and lost.

Borough manager Stan Bennett summed it up when he said: “It was unbelievable. We played them off the park. They had one and a half chances – and scored twice.”

No-one who witnessed the drama will ever be able to reconcile themselves to the fact that Nuneaton lost. But the desolate terraces littered with ticket



This section of the crowd spell out just who they went along to Manor Park this afternoon to cheer

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

stubs for the Third Round, told their own story. Borough, the side that crushed Oxford, had been beaten by a team of “no hopers” from London’s dockland.

Tilbury, given a reprieve on a technicality after losing to Kettering, were through. Only when the draw made live on television to give them a Third Round trip to Stoke City, did it begin to sink in.

Borough, who could easily have won 6-2, had been dumped unceremoniously on the backsides by a club that, just six months ago, couldn’t raise a team! The two goals they scored will prey on Borough’s minds for years to come – and haunt goalkeeper Bob Knight for ever. For the man who did so much to keep Nuneaton in the FA Cup saw his hopes turn into a nightmare.

With only ten minutes gone, Tilbury forward Colin Wallace hit a tame shot from outside the box. The ball was

going wide before it hit a divot, struck Knight on the chest – and ran over the line.

Even then, Nuneaton still had their sights on victory. They were so much better than Tilbury that success appeared to be a formality. Bobby Vincent then equalised with a magnificently taken goal, superbly set up by Brendan Phillips, two minutes from half-time. The goal contained all the class, skill and confidence that Tilbury just could not match.

And the stage was set for Nuneaton to emphasise their status in the second half as Tilbury flagged. They had been torn apart by Phillips and Gavin Lang on the flanks and had been set up for the kill.

Lang, hero of the win over Oxford, looked every inch a match winner with a stream of crosses that searched out the Tilbury defence. But goalkeeper Tony Armstrong and central defenders



**Borough skipper Dave Lewis goes in hard on Tilbury goalkeeper Armstrong during the first-half. Armstrong had to have treatment.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Dave Barnett and Malcolm Linton performed heroics for the Isthmian Leaguers – and the ball just would not go in. Then came the hammer blow that decided the tie and wrecked a whole town's hopes.

Tilbury had pulled an extra man back into midfield in a bid to curb Phillips and Lang, but were still under incessant pressure. But they broke quickly out of defence and Malcolm Linton sent over a high cross that seemed to hang in the air for an age.

Knight should have done better and Ken Gray, Tilbury's former England amateur international, could hardly believe his luck as the ball landed at his feet. Only then did the goalkeeper make his move, but it was too late.

Gray, once a legend in amateur soccer and now in the twilight of his career, searched back through his memory. He knew he had a chance he could not miss – and calmly sidefooted the ball into the net as Knight finally decided to leave his line.

Then followed some of the most amazing scenes ever witnessed at Manor Park as Borough battled to salvage their pride. Panic spread through their play as they piled on attack after frenetic attack. Even so, they should have scored. Only fate and some astonishing escapes kept Tilbury in front. Dave Lewis, who had somehow hit the bar earlier on with a header, grazed an upright with another effort.

Corner followed corner and some of the goalmouth scrambles had to be seen to be believed. In the dying seconds, Borough forced four successive corners and the Tilbury goalmouth became a battleground as shots were saved and scrambled away.

But in the end the scoreline stood as an epitaph to yet another Borough search for glory. And the final whistle provided a piercing and painful end to a match Borough were never destined to win.

Despair and disbelief replaced the delirium of the triumph over Oxford – pushed back into everyone's minds by the bitter taste of defeat against a side that Nuneaton should have beaten hands down. And the FA Cup has provided yet another upset. With Borough this time on the receiving end.



**Players battle desperately for the ball in just one of the series of astonishing scrambles in the Tilbury goalmouth towards the end of an incredible cup tie.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Grantham Town — 1st Round Proper

Borough welcomed Grantham Town to Manor Park for a FA Trophy 1st Round Proper tie.

Borough: Marsden, Stephens, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Owen.

Grantham: Gardiner, Shaw, Bower, Norris, J. Jackson, Hodson, Gould, P. Jackson, Platt, Taylor, Benskin. Sub: Horobin.

Borough launched Stan Marshall's managerial reign with a performance that kept Wembley on the horizon. Victory was vital after the turmoil that led up to the departure of Stan Bennett.

But the side rose to the challenge and moved smoothly into the second round of the competition that provided so much excitement last year. Second half goals from Brendan Phillips and Wayne Thomas steered them into the last 32 as Grantham crumbled.

So inconsistent, Nuneaton found the form that makes them such an exciting side to watch. After the first 20 minutes, The Gingerbreads were never in the same class and could have been given a real hammering.

Timmy Smithers and Trevor Peake both hit the woodwork and Dave Lewis had what looked to be a perfectly good goal disallowed. He scored after a superb run by Gary Fleet, only to have the

goal ruled out for a foul on Fleet in the build-up.

Borough are no longer the predictable side they once were. They vary from match to match – even during games. But the supporters don't appear to be in mind – if Saturday's 1,400 attendance is anything to go by.

Watching Nuneaton these days is like a lottery. Draw the right ticket and everything is marvellous. Choose the wrong match and Borough can drive you to distraction – but the fans went home happy on Saturday.

No-one seems to sum up their inconsistency more than Gary Fleet, who epitomises their play. And on Saturday he chose to turn in another of his irrepressible displays with the precision passes that provide dagger thrusts for any defence. Kirk Stephens was back to something like his real form at right back and the whole side played with a lot more commonsense.

They stopped throwing long, hopeful crosses into the middle and brought variety to their approach work. Brendan Phillips brought his skills back to midfield after his two match suspension. And skipper Dave Lewis clearly relished his role up front. He makes no secret of the fact that he likes playing alongside Bobby Vincent.

Graham Smith did a solid job against

centre-forward Dave Platt, rated in the £4,000 class by Grantham and the back four looked a lot sounder than of late, with youngster Gary Tysall again solid, sound and dependable at left-back.

Grantham, joint bottom with Redditch, looked the better side early on. But as soon as Fleet began to develop his skills, Borough took over and the visitors' resistance slowly crumbled. Phillips broke the deadlock in the 52nd minute with a typical goal. Chris Gardiner punched out a Stephens' cross and Phillips steered it back into the net.

The writing was on the wall for the Lincolnshire side and Wayne Thomas confirmed the win with a stunning goal. He hit an unstoppable free-kick from 25 yards in the 67th minute that left Gardiner breathless.

Borough were in total command after the two goals and went on to win in a style that could put them among the favourites for a Wembley trip – unless their inconsistency lets them down.

## Bangor City — 2nd Round Proper

Borough welcomed Bangor City to Manor Park to play a 2nd Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Thomas, Phillips, Fleet, Vincent, Lewis, Smithers. Sub: Lang.

Bangor: Craven, Atherton, Lunn, Elliott, McClelland, Smith, Olney, Broadhead, Telford, Mason, Hipwell. Sub: Hughes.

Hopes of Borough reaching Wembley in the FA Trophy took a nose-dive when Gary Fleet was carried from the field after only eight minutes. Fleet was in collision with Bangor centre-forward Telford and received a gaping gash in his leg – which later needed stitches. It was a blow from which Borough never fully recovered and a series of compromises never threatened to destroy the Welsh side.

Bangor always looked as though they would settle for a draw, leaving just two strikers forward for long periods.



Goalkeeper Gardiner can only stand and stare as a free-kick from Wayne Thomas screams past him from 25 yards for Borough's second goal.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



Borough were nippy enough at the start and Brendan Phillips looked as though he, together with Fleet, might stamp personality on the game. But Bangor were full of composure and showed no sign of being ruffled by two early forays into the goal area.

Player manager Dave Elliott, Smith and McClelland provided a solid foundation and, when Fleet was carried off on a stretcher, Dave Lewis and his men were in obvious trouble. Fleet got to the ball first but Telford was already crashing in. The Borough player never looked like getting up.

With only eight minutes gone, trainers, ambulance men and a doctor invaded the pitch and play was held up for fully three minutes. Gavin Lang came on for Fleet and a re-shuffle took place with Lewis dropping back to fill the midfield gap, leaving Lang up front with Vincent and Smithers.

It never approached being a winning combination – although all three strikers worked hard to achieve success. Individual flair was there but blend was missing. Lewis, in desperation, swapped with Smithers and some sort of pressure was achieved, but Bangor's strong rearguard were equal to it all.

Cumbersome centre half McClelland gave Vincent little scope, while quick breaks by the Welsh forwards Broadhead and Telford gave the home crowd anxious moments. On one occasion, Broadhead broke on the right and crossed a great ball, which Knight did well to save, tipping the ball only inches away from the diving head of Hipwell.

Borough hit back with long range efforts from Lewis and Thomas, who hit a scorcher from about 40 yards and rattled the angle with goalkeeper Craven beaten all ends up. But it was the nearest Borough came to scoring.

Lang tried hard, without much success, operating on both the left and right and, in frustration, players like Phillips and Vincent simply fizzled out.

Borough wilted like a flower in the frost as the ball service to the forwards deteriorated to a trickle. Borough had more shots on target in both halves and more corners without being able to capitalise.

Once in control of the midfield, Bangor never looked like relaxing their grip. Now Borough have a veritable mountain to climb at Bangor on Monday if they are to survive

## **Bangor City – 2nd Round Proper Replay**

Borough made the journey to Bangor to play a 2nd Round Proper FA Trophy Replay.

Borough: Knight, Stephens, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Fleet, Thomas (Smithers 70), Dale, Vincent, Lang.

Borough were shot out of the FA Trophy by a double-barrelled goal blast in an exciting second round replay. But they went out with pride in a match that was a credit to both sides in atrocious conditions. Incessant rain turned an already heavy pitch into an ankle deep bog – but the teams still managed to show an astonishing amount of skill.

Borough's hopes collapsed early in the second half when Bangor slammed goals past Bob Knight in the 53rd and 55th minutes. Gareth Dale quickly gave Nuneaton fresh hope when he pulled one back in the 57th minute.

But, try as they may after that, Borough could not make up the leeway, and were still trailing at the end.

They forced Bangor to defend desperately in the final 20 minutes yet failed to find a way through. The Manor Park side opened in impressive style with Gary Fleet in superb form in midfield.

Misses at both ends set the stage for a thrilling tie that seldom lost any of its momentum. Kirk Stephens pulled off one goal-line clearance to deny Tony Broadhead a goal, Fleet hammered too high and Brendan Phillips drove a shot straight at the goalkeeper.

Towards half-time Borough were controlling the proceedings and both Gavin Lang and Dale missed chances. But they had one anxious moment when Billy Telford slammed a shot against Trevor Peake which deflected for a corner.

Knight then saved from the same player, who had been booked earlier for a tackle that cut down Stephens at the knees. The intriguing stalemate was eventually broken in sensational style as Bangor struck with their two goals in two minutes – both from breaks from out of defence.

A delicate chip by City player manager Dave Elliott set up the first. Borough's defence was caught square and Telford ran on to the ball to fire strongly beyond the advancing Knight from 15 yards. Dale had missed an identical chance for Nuneaton almost on the stroke of half-time.

Before Borough knew what had hit them, Bangor left-back Phil Lunn surged forward, collected a return pass from Broadhead and finished in style with a fierce, low shot across Knight and into the far corner.

Nuneaton looked down and out, but they demonstrated their undoubted character by picking themselves up to grab a timely reply. Bobby Vincent dug a pass out of the goalmouth mud to Phillips, whose cross was headed past goalkeeper Mike Craven from six yards by Dale.

Again the tie was wide open, Borough were back in the hunt and they began to apply more pressure. Bangor survived narrow escapes as the ball skidded in the mud and they were forced into panicky clearances.

But Borough just could not force the ball into the net – and their dreams of Wembley disappeared for yet another season. They had the consolation of knowing they had given as much as they could in a match between two good teams, playing in difficult conditions.



## Nuneaton Borough 1977-78

Back: Chris Martin, Gavin Lang, Wayne Thomas, Roy Cross, Bob Knight, Trevor Peake, Chris Chinn, Bobby Vincent, Stan Marshall (manager).

Front: Dave Looms (trainer), Kirk Stephens, Gary Fleet, Dave Lewis, Gareth Dale, Timmy Smithers, Brendan Phillips.

### Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1977-78

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.06	Bedworth United	A	PSF	2-0	Phillips (pen), Smithers	
08.08	Racing Club Warwick	A	PSF	2-1	Vincent, Lewis	
08.10	Sterling Metals	A	PSF	8-0	Vincent (3), Mason (2), Others Not Known	
08.11	Willenhall	A	PSF	0-2		
08.13	Wigan Athletic	H	PSF	1-2	Stiles (o.g.)	
08.15	Stourbridge	H	PSF	0-0		
08.20	Oswestry Town	A	SLC1-1L	2-1	Jones (2)	460
08.22	Oswestry Town	H	SLC1-2L	1-1	Phillips	1162
08.27	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	1-0	Jones	1096
08.29	Bath City	H	L	0-0		1262
09.03	Minehead	A	L	1-1	Thomas	
09.05	A.P.Leamington	H	MFC	1-0	Benn	639
09.10	Kettering Town	H	L	2-1	Jones, Phillips	1715
09.17	Weymouth	A	L	0-0		
09.24	Gravesend & Northfleet	H	L	1-2	Smithers	1302
09.26	Kettering Town	H	SLC2	1-1	Jones	1844
09.28	Burton Albion	A	MFC	1-3	Phillips	
10.01	Cheltenham Town	A	L	1-2	Lewis	1036
10.03	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	1-1	Vincent	758
10.08	Dover	H	L	3-1	Vincent (2), Lewis	1020
10.11	A.P.Leamington	A	L	1-0	Dale	
10.15	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	0-1		
10.17	West Midlands Police	H	BSC2	7-1	Vincent (2), Thomas (2), Owen, Smithers, Lang	542
10.22	Bedford Town	H	L	3-0	Lewis, Vincent, Phillips (pen)	1270
10.24	Tamworth	A	MFC	0-2		
10.26	Kettering Town	A	SLC2r	1-0	Vincent	1633

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1977-78

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
10.29	Hastings United	H	L	2-2	Vincent (2)	1440
11.01	Barnet	A	L	0-0		967
11.05	Hednesford Town	H	FAC4Q	2-1	Fleet, Smithers	1979
11.12	Maidstone United	A	L	0-2		710
11.15	A.P.Leamington	A	MFC	0-1		
11.19	Grantham Town	A	L	0-0		
11.21	Stourbridge	H	SLC3	2-1	Dale (2)	833
11.26	Oxford United	H	FAC1	2-0	Lang, Phillips (pen)	7759
11.29	Atherstone Town	A	MFC	4-1	Dale (2), Knowles, Smith,	337
12.03	Yeovil Town	A	L	0-1		1323
12.05	Wealdstone	H	L	1-0	Phillips (pen)	1213
12.10	Redditch United	H	L	3-0	Phillips, Lewis, Thomas	1395
12.17	Tilbury	H	FAC2	1-2	Vincent	4756
12.20	Sutton Coldfield Town	A	BSC3	1-1	Lang	
12.26	Atherstone Town	H	L	0-0		2483
12.27	Telford United	A	L	1-2	Lang	849
12.31	Hastings United	A	L	0-2		
01.02	Sutton Coldfield Town	H	BSC3r	2-1	Vincent, Phillips	603
01.07	Barnet	H	L	2-1	Vincent (2)	1442
01.09	Maidstone United	H	L	0-1		1318
01.14	Grantham Town	H	FAT1	2-0	Phillips, Thomas	1378
01.28	Bath City	A	L	1-1	Fleet	1609
01.30	Burton Albion	A	BSCQF	1-0	Vincent	274
02.08	Bangor City	H	FAT2	0-0		2183
02.18	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	L	1-1	Peake	842
02.22	Bangor City	A	FAT2r	1-2	Dale	1670
02.25	*Cheltenham Town	H	L	2-1	Bayliffe (o.g.), Carr	1155
02.27	Gravesend & Northfleet	H	SLCQF	0-0		1849
03.04	Dover	A	L	1-0	Vincent	244
03.07	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	SLCQFr	1-2aet	Vincent	
03.11	A.P.Leamington	H	L	1-0	Carr	1197
03.13	Worcester City	A	L	1-1	Thomas	1285
03.16	Tamworth	H	MFC	0-0		149
03.18	Bedford Town	A	L	1-0	Vincent	481
03.22	Treviso	H	AIT	2-0	Vincent (pen), Fleet	1003
03.25	Reggiana	H	AIT	1-1	Smithers	1156
03.27	Atherstone Town	A	L	1-0	Fleet	1753
03.29	Kettering Town	A	L	2-1	Carr, Lewis	1415
04.01	Grantham Town	H	L	1-0	Vincent (pen)	1024
04.03	Burton Albion	H	MFC	6-1	Nardiello, Crawley, Dale (2), Smithers, Lang	403
04.06	A.P.Leamington	H	BSCSF	0-0		748
04.08	Wealdstone	A	L	0-0		
04.10	Weymouth	H	L	1-1	Dale	899
04.13	A.P.Leamington	A	BSCSFr	1-0	Smithers	
04.15	Worcester City	H	L	1-2	Nardiello	1273
04.18	Dartford	A	L	0-1		
04.20	Telford United	H	L	1-2		
04.22	Redditch United	A	L	0-4		
04.24	Minehead	H	L	0-0		629
04.26	Cheltenham Town*	H	L	1-0	Smith	283
04.29	Dartford	H	L	0-1		772
05.01	Yeovil Town	H	L	2-2	Fleet, Thomas	
05.04	Redditch United	At Coventry	BSCF	1-1	Vincent	c3000
05.13	Redditch United	At Walsall	BSCFr	1-0	Smithers	
06.20	Reggiana	A	AIT	0-2		
06.23	Paganese	A	AIT	3-1	Thomas, Smithers (2)	

KEY: L = Southern League Premier, FAC = FA Cup, FAT = FA Trophy, SLC = Southern League Cup, BSC = Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, AIT = Anglo Italian Tournament, PSF = Pre season friendly

\* This game was replayed after Cheltenham appealed against Borough playing an ineligible player on February 25, 1978.





## How The Football Alliance Was Born

A chance telephone call led to Nuneaton Borough's involvement in the most important step in the history of non-league football. From it, blossomed the idea of a semi-professional "Super League", an amalgamation of the top clubs from the north and south into a Football Alliance.

The call was made by John Evans, secretary of Nuneaton Borough, to Jack Leighton, then chairman of Gateshead. He wanted, simply, to arrange a pre-season friendly for Borough with the Northern Premier League club. What he didn't know was that a few days earlier, the northern club had talked about forming an Alliance.

And what Jack Leighton didn't know was that, on the same day, the Borough secretary had put forward a similar proposal at the Southern League annual meeting.

"We talked for nearly an hour and I sent him a copy of the speech I had made," John Evans recalled. So, for the first time, contact had been made at club level – and the campaign gathered speed. Ken Peel was chairman at Manor Park at the time and immediately committed Borough to the cause.

He and John Evans soon became deeply involved and the next step was to call a meeting at the Great Western Hotel, Paddington. The date was July 20, 1974 and nineteen clubs turned up – Altrincham, Bath, Boston, Cambridge City, Chelmsford, Dartford, Gainsborough, Gateshead, Macclesfield, Maidstone, Morecambe, Northwich Victoria, Nuneaton Borough, Scarborough, Weymouth, Wigan, Worcester and Yeovil. Stafford Rangers also sent their support.

Ken Marsden, now chairman of the Northern Premier League, took the chair and John Evans was invited to act as secretary. The idea of an Alliance was not new. A set of rules had even been drawn up at one time. But, at the eleventh hour, it collapsed – mainly due to extortionate demands by the Southern League.

Apparently, two of its top officials put their heads together and insisted on £80,000 for the League from the Football Pools money before they would agree. Other facts which astonished the Southern League clubs at the Great Western Hotel meeting came to light.

They discovered that the Northern Premier League clubs knew far more about what was going on in non-league football. To put that right, they decided to send copies of the Alliance proposals to every club in the two leagues.

Another meeting was held the following November at the Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, when Atherstone and Wealdstone joined the campaign. There were problems. While the Northern Premier League clubs were unanimous in their support, some in the south were far from impressed.

John Evans spoke at length on the subject at the next Southern League annual meeting and had a rough time. But what had started off as a campaign to improve and strengthen non-league football had already become a

crusade. With the unwavering support of the northern clubs and a handful of the more powerful ones in the south, Borough continued to push.

"We were determined not to let it drop," said John Evans. "We decided to continue the fight." The Southern League continued to pay no more than lip service to the idea of a nationwide "elite". There was even talk of a breakaway group of clubs going it alone. But behind the scenes, significant steps were being taken that were to have a dramatic effect.

New names appeared as candidates for the Southern League management committee, all of them committed to the Alliance. Then twelve months ago the League was presented with a fait accompli – the "old guard" was removed and a new regime swept into power. The attitude of the executive changed, although still more lobbying and canvassing was needed to convince the clubs on the borderline.

To pass the proposal, the management needed a two thirds majority and some clubs took a lot of convincing. They firmly believed the Alliance should not be formed until the Football League gave assurances there would be an automatic promotion and relegation link with the Fourth Division.

Even some of the top men were of the same opinion, but a meeting with the committee that represents the Third and Fourth Division clubs changed all that. The non-league clubs were told in no uncertain terms that the League clubs were not interested. The Southern League representatives left that meeting in a grimly determined mood.

Chairman Jim Thompson insisted: "If that's the way we are going to be treated we will set up the Alliance ourselves and make it so powerful it cannot be ignored."

His infectious fighting spirit swept through the League, it even stirred some of the clubs who had held back. The structure of the Alliance was drawn up, the proposal framed, and a special meeting called. And on June 3 under the crystal chandeliers in the Dunbarry Suite at the Cafe Royal, the clubs overwhelmingly agreed to launch the Alliance the season after next.

At the same time in Warrington the Northern Premier clubs, who had always been in favour, officially rubber stamped the plan. Jubilation greeted the announcement from Thompson. And, amid the noisy throng, the chairman of Dartford slowly weaved his way towards John Evans – and quietly shook him by the hand.

## Bobby Vincent Released

Bobby Vincent has been released by Nuneaton Borough – after being given a second chance. The centre-forward, top scorer at Manor Park last season, failed to impress in the Anglo-Italian Tournament games in Italy. And new manager Roy Barry told him that he would not be retained for the coming season.

Released by former manager Ian McKechnie, Vincent was

given the chance by Barry to prove he had a part to play in his future plans. The striker was pulled off in both games in Italy: “It’s unfortunate,” said Barry. “He was disappointed. But at least this way he will have a better chance of finding another club. Had I have let it drag on he could have been stuck.”

But winger Gavin Lang and goalkeeper Ian Marsden, also released by McKechnie, have accepted contracts for next season. Lang was a revelation on the Italian trip: “He really won me over,” said Barry. “I was very impressed.”

Marsden did well in the match against Paganese last Friday: “I had already made my mind up to keep him,” said the Borough manager.

## Phillips To Stay At Borough

Brendan Phillips, Nuneaton Borough’s Jamaican-born midfield player, is staying at Manor Park. He has told manager Roy Barry that he wants to be taken off the transfer list. Said Barry: “He rang me to talk about the situation and he said he would be happy to stay. I know he was a bit fed up, but I think we have got over that. Naturally, I am pleased. Brendan is a valuable asset to the side and impressed me in Italy.”

## Sign Of The Times At Manor Park



A sign of the times at Manor Park as more ground improvement schemes get under way. Club directors, volunteers and members of the Improvement Fund are busy laying new steps on to the terraces near the Queens Road entrance to the Nuneaton Borough ground.

The improvements will ease the congestion for supporters who want to stand at the Cock and Bear end, the most popular part of the ground. At the same time, preparations are being made for the new £20,000 floodlights that will be ready for the start of the new season. The bases for the 70ft. towers are already being laid and work could be completed by the end of the month.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune.

## Vincent Joins AP Leamington

Bobby Vincent, arguably Nuneaton Borough’s biggest crowd pleaser, has finally left Manor Park. He signed for AP Leamington last night in a move that keeps him in the Southern League Premier Division where he made his name before a 1974 car crash nearly wrecked his career..

## Fleet On Transfer List

Gary Fleet, Nuneaton Borough’s gifted midfield player is up for sale. He has gone on the transfer list at his own request after being refused a pay rise. Manager Roy Barry said: “I am not prepared to pay him what he wants at the moment. I told him if he did well during the season then I would consider it – but he is adamant that he wants to leave. As far as I am concerned that’s it. We can’t have players holding the club to ransom.”

## More Ground Improvements Planned

Nuneaton Borough are working on a blueprint for massive ground improvement plans that would transform Manor Park. The first stage is in full swing with the new £20,000 floodlights that are being installed. Including the lights Borough have committed themselves to a £30,000 improvement scheme ready for the new season. But chairman Noel Kelly and his directors are already looking to the future.

Plans for the next phase are on the drawing board. They include extensions to the Social Club, new dressing rooms, a new vice-presidents lounge and new offices. Mr Kelly said today: “We envisage a five phase plan and we hope to be able to show the public what we intend to do by the early part of the season.” The proposed plans will be on view in the Social Club and vice-presidents bar.

## Borough Fail In Lewis Bid

Nuneaton Borough have failed in a bid to sign striker Dave Lewis from Cheltenham Town. Roy Barry had agreed on a fee and spoken to the player – but the deal fell through at the last moment. The Borough manager said today: “I was on my way to sign him when he rang to say they had offered him more money.”

## 1978-79

### Dudley Town v Nuneaton Borough

05-08-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Peake, Cross, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Dale, Nardiello, Lang. **Subs:** Smith, Singh, Crawley, Ellis

Borough made the journey to The Black Country to play Dudley Town in a pre-season friendly.

Gavin Lang celebrated the start of his new two-year contract with the goal that gave Borough the lead. But striker Tom Walton equalised for the West Midland Leaguers on the stroke of half-time and an uneventful match was drawn 1-1.

Dudley attacked from the start, but the early pressure soon



eased as Borough organised themselves to cope. Both of the goals were scored in the first-half.

Borough broke the deadlock with a goal from Lang. Farndon sent over a cross, Leyland failed to hold a glancing header from Dale and Lang ran in to force the ball over the line. Dudley equalised seconds before half-time when Walton shrugged off a challenge from Farndon and beat Marsden as Cross tried to get in a tackle.

## Northwich Victoria v Nuneaton Borough 07-08-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Peake, Cross, Tysall, Singh (Ellis), Lewis (Smith (Smithers)), Postin, Nardiello (Knowles), Lang.

Borough made the journey to the Drill Field to play a pre-season friendly match against Northwich Victoria.

Borough held the powerful Northern Premier Leaguers to a creditable draw. And they almost snatched a win in the dying seconds when youngster Dave Postin laid on a chance for Gavin Lang. Lang's header led to a corner and Northwich were fortunate to survive.

Borough, their side sprinkled with young talent, showed a big improvement on their performance at Dudley. The opposition was more formidable – but manager Roy Barry's organisation is beginning to show through. They travelled to Northwich without Gary Fleet, Gareth Dale, Bob Knight and Brendan Phillips – all unavailable.

But their youngsters did well against a Northwich side playing their sixth pre-season practice match. The home side rarely had chances against a solid back four in which Paul Farndon and Gary Tysall both did well. Postin, still only 17, had a promising debut up front and Borough's general performance was a lot better than it was in the Dudley game.

## Stan Marshall Life Member Of Borough

Stan Marshall has been made a life member of Nuneaton Borough – the highest accolade any club can bestow. The honour, the first of its kind in Borough's history, also includes his wife Hazel.

Announcing the decision today club secretary John Evans, said: "What it means is that they will be forever welcome at Manor Park. They will be the first life members of the club and will be afforded all of the privileges that go with it."

## Enderby Town v Nuneaton Borough 12-08-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Cross, Smith, Tysall, Lewis, Phillips, Rankin, Dale, Fleet, Smithers. Sub: Postin.

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

Gareth Dale spared Borough's blushes with a late equaliser. Dale scored in the 82nd minute with a shot from the edge of the box. But Borough struggled for long periods against the Southern League first division north side.

Borough fell behind to an early goal by former Friar Lane Old Boys striker John Elliott and were far from impressive. Elliott could have had a hat-trick against a shaky Nuneaton defence which badly missed the injured Trevor Peake.

Scot Brian Rankin, on trial with the Manor Park club, showed flashes of promise in midfield. But Nuneaton struggled to put their game together and were generally unsure. They had a brief period on top just before half-time and missed chances after the break.

Teenager Dave Postin went on for Rankin after 65 minutes and almost scored with a brave diving header. But Borough were fortunate to escape their first pre-season defeat and are still looking for the right blend with the new season less than a week away.

## Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 14-08-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Smith, Fallon, Tysall, Phillips, Chinn, Smithers, Dale, Fleet, Lang. Subs: Postin and Nardiello.

Borough welcomed Telford United to Manor Park to play the David Jackson Memorial Match.

Borough's pre-season problems increased when they lost three key players during the match. Defender Graham Smith was taken to hospital with a suspected broken arm. Winger Gavin Lang failed to re-appear after the interval with a recurrence of the ankle injury that kept him out last season. And utility forward Gary Fleet was carried off in the closing minutes after injuring his right knee.

The three injuries – and another disappointing performance – added to manager Roy Barry's worries on the eve of the new campaign. For Borough looked far from ready for the start of a rigorous new season. They struggled badly in defence, looked far from sure in midfield – and rarely threatened up front. Not the best way to go into a season that is expected to be tougher than every with the Football Alliance on the horizon.

Borough fell behind to a soft goal in the opening minutes and went on to struggle. Telford's left back Ian Bitton hit a shot from outside the box that went across goalkeeper Ian Marsden, hit the inside of the post and went in. Brendan Phillips then volleyed wide, but Telford looked by far the better side. Borough's next shot of note came just before half-time when Gavin Lang picked up a half-clearance and forced David Jenks into a spectacular save.

The Manor Park side, reshuffled during the interval, then suffered another blow. Eddie Hogan hit a free-kick into the middle and Doug Hickton was allowed to run in unchallenged to score Telford's second goal. Youngster Dave Postin, on in place of Lang, added more determination to the Borough attack and Gareth Dale went close.

But the game dragged on a pitch in astonishingly bad condition after the wet summer and the work on the new floodlights. Borough eventually cut the arrears in the closing minutes when Phillips moved on to a superb chip from



Gary Tysall to slide the ball into the net. By that time, it was too late and manager Barry clearly has problems with the Southern League Cup tie against Burton just four days away.

## Borough Bid For Striker

Nuneaton Borough have stepped up their bid for striker Gary Matthews, the striker Willenhall Town rate in the £5,000 class. The West Midlands League club have already turned down £2,000 for Matthews, a non-contract player. Today Borough increased their offer to £3,000 and manager Roy Barry said: “We are prepared to pay them that much in compensation. I spoke to their manager and he has promised to put it to the club’s committee.”

The 22-year-old striker has become one of the hottest properties in Midlands non-league football. Several other clubs, including Stafford Rangers and Stourbridge, have made offers, but none of them have matched Willenhall’s valuation.

### Burton Albion v Nuneaton Borough 19-08-1978

**Burton:** Alcock, Smith, Hailsworth, Rewson, McKenzie, Pegg, Fearn, Dolphin, Annable, Blair, Gregory. **Sub:** Arthur.

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Postin, Nardiello, Smithers, Phillips. **Sub:** Chinn.

Borough made the journey to Eton Park to play a Southern League Cup first round first leg tie.

Dave Postin is convinced that he was robbed of a debut goal. The Borough teenager hit the underside of the bar with a header and the ball was quickly cleared by an Albion defender. Postin insisted: “It was in. He headed it back from behind the line. Even their players said it was a goal.” But Leicester referee John Varnham decided otherwise and Borough had to settle for a 1-1 draw in a sweltering game.

The controversial incident happened during a crazy scramble in the Albion goalmouth with thirteen minutes to go. Gareth Dale sparked it off when he glanced a header into the box which caused panic. Phil Nardiello completely missed his chance and the ball bobbed around the six yard box like a scene from a sea lions act at a circus.

Borough seemed certain to score, but Burton survived Postin’s attempt and Dale eventually headed over the top. Dale, Borough’s most impressive forward, had given them the lead in the 14th minute. He scored with a glancing header after Postin had seen his shot cleared off the line. The young winger had an eventful debut – he was booked when he foolishly kicked the ball away after a free-kick decision had gone against the Manor Park side.

Burton equalised with the second half only four minutes old when full-back Hailsworth crossed from the corner flag on the left-hand side. Borough’s defence was far from organised, and Gregory reached the ball at the near post, flicked it over keeper Ian Marsden – and Bobby Dolphin slid it into the net.

But the Manor Park side showed class and composure against

tough, determined Albion, who have four players due to start month-long suspensions next Monday. One of the banned quartet, Phil Annable, was fortunate not to add another booking to his sins. Normally a centre-half, Annable played up front and provided a rough handful for the Borough defence. He laid out Roy Cross in the first-half and often made Trevor Peake struggle in the air, something Premier Division strikers rarely achieve.

Brendan Phillips did well in midfield for Nuneaton against his old club and there was plenty of determination in the side. They should be going into tonight’s second leg with a lead. But after their pre-season injury problems and a so far fruitless search for new players, it was a creditable, workmanlike performance.

### Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 21-08-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Smith, Nardiello (Chinn 84), Postin.

Borough welcomed Burton Albion to Manor Park to play a Southern League Cup first round second leg tie.

Borough romped through to the second round under the peppermint glow of their new £25,000 floodlights. Centre-forward Gary Smith gave them the lead in the opening seconds and they hit four more goals after half-time before Albion grabbed a consolation effort near the end.

Smith scored with the tie barely a minute old. Brendan Philips chipped a free-kick into the box and the young striker looped a header into the net. He almost scored again a few minutes later and several other chances went begging before Burton caused Borough some problems. Despite losing centre-half Colin McKenzie with a leg injury in the 25th minute, they pulled themselves together just before and immediately after half-time.

Bobby Dolphin somehow lifted the ball over the top with the goal gaping in front of him. And goalkeeper Ian Marsden saved Borough, once in spectacular fashion when he got to a header from Gregory and the ball was hacked away. But a 64th minute penalty put Borough back in the driving seat – and signalled the end of Albion’s resistance.

Smith put Phil Nardiello through and the centre-forward was bundled off the ball by two Burton defenders. Birmingham referee Alan Corr had no hesitation in pointing to the spot and Phillips made no mistake. Four minutes later Timmy Smithers rifled a ferocious left foot shot across the Albion box and into the far corner of the net. Then two goals in as many minutes rounded off Borough’s scoring spree.

With nine minutes left Albion defender Smith made a hash of a back pass. Goalkeeper Harry Alcock raced out of his box and hit a clearance against Dave Postin which left the teenager clear. Postin chipped the ball towards the empty net, it hit the far post – and went in off the keeper as he charged back in a vain attempt to repair the damage. A minute later, Dave Lewis



hit a stunning fifth goal for the Manor Park club. He picked up the ball 25 yards from goal, set himself up for a left foot shot and rocketed the ball into the net. Burton grabbed their consolation goal four minutes from the end when Harrison swept the ball into the net following a free-kick. But the goal was hardly noticed amid Borough euphoria.

Borough will meet better sides this season, but there is nothing better than goals to boost confidence. And the Manor Park side can now go into Saturday's Southern League match with Weymouth in a much better frame of mind.

## Borough Turn Down Offer For Knight

Nuneaton Borough have turned down an offer from AP Leamington for goalkeeper Bob Knight. Leamington manager Jimmy Knox said today: "We approached Nuneaton, but they said there was no chance."

### Weymouth v Nuneaton Borough 26-08-1978

**Weymouth:** Livsey, Lawrence, Richards, Dyer, Durkin, Iannone, Lowe, Henderson, Leitch, Dove, Hawkins. **Sub:** Courtney.

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Tysall, Fallon, Peake, Lewis, Smith, Postin, Nardiello, Phillips, Smithers. **Sub:** Chinn.

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

Borough manager Roy Barry found out the exact size of his task. He sent out a team of youngsters to face Weymouth, runners-up last year – and they were cruelly exposed. The message from the South Coast was loud and clear. Unless he strengthens his squad, and quickly, he will be in trouble.

To send out a team of raw, inexperienced teenagers against a side like Weymouth was asking too much. Fortunately, Barry is professional enough to know exactly where his problems lie. He knows that in the fiercely competitive world of the Southern League Premier Division you cannot ask kids to do a man's job. Borough's youngsters chased and ran, but they are part of the club's future. They have to be nursed rather than plunged in at the deep end.

A tragic goal put them on the downward path with the match just eight minutes old. Tom Fallon, one of three 17-year-olds in the side, miskicked and sparked off a tangle in the Borough box which ended when Tommy Henderson put the Terras into the lead. Weymouth, realising what they were up against, began to push the ball around with a confidence that grew into arrogance as the match wore on.

After half-an-hour they went 2-0 up when 6ft. 4in. centre-forward Andy Leitch challenged Ian Marsden for a left-wing cross. The ball dropped to Barry Lowe who drove a left foot shot into the net. Weymouth continued to expose Borough's weakness down the left-hand side and the Manor Park side were in deeper trouble just before half-time.

Skipper Dave Lewis tried to clear another centre – only to rocket a header into his own net.

Weymouth's back four had hardly been troubled and an early team reshuffle did not help the Borough cause. Phil Nardiello bravely decided to play with a groin injury, but he lasted only thirteen minutes before he limped off. Brendan Phillips pushed forward to allow substitute Chris Chinn to go on in midfield. The home side netted the fourth goal after 67 minutes when Leitch again caused problems. This time the ball dropped to Iannone to head past Marsden and Weymouth promised a goal spree.

But Borough's determination and the Terras' own over confidence ensured there were no more goals. Now Barry has to pick up the pieces, but he will need cheque book rather than coaching manual to put matters right.

## Borough Make Double Bid

Nuneaton Borough have stepped in with a sensational bid for striker Mark Neale and defender Bob Stockley from Atherstone Town. And they are prepared to break their transfer record to clinch what would be a staggering deal. Borough are believed to have offered Adders £5,000 for the two players – both established Southern League stars.

## Borough Sign Cliff Campbell

Nuneaton Borough have signed striker Cliff Campbell from Banbury United. Manager Roy Barry completed the deal at AP Leamington last night. The fee for the 21-year-old striker is believed to be around £2,000.

### Nuneaton Borough v Yeovil Town 02-09-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Farndon, Tysall, Lewis, Peake, Phillips, Chinn, Smithers, Campbell, Dale, Gary Smith. **Sub:** Postin.

**Yeovil:** Parker, Thompson, Cottle, Jones, Dominey, Russell, Morrell, Turner, Cotton, Hubbard, Clancy. **Sub:** Flay.

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

Borough survived a last minute penalty scare in a dramatic end to their first home league game of the season. They had already missed a 59th minute spot kick when goalkeeper Ian Marsden was judged to have brought down Yeovil's Cotton. Marsden chased the striker to a back pass and as he challenged Cotton the Yeovil striker tumbled.

There were just a few seconds left when Yeovil full-back Brian Thompson stepped up. But his shot hit the bottom of a post – and Sleaford referee Alan Ward blew the final whistle. Borough missed a golden opportunity earlier when they also missed a spot kick.

New signing Cliff Campbell, a £2,000 midweek buy from Banbury United, won the kick when he was tripped by defender Tony Cottle. He brushed his way past Bob Russell and then cut inside before being brought down by Cottle. But Brendan Phillips' tame penalty was easily saved by former Arsenal keeper Brian Parker. Apart from those two incidents, there was little to enthuse the 1,000-plus crowd.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Borough and Yeovil, both looking shadows of their former selves, offered little entertainment and the game soon dragged into a lifeless affair. It was too often a dull, inconsistent game with both sides struggling to find any real form. Yeovil were quite content to go through the motions and take a draw back to Somerset.



**Borough let a golden chance slip as Yeovil keeper Brian Parker moves to his left to stop Brendan Phillips' second half penalty.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Borough could not produce any punishing attacks and the front runners offered little danger to a Yeovil back four that has seen it all before. Campbell, towering above the defence at 6ft. 4in., worked hard but could not produce the goalpower Nuneaton lacked. He was eager to please in his Borough debut and had a couple of chances to make a dream start. The striker turned a header around a post and then brushed off two challenges before shooting tamely.

Borough re-shuffled the back four with skipper Dave Lewis playing alongside Trevor Peake, were rarely troubled until the final minutes when Yeovil made a late bid for a winner. But the Manor Park crowd seemed fated to see a goalless draw – despite two penalty awards.

## Atherstone Reject Borough Offer

Atherstone Town chairman Ted Tunnicliffe has accused Nuneaton Borough of underhand methods in an attempt to sign two of his best players. Tunnicliffe claimed the Manor Park club leaked information to the Press in a bid to unsettle striker Mark Neale and full-back Bob Stockley.

The outspoken Adders chairman said: “The players are not for sale – you don’t sell your best assets. And the price Nuneaton offered would not buy the dirt they scrape off their boots.”

### Telford United v Nuneaton Borough 04-09-1978

**Telford:** Weir, Lamsden, Britton, Hurst, Malcolm, Moore, Steele, Hogan, Hickton, Gavin, Perry. **Sub:** Draycott.

**Borough:** Marsden, Chinn, Peake, Lewis, Tysall, Smithers, Phillips, Setchell (Postin), Dale, Campbell, Smith.

Borough made the journey to the Buck’s Head to play Telford United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Unlucky Borough almost snatched a point with a late flourish. New signing Cliff Campbell, impressive in only his second game, rocketed a header against the crossbar as Nuneaton fought for an equaliser. It just about summed up Borough’s ill-luck as they battled in a bruising, but exciting match. Borough, their side packed with youngsters, matched an experienced Telford side for most of the game.

On occasions, Borough, led magnificently by skipper Dave Lewis, Brendan Phillips and Gareth Dale, could have easily picked up their first win of the season. But in the end Neil Perry’s 60th minute blockbuster gave Telford two undeserved points. Teenager Setchell made his debut for Borough with Chris Chinn replacing Paul Farndon at right-back.

Ian Marsden was forced into a couple of early saves – but Borough hit back. Phillips beat two defenders to find Smithers and he unleashed a tremendous shot that keeper Phil Weir pushed over the top. Then Weir had to head clear as Dale chased a long Lewis ball as Borough worried the home side. Borough continued to dominate for long periods until Marsden had to race across his goal to stop a flick from player-manager Geoff Hurst.

New boy Campbell was booked by Bridgnorth referee Alan Blake for refusing to move back ten yards for a free-kick. Then Smithers had a shot blocked – before Telford took the lead with a marvellous goal. Substitute Kenny Draycott flicked on an Eddie Hogan free-kick and former Tamworth player Perry fired home with a tremendous drive. Borough then had to soak up a lot of pressure as Telford searched for more goals.

Marsden saved at the feet of Draycott and then missed a right-wing cross that went straight across the goal. But slowly Borough clawed their way back into the game with Phillips, Chinn, Gary Smith, Dale and Lewis all playing well. Campbell, causing a lot of trouble with his height and strength, hit the bar with a header in the 77th minute. The 6ft. 4in. striker was always in the thick of the action and created a lot of openings for young strike partner Gary Smith.

Dave Postin replaced Setchell and then Phillips was booked for a foul on Hogan. Borough fought for a last gasp equaliser and Smithers had three crosses blocked. For Nuneaton the taste of defeat was bitter after a good performance – but they showed a lot of promise of things to come.

### Nuneaton Boro v Gravesend & Northfleet 09-09-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Chinn, Tysall, Lewis, Peake, Graham Smith, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Smithers, Setchell. **Sub:** Gary Smith.

**Gravesend:** Smelt, Idle, Sargent, Keirs, Osborne, Glozier, Brown, Jacks, Woon, Dudman, Woolfe. **Sub:** Tomkins.

Borough welcomed Gravesend and Northfleet to Manor Park for a Southern League Premier Division game.

Off-target Borough continued their goal famine. They have now failed to score in six hours, and manager Roy Barry is still waiting to celebrate Borough’s first win in the Southern

League. this season. But Barry said after the game: “I am not panicking. I don’t think it will be too long before we hit a good spell. We always looked capable of holding Gravesend – and should have won the game. I cannot see things getting worse – they can only get better,” he said.

Borough dominated most of the play against a free-scoring Kent side, who have hit 19 goals in five games. Their approach work was good but it fell apart near goal. Borough clearly lacked experience as they searched for the first elusive goal. At the moment, Campbell is being supported up front by John Setchell and Gary Smith, two teenagers also experiencing their first taste of Premier Division football.

Graham Smith made an unexpected return in midfield with Dave Lewis in the back-four.

Borough started brightly and carved out a couple of early chances. Campbell showed good skills lobbing the ball over two defenders before his low drive was stopped by Gravesend keeper Lee Smelt. Then Brendan Phillips knocked on a Lewis free-kick into the path of Gareth Dale who ran on to shoot but Smelt stopped the ball with his feet.

After the break, Gravesend, fresh from a 3-1 win at Bath and a 5-2 victory against Wealdstone, started to play a more active part in the game. Steve Brown had the best chance of the game, but tamely headed at Ian Marsden from Brian Woolfe’s cross. Borough always looked capable of holding the Gravesend attack with Trevor Peake and Lewis dominant.

But Borough almost found themselves in trouble after a couple of unenforced errors from Marsden. He fumbled a succession of crosses and the Kent side almost snatched a goal. Borough tried desperately to find a late winner but time ran out.

It seemed ironic at the end that Gravesend, out to continue a goal rush, and Borough, still looking for their first strike, could only produce a goalless draw.

## Gravesend Want Lewis

Ambitious Gravesend are interested in Borough skipper Dave Lewis. Their manager Tony Sitford has contacted Roy Barry to discuss the player. Sitford was impressed with Lewis in the goalless draw at Manor Park on Saturday – although he played a defensive role. Gravesend are looking for an experienced midfielder player to complete an expensive spending spree.

## Barry Does Spectacular Deal With American Club

Manager Roy Barry has pulled off one of the most spectacular deals in Nuneaton Borough’s history. He has persuaded American club New England Tea Men to let him have former Coventry and Leicester forward Brian Alderson on loan.

Alderson, who cost Leicester £105,000 from Coventry three years ago, will play for Borough until the new United States soccer season opens next March. Barry clinched the agreement during a Transatlantic telephone call to Noel Cantwell.



**Skipper Dave Lewis welcomes Nuneaton Borough’s latest capture Brian Alderson to the club. Alderson met his new team-mates at a midweek training session last night.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Kettering Ask Price For Phillips And Peake

Kettering Town have asked Nuneaton Borough to name their price for Brendan Phillips and Trevor Peake. The Poppies are willing to set up a deal that would break Borough’s existing transfer record. But Borough manager Roy Barry said: “They are wasting their time – the players are not for sale. The only way either of them will leave this club is if they have a chance of going into the League.”

## Nuneaton Borough v Macclesfield Town 16-09-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Tysall, Lewis, Peake, Smithers, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Fleet, Alderson. Subs: Graham Smith, Setchell, Crawley.

**Macclesfield:** Simpson, Crompton, Scott, Hollingshead, Blore, Booth, Bradbury, Grabner, Carrick, Jones, Wheeler. Sub: Owen.

Borough welcomed Macclesfield Town to Manor Park to play a friendly match.

Brian Alderton, a £100,000 plus player three years ago had a goal disallowed on his debut. The former Coventry and Leicester City winger had the ball in the net in the 23rd minute only to be pulled up for offside.

Borough, facing a blustery wind, built some skilful attacks and Alderson hooked a shot wide. The difficult conditions contributed to errors from both sides before Macclesfield went into the lead. Wheeler set up the goal for centre-forward Carrick with a neat back heel and he made no mistake.

Macclesfield survived two misses. Fleet shot against the woodwork and Phillips followed up on the rebound, only to see his shot strike and upright. Borough continued to do most of the attacking and Alderson had the ball in the net from a Campbell header, but it was disallowed for offside.

Fleet was brought down by Booth on the edge of the area as Nuneaton increased the pressure. Smithers took the free-kick, which was half-cleared to Alderson, whose shot struck Crompton and went out for a corner. Fleet made a run through the middle and found Phillips wide on the right. The midfield player crossed to the far post where Macclesfield defender Hollingshead was forced to head out for a corner.

Borough were almost caught on the break when Wheeler and Carrick burst clear, and only a superb save by Marsden from Wheeler denied them a goal. Marsden blocked the shot and Wheeler tried a second attempt, but the ball hit Lewis and was cleared. Almost on half-time keeper Simpson raced out of his box to boot clear as Dale tried to reach Phillips' pass.

Then, only seconds from the interval, Campbell hooked the ball over the top when Simpson failed to gather a Cooper centre. Alderson went off at half-time to be replaced by Ian Crawley and John Setchell went on for Gary Fleet in midfield.

Borough pressed forward in the second half, but conditions were still difficult and their attacks were not as skilful. Lewis tried to add power up front and was brought down on the edge of the box, but nothing came of it.

Borough equalised almost on the stroke of 90 minutes with a goal from Cliff Campbell, his first for the club. The 6ft. 4in. striker dived full length to head the ball into the net from two feet off the ground. And, during the six extra minutes referee Maurice Robinson added on for Macclesfield's time-wasting tactics, Borough were awarded a penalty and Gareth Dale won the match from the penalty spot.

The penalty, given against defender Dave Jones for handball, was hotly contested by the visitors, but Mr Robinson waved their protests aside. Perhaps it was judgment on them for their spoiling offside tactics and a succession of back passes in the second half.

## Manor Park Super Stadium

Nuneaton Borough have unveiled plans to turn Manor Park into a "super" stadium at a cost of £1 million. The six stage project will be the biggest tackled by any club at non-league level. And Borough chairman Noel Kelly said today: "It's definitely on. This is no pie in the sky plan. With a bit more effort on our lottery we could complete it in six years."

Phase One, which comprises new lights and improved terracing and toilets is already nearing completion at a cost of £35,000. Phase Two: New changing rooms and offices, a vice-presidents' suite and extensions to the Social Club – could start early next year.

The other stages include a new stand, terracing all round – and

a sports hall on the canal side. There would have facilities for six-a-side soccer, badminton, squash, tennis and a sauna and solarium. The key to the whole project will be the terms of the new lease the club has to negotiate with the Borough Council.

"We are trying to arrange an urgent meeting with the council to discuss the lease," said Mr Kelly. "Nothing more can be done until we get that right – it holds the key to it all."

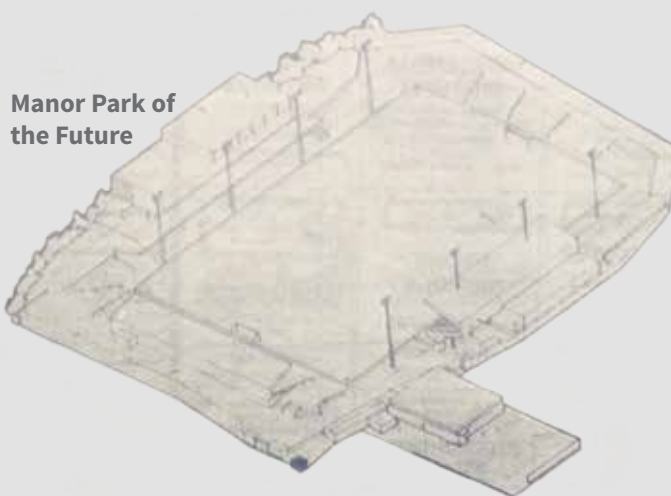
Borough, whose financial position has been transformed in the past 12 months, are currently making upwards of £2,000 a week from their lottery. "We could get the working drawings done for phase two straight away," said Mr Kelly. "Time is getting short now, but it all depends on the lease." Borough have been promised financial help from the Sports Council and one of Britain's biggest breweries – providing the terms of the lease are satisfactory.

"We want to make the ground a real sports centre which would not be a burden to the ratepayers, neither for the initial cost, nor the upkeep," said the Borough chairman. "Whatever goes up will be paid for as we go along. We won't be spending someone else's money. It's happening now. People have only to look at the lights which cost £26,000 to see where we are spending our money.

"All we would ask them to do is dig a little deeper into the pockets to help push our lottery proceeds from £2,000 to £3,000 a week. The contractors are there – local contractors would do the work for us, but we need the security of a good lease." Borough's lease on the Corporation owned ground runs out in less than ten years' time.

There has been controversy over its renewal – and speculation that the club would be moved to a municipal stadium in Avenue Road. But that was before the club's financial situation underwent such a dramatic change.

"We don't have to go cap in hand to anybody anymore," said Mr Kelly. "This club is heading in the right direction – all we want is the encouragement."



Manor Park of the Future

What Manor Park will look like six years and £1 million from now – if Borough get the backing they need. Image: Nuneaton Evening Tribune





## Margate v Nuneaton Borough 23-09-1978

**Margate:** Bowtell, Barr, Williams, Crush, Cugley, Fagan, Pointer, Summers, O'Mara, Fusco, Walter. **Sub:** Pain.

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Lewis, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Smith, Smithers, Dale, Campbell, Setchell. **Sub:** Chinn.

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

A goal seven hours and twenty seven minutes after the start of the season earned Borough a point. They travelled to Kent having failed to find the net in their first four premier division games. And the barren spell threatened to continue as the match moved into its closing stages. Then a flash of individual brilliance from Brendan Phillips broke the sequence – and put the seal on a vastly improved performance.

Phillips beat four defenders and drove the ball into the net as Margate tried frantically to fill their goalmouth. The goal crowned a superb performance from the Borough midfield player, whose skills – and hard work – made him man of the match. It also eased problems for manager Roy Barry, who saw his side provide some of their best football of the season.

Barry, clearly relieved, said: “We were that much better than them it wasn't true. We made them look like the away side and I'm sure we would have murdered them at our place.”

Borough laid the foundations with an impressive first-half performance. The woodwork and a breathtaking save denied them a half-time lead after they had dominated the play. With only three minutes gone, centre forward Cliff Campbell headed against the inside of an upright. And, just before the break, Margate goalkeeper Steve Bowtell pulled off a superb save to push a shot from Timmy Smithers on to the bar.

Bowtell pulled a hamstring in the process and had to be carried off in obvious distress. Seconds later Borough, who had dominated the attacking play, found themselves a goal behind. Bob Walter fired a shot past Ian Marsden after the defence had waited for an offside whistle that never came. So Borough, streets in front of the Kent club in terms of skill and organisation, found themselves in trouble.

They altered their formation to push players forward after half-time in a bid to cash in on Bowtell's injury. But Margate covered substitute goalkeeper Alan Summers by closing down on Borough on the flanks and preventing them from getting in the crosses that would have caused trouble. And the Kent club almost snatched another goal when giant centre-forward John O'Mara burst clear.

O'Mara, even taller than Campbell, looked offside when he started his run but Marsden rose to the occasion to deny him a goal with a save that ranked alongside the one Bowtell had made from Smithers. As the minutes ticked away, it looked as if Borough were heading for defeat. But Phillips, who looked dangerous each time he had the ball, changed all that. And a much happier Borough travelled back from Kent with a point.

## Roy Cross May Have Played Last Game

Roy Cross, Nuneaton Borough's stylish defender, may have played his last Southern League game. The ex-Port Vale centre-half has a knee injury which has cast a shadow over his future. And he has also told Borough he will not be available for premier division away matches because of his teaching.

## Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 27-09-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Peake, Lewis, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Chinn, Dale, Campbell. **Sub:** Setchell.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane, to play Worcester City in a Southern League Cup second round tie.

Borough crashed out of the Southern League Cup after a disastrous second half. Trailing 1-0 at the interval, they were destroyed by the skills of City midfield player Gary Stephens. And they were fortunate not to have been beaten by an even greater margin as Worcester threatened to run riot. After the first 45 minutes a goal from Norman Pemberton separated the two sides. He went down on his knees at the far post to head the ball into the net after a Lionel Martin corner had found its way across the goalmouth.

That was in the 28th minute after an all-action start in which Borough more than held their own. Gareth Dale had a shot blocked in the opening seconds and Brendan Phillips set up one glorious chance. He moved on to a superb ball from Dave Lewis, beat John Deehan and squared it across the six yard box. Goalkeeper Kevin Rose stayed on his line – but there was no Borough forward to snap up an easy chance.

Shakiness crept into Nuneaton's play after the Worcester goal, but a Deehan tackle on Phillips denied Borough an equaliser on the stroke of half-time. Seconds before the break former Borough player Malcolm Phelps headed against a post.

But it was a different story after the break as Stephens, the smallest player on the pitch, grew in stature to torment the Manor Park side. Worcester increased their lead in the 53rd minute when Ken Lawrence unmarked from a John Barton cross, gratefully accepted his chance – and Borough fell apart.

Manager Roy Barry pulled off defender Graham Smith after an hour, pushed Dave Lewis back and sent on John Setchell to play wide in a 4-4-2 formation. That gave Stephens even more room in midfield and he revelled in it.

Ian Marsden touched a shot from Barry Williams on to the bar to prevent another goal. But the goalkeeper was powerless to prevent City's third in the 63rd minute. Deehan crossed from a short corner and the ball found Williams unmarked at the far post – for the third headed goal from an unmarked player. By this time Borough had been reduced to a shambles. Heads dropped as City pushed forward with the Manor Park side pinned in their own half.

And Lawrence netted the fourth goal in the 73rd minute after an attack had been only half cleared. Minutes later Barry Williams waltzed through a by now devastated Borough

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



defence, only to be denied a goal as Marsden dived at his feet. The goalkeeper pulled off a similar save from Worcester substitute Graham Allner in the dying seconds – but the damage had already been done.

## Nuneaton Borough v Kettering Town 30-09-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. **Sub:** Fleet.

**Kettering:** Smith, Ashby, Lee, Evans, Suddards, Dixey, Groome, Kellock, Phipps, Clayton, Felton. **Sub:** Conde.

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

Once proud Borough crashed to another defeat against Kettering and have now made their worst start since they moved into the Premier Division. With only three points from six games, they are still looking for their first win. And, they have scored just one goal in nine hours of football – a dreadful record. The ease with which the Poppies beat them on Saturday was almost embarrassing.



**Ian Crawley is beaten to the ball by goalkeeper George Smith in a crowded Kettering goalmouth.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Two goals in two minutes just before half-time wrapped up the points for Kettering. Centre-forward Peter Phipps grabbed them both. Roy Clayton added the third in almost comic fashion 20 minutes from time and they could have had more. Ironically, the two goals that decided the game, came as Nuneaton were enjoying their brightest spell.

They had improved after a ragged, untidy start and had the Poppies under pressure. Then, in the 42nd minute, Graham Felton floated a cross to the far post where Phipps – unmarked – scored with a header. Borough barely had time to get their breath before Phipps scored again. He looked suspiciously offside as he collected the ball and then ran 25 yards to push it past the unprotected Ian Marsden.

Borough were in desperate straits. Their confidence went

and their organisation was in tatters. A second half switch did not help. Graham Smith was taken off, Dave Lewis went into the back four and Gary Fleet went on in midfield. The move stripped Borough of their competitive edge in midfield and gave Kettering freedom where they had earlier feared to tread.

Brendan Phillips, Gareth Dale and Cliff Campbell all missed chances, but it was clear that Borough were on the way out. And any hopes they might have had of saving the match disappeared in the 70th minute. Phipps was again at the heart of things. A corner reached him at the far post, he shot goalwards – and the ball hit Clayton between the eyes and cannoned into the net. Phipps would be the first to admit that Kettering owed a huge debt to winger Felton. The former Northampton forward was given yards of space on the right flank even though Christmas is still three months away.

To add to Borough's misery both Lewis and Phillips were booked for arguing with the referee. And at the end of it torrential rain swept the ground to drench the fans who stayed and suffered.

## Bedworth United v Nuneaton Borough 03-10-1978

**Bedworth:** Robinson, Davies, Dight, Ashley, Halton, Moore, Harris (Evans), Lee, Haskins, McCranor, Conway. **Subs:** Manning.

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Peake, Cross, Tysall, Fleet, Phillips (Setchell), Lewis, Dale, Campbell (Crawley), Smithers.

Borough travelled to The Oval to play Bedworth United in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Determined Bedworth foiled Borough's bid for goals with a gritty display. Defenders Alan Ashley and Liam Halton were magnificent as United ruined Nuneaton's hopes of long awaited success in front of goal. Borough were angry about a last minute incident that saw substitute Ian Crawley's goal ruled out by referee George Crook. But a Nuneaton win would have been an injustice to Bedworth, who matched their opponents in every department.

Strikers Mark McCranor and Martin Haskins, back from injury, posed more problems than their Borough counterparts. McCranor was particularly impressive, bustling and worrying the Manor Park defence. But it was Borough who started the better and Ashley and Halton tidied up threatening moves early on. Bedworth responded and Steve Lee, who had a superb first-half, blasted over the top with an ambitious effort. Then after 16 minutes, the Oval side carved out one of the best chances of the game – and Borough were lucky to escape.

McCranor met a Lee cross and his header was knocked off the line by Trevor Peake standing at the near post. Borough hit back and slowly wore down the hard-working home side. Roy Cross, back in the side to test the knee injury that threatens to end his playing career, was a steadying influence on an inexperienced Borough back four. Cross was the architect in the back four – feeding the midfield and the strikers with some intelligent passes.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Ex-Borough goalkeeper Brian Robinson rescued his teammates when he coolly dribbled the ball past Dale as the striker raced to meet a Smithers' through ball. But Halton and Ashley kept Borough at bay with fine performances and player-manager Len Harris worked tirelessly until sending on Keith Evans, another former Nuneaton player.

Substitute John Setchell, who left Bedworth for Borough, fired across the box before the final minutes of controversy. Smithers and Fleet combined well for Dale to knock on a cross and Crawley tumbled the ball home. But the goal was ruled out and Crawley's joy was shortlived.

## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 06-10-1978

**Borough: Marsden, Cooper, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Fleet (Smith), Dale, Campbell, Smithers.**

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to take on AP Leamington in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Goal starved Borough picked up a point in a match that promised a lot but produced little. They have now scored just once in ten and a half hours of Southern League soccer. There were signs of an improvement, particularly in a fast moving first-half when they played some of their best football of the season. After half-time their defence, steadied by the presence of Roy Cross, withstood heavy pressure from the Brakes.

They then launched a late flourish in an attempt to pull off their first win of the season. But the match ended in a predictable goalless draw a result which will not surprise anyone. All in all, though, the match was another sad reflection on the way Southern League premier division soccer has slumped in recent seasons.

And Northampton referee Mr Brazier, whose performance left a lot to be desired, had to deal with several ill-tempered skirmishes which should have been stamped on more firmly. Brakes full back Malc Southeran sent in the first shot in a fast moving start – a volley that Ian Marsden pushed over the top. Bob Turpie then missed a chance for Leamington when he scooped a ball into Marsden's arms.

Gary Fleet was injured after a clash with Mick Keeley and then sent in a shot which took a deflection and was kicked off the line. Leamington goalkeeper Alan Dulleston somehow managed to block a shot from Smithers as Borough began to get on top. The ball rebounded to the Nuneaton winger whose header sailed over the top. Then Bobby Vincent, now top scorer at the Windmill with three goals, shot inches wide.

Dave Lewis and Brian Rankin were both lectured at length by Mr Brazier before Fleet and Keeley clashed again. But Borough should have taken the lead almost on the stroke of half-time when Smithers found Campbell, and the centre-forward, with the goal at his mercy, somehow headed wide.

Seconds later, Campbell had another chance, but needed too much time and Dulleston was able to get his body behind the shot. The centre-forward missed an even easier chance

four minutes into the second half. He met a Cooper cross high above everyone else in a crowded goalmouth, only to head straight into the goalkeeper's arms.

Leamington midfield player Brian Rankin had been booked and Cooper joined him after a tackle on Vincent. Tom Kilkelly then flung a series of punches at Cliff Campbell and was let off with a warning. Leamington began to take over and Vincent almost set up a chance for Turpie. Fortunately the Brakes' finishing was just as bad as that of the Borough. The pressure began to ease as the Nuneaton defence stood firm to deny Leamington a break-through. And Cooper almost snatched a goal out of nowhere with an overhead kick that grazed the top of the bar and flew over.

Then Phillips had a shot blocked as Borough broke out of defence in the closing minutes. Alan Jones became the third player to be booked when he trampled all over Marsden. The game ended with Borough still on the attack, but unable to find a way through – an all too familiar picture this season.

## Borough Agree Cooper Fee

Nuneaton Borough have agreed a fee with Mile Oak Rovers for defender Paul Cooper. The full-back, who played for Grimsby and Huddersfield, has been at Manor Park on loan from the Midland Combination club. He was a non-contract player at Mile Oak and Borough offered the cash as compensation.

## Grantham Town v Nuneaton Borough 11-10-1978

**Borough: Marsden, Cooper, Smith, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Dale, Crawley, Lang (Campbell). Sub: Setchell.**

Borough made the journey to London Road to play Grantham Town in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Youngster Ian Crawley notched a superb hat-trick as Borough outplayed Grantham. He grabbed two first-half goals and then struck a minute after the break to settle the match. And the first two goals were set up by winger Gavin Lang, making a comeback from the ankle trouble that has kept him out all season. Lang was replaced by substitute Cliff Campbell after an hour, but the goals, and his return, made it a happy night for Nuneaton.

Crawley shot Borough in front in the 15th minute after Grantham, relegated last season had forced the early pace. Lang played an inch perfect pass through to the youngster who beat goalkeeper Cox from close range. Cox managed to get a hand to the ball, but could only deflect it high into the roof of the net. Eight minutes later Borough increased their lead from another Lang cross. Gareth Dale headed the ball down and Crawley hammered it past Cox in devastating style.

Crawley, always in the thick of the action, had to receive treatment after a clash with Cox. He put in a strong challenge as Lang again sent the ball into the middle, but was able to recover after treatment. Grantham tried to get back into the match before half-time, and both Jarvis and Chamberlain missed chances.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



But only a brave save from Cox at the feet of Dale prevented them from falling further behind. And the game ended as a competitive battle in the 46th minute when Crawley completed his hat-trick. His deflected shot left Cox helpless and plunged the home side into even deeper trouble.

The stage was set for a flood of goals – which did not materialise. Understandably, Borough decided they had done enough and sat back comfortably on their lead. Lang went off to be replaced by Campbell and Grantham launched a series of late raids. But a sound defence and the agility of keeper Ian Marsden prevented the home side from breaking through and Borough coasted home.

## Nuneaton Borough v Maidstone United 16-10-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Cooper, Cross, Peake, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Smithers, Dale, Alderson, Lang (Crawley 66).

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

Borough salvaged a point with a sensational recovery against Maidstone at rain-swept Manor Park. With 65 minutes gone, they were three goals down and a slow handclap began to echo around the ground.

But Timmy Smithers stifled the protest with a superbly taken goal a minute later. And the fans who had been quick to condemn accelerated their hands to applause. Their jeers turned to cheers as Borough suddenly picked themselves off the floor to come back from the brink of disaster. Smithers' goal lifted their heads and four minutes later Trevor Peake scored the second. Gareth Dale challenged the goalkeeper at the far post and Peake headed in from almost on the line.

Suddenly, the ground which had been like a graveyard for more than an hour, came back to life. And Dale grabbed the equaliser in the 73rd minute when he ran in behind the Maidstone defence to meet a Dave Lewis cross and leave goalkeeper Derek Bellotti helpless. Stones, stunned by the recovery, struggled to stem the tide as Nuneaton went for the kill. Ian Crawley, on as substitute for Gavin Lang, caused them a load of problems and Dale posed a constant threat.

Maidstone then staged their own rally and a match that had threatened to die a death built into a thrilling finish. But it had been a different story early on as Borough were hit by Maidstone's three goal blast. The game was just nine minutes old when the Kent club struck with a goal that was stunningly simple. Brian Edwards took a free-kick and Brian Gregory scored with no more than a flick. Borough struggled as Maidstone's confidence grew, although they almost scored only for Bellotti to deny Smithers with a brave save.

Dale, who chased everything up front for Borough missed with a header and then Peake was booked for something he said as rain swept across the ground. Two minutes into the second half Maidstone struck another hammer blow when Coupland headed on and Gregory beat Ian Marsden with

a shot that curled under the goalkeeper's body. Marsden looked as if he had just got his angles wrong – and must shoulder the blame for the third goal in the 65th minute. Maidstone midfielder Kenny Wallace hit a shot from 25 yards with the goalkeeper off his line. The ball dipped over him, hit the underside of the bar – and thudded down over the line.

Humiliation loomed for Borough as the supporters let them know just how they felt. They had fallen apart and newcomer Brian Alderson, his troublesome thigh heavily strapped, had struggled to get involved. Only Dale had done anything up front and the Kent club had closed them down in midfield. But Smithers' goal changed all that, launched their stunning revival and their football in the final 25 minutes must have raised renewed hope among the fans.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dartford 21-10-1978

21-10-1978

**Borough:** Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Fleet, Alderson, Phillips, Smithers. **Sub:** Crawley.

**Dartford:** Hucker, Jones, Tunbridge, Harrison, Harris, Horsefield, Morrissey, Johnson, Jentas, Bray, Possee. **Sub:** Julians.

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

Unhappy Borough provided more evidence on Saturday that big ideas and cash in the bank do not win championships. And they are beginning to stretch the patience of their long suffering fans. After eight Southern League games without a win they were given a golden chance of two points against a mediocre Dartford side. With the match barely a minute old they were presented with a penalty when Timmy Smithers was brought down.

Gareth Dale scored from the spot and the scene was set for a long overdue triumph. But Dartford, who should have been nothing more than cannon fodder, were allowed to hit back. Tiny midfield player John Harrison, the smallest man in Southern League football, grabbed a 24th minute equaliser. And in a ragged, robust second half the Kent club battled to relieve the Manor Park side of yet another home point.



**Hucker in action as he twists himself in mid-air to claw a 35 yard piledriver around the post.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Harrison's equaliser was a stunner. He unleashed a shot that looped over goalkeeper Bob Knight and dipped into the net.



Even so, Nuneaton should have won without a lot of trouble against a side below them in the Premier Division table. They can point to a series of fine saves from the Kent club's new goalkeeper, signed a few hours before the game from Queens Park Rangers. They can argue that Dartford were desperately lucky to survive three goalmouth scrambles. And they can insist that the Darts strong arm tactics – three of their players were booked – should have been dealt with more firmly by Northampton referee Mr Vic Wood.

But those arguments are slowly wearing thin as a threadbare season drags on. Hucker saved from Brian Alderson, again a big disappointment, clawed a shot from Dave Lewis round the post – and denied Borough what looked like a certain goal in the dying minutes. A header from Dale was on its way towards the far corner of the net when the keeper stretched backwards and somehow forced it over the top. Having said that, the fact remains that Nuneaton again failed to produce the goods against a side they should have beaten.

They had the skill in midfield from Brendan Phillips and Gary Fleet, courage up front from Timmy Smithers and Gareth Dale and Trevor Peake was superb at centre-half. Smithers had to be taken off 20 minutes from the end with double vision after being battered from pillar to post by Darts' full-back Eric Jones.

At the final reckoning the problem remains that the finishing is not there and until it improves all the effort in the world will continue to be wasted.

## Cooper Could Be Out For A Month

A punch thrown in anger could put Nuneaton Borough full-back Paul Cooper out of football for up to a month. The former Grimsby and Huddersfield defender appears before an FA disciplinary commission in Birmingham later this week. He asked for a personal hearing after being sent off for striking an opponent while he was playing for Mile Oak Rovers.

## AP Leamington v Nuneaton Borough 24-10-1978

**Borough: Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Smith, Peake, Lewis, Fleet, Smithers, Dale, Crawley (Campbell 46), Alderson (Setchell 81).**

Borough made the journey to The Windmill to play AP Leamington in a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Substitute Cliff Campbell snatched a last gasp headed equaliser in a thrilling game. Campbell forced home a Gary Fleet corner three minutes from time and only seconds after AP looked to have sewn up this incident packed tie which completely overshadowed the real thing ten days earlier.

With both sides thoroughly committed to producing the goods, the memories of the disappointing Southern League encounter a week last Friday between the two sides was completely wiped away. New signing Brian Alderson, playing with a strapped up thigh, laid on an excellent sixth minute opener for Dave Lewis, but for much of the rest of the half Borough were forced to defend and limited to breakaways as AP stepped up the pace.

However, poor finishing let the home side down. With Duncan Gardner – the ex-Warwick striker that Borough boss Roy Barry watched early in the season – continually posing Nuneaton's defence problems, AP extended their attacking edge into the second half. A number of slips in their own rearguard nearly let Campbell and Fleet in before Tommy Gorman – the player who broke his neck last March playing against Nuneaton – completed his miraculous recover by latching on to a Peake pass which Knight failed to gather completely to score on his return game.

Within seconds Borough were awarded a penalty after Lewis was downed by Kilkelly, but the twice taken spot kick by Gareth Dale was twice saved expertly by keeper Dulleston. With four minutes left AP's Houston made it three goals in three games when he fired home after Knight failed to hold Taylor's cross. But within seconds Borough took advantage of another home defensive lapse for Campbell to nod in the equalising goal.

## Bridgend Town v Nuneaton Borough 28-10-1978

**Bridgend: Potter, Huskings, Charles, Youlden, Stapleton, Colwill, McInch, Humphries, Ayres, Bennett, Jones. Sub: Parsons.**

**Borough: Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Fleet, Campbell, Alderson, Smithers. Sub: Smith.**

Borough made the journey to face Bridgend Town in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Cliff Campbell hit one of the fastest hat-tricks of all time and then said: "I would have been happy with just one goal. But it was just what I needed and it was a great feeling." Campbell exploded onto the scene to devastate Bridgend with three goals in a sensational four minute spell. And Borough romped to their first Southern League win of the season – and the biggest away victory for ten years.

Campbell has had an unhappy time since his £2,000 transfer from Banbury United. Before Saturday he had failed to score in the premier division and he admitted: "I was getting a bit worried. I wondered whether I had stepped out of my depth, but I decided to keep working. That's the way I have always played, but there is a big difference between the first division and the premier division. There is more thought and technique and I realise I am still a bit raw."

But the 21-year-old striker, who was playing for his village side at Fenny Compton three seasons ago, took his goals with the coolness of a seasoned veteran. His first in the 83rd minute was a hammer blow for Bridgend who were pushing forward to attack Borough's 2-1 lead. Dave Lewis played Campbell clear and he ran 40 yards to chip the ball into the net as three defenders closed in.

His second, in the 85th minute, followed another raking pass from Lewis and a challenge by Timmy Smithers on goalkeeper Steve Potter. Campbell was in like a flash as the ball went loose, to score from an acute angle. The referee



consulted his linesman for several seconds before pointing to the centre spot. And his third, in the 87th minute, followed a long clearance from Bob Knight that cleaved the demoralised Bridgend defence. Campbell coolly flicked the ball over Potter and then ran round to finish off.

Before the three goal blast Borough had lived precariously against bottom of the table Bridgend. Gary Fleet, in superb form for the Manor Park side, had shot them ahead with a superbly taken goal in the 27th minute. Brian Alderson had been denied a goal by a breathtaking one-handed save from Potter. But Borough had been far from impressive and Bridgend missed two chances early in the second half that should have put them in front.

Gareth Dale, who passed a late fitness test, then eased some of Borough's problems when he robbed Bridgend midfield player Jimmy McInch and ran on to beat Potter. That was in the 73rd minute and just four minutes later Bridgend were back in the game. Knight and Roy Cross combined to bring down Jimmy Humphries in the box, and McInch scored from the penalty spot.

The stage was set for a tense finish as Bridgend searched desperately for an equaliser. Then Campbell grabbed his astonishing hat-trick which could have altered the course of his own career.

## Nuneaton Borough v Cheltenham Town 30-10-1978

**Borough: Knight, Cooper, Peake, Cross, Tysall, Phillips, Lewis, Fleet, Crawley, Campbell, Smithers. Sub: Smith.**

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

Revitalised Borough lifted themselves into the top half of the Southern League table with a sparkling success. Two goals in the first 15 minutes tore the heart out of the Gloucestershire side. And Borough went on to win in a canter to set themselves up for the FA Cup tie against Matlock. The five goal injection at Bridgend had clearly worked wonders for the Manor Park side.

Skipper Dave Lewis stunned Cheltenham with a superb 25-yard goal with the match barely seven minutes old. Then Cliff Campbell, hat-trick hero of the win in Wales, grabbed two more to take his tally to five in three days. Borough could have had more against a Cheltenham side totally demoralised by the two goal opening burst.

But the two wins have swept away much of the gloom that threatened to settle over the club and Manor Park has been transformed. They could have been in front in the opening minutes when Ian Crawley had a header pushed over the top by goalkeeper Jeff Miles. Then Lewis set the crowd alight with his spectacular goal – an explosive shot that went just inside the post with Miles helpless.

Bob Knight saved a shot from John Davies, but it was all Nuneaton and Crawley shot against the woodwork. Another

goal was inevitable and it came in the 15th minute from a superb move. Brendan Phillips set it up and Campbell ran through to snap up the chance with sharpness he would not have shown before Saturday. Lewis was booked for kicking the ball at Graham McKenzie before Borough were denied a penalty. Crawley looked to be pulled down by Miles, but the referee ignored the crowd's appeals and Phillips had a shot cleared off the line by Seville.

Almost on half time Seville performed another rescue act after Miles had dropped a cross from Phillips. By that time it was a question of how many the Manor Park side would get. They had destroyed Cheltenham in their magical first 20 minutes and the visitors were in desperate trouble.

The Robins managed to pull themselves together, but the game was so one-sided that it threatened to die through lack of competition. Borough's third goal came in the 64th minute – set up by tireless Timmy Smithers. He went on a run which took him past full-back Murphy and then pulled the ball back for Campbell to steer it into the net.

Campbell, suddenly a crowd favourite, then went after another hat-trick as the fans waited for more goals. He had an effort disallowed when he bundled Miles into the net and Cheltenham had several close shaves. And a match totally dominated by the Manor Park side ended without any further score.

## Crawley Signs Professional

Teenage striker Ian Crawley has signed professional forms for Nuneaton Borough. And tomorrow he has a chance of picking up his first bonus – in the FA Cup. For the ink was barely dry on his contract when he was told by manager Roy Barry: "You are in against Matlock."

## Football Grounds Improvement Trust

Nuneaton Borough and Atherstone Town could share some of the £1 million pounds allocated for the improvement of non-league grounds. A six figure sum is expected to become available in the coming year. Borough chairman Noel Kelly described the announcement as "great news."

## Maidstone United v Nuneaton Borough 11-11-1978

**Maidstone: Guy, Kinnear, Edwards, Hill, Aitken, Merrick, Wallace, Gregory, Coupland, Budden, Silvester. Sub: Hutton.**

**Borough: Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Cross, Smith, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Campbell, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Fallon.**

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

Borough were denied both points by a man who has become a legend in non-league football. Goalkeeper Dickie Guy, whose exploits at Wimbledon earned him lasting fame, pulled off a miraculous save in the closing minutes. Borough full-back Paul Cooper hit what looked an unstoppable shot from 25 yards. He was ready to salute a goal when Guy somehow got a touch on the ball. It deflected on to the underside of the bar,



thudded down and was scrambled clear. Afterwards, Guy, who was making his home debut for Maidstone after a £1,500 move from the Dons, admitted: “I thought it was going in. It hit me on the wrist and the touch was just enough to put it on to the bar.”

A goal then would have crowned another battling display from the Manor Park side. They had taken almost complete control of the second half and the Stones were in desperate trouble. But the draw stretched Borough’s unbeaten Southern League run to six games and memories of their dismal start to the season have now paled.

They are unbeaten in eleven matches in all competitions and their confidence has soared. Before half-time Borough packed midfield, hit long balls to their front runners and made little progress. They looked like a side that had played a gruelling two hour Cup replay in midweek. And they fell behind to a scrambled goal in the 28th minute.

Glen Coupland challenged for a Chris Kinnear free-kick. He collided with Roy Cross and Pete Silvester scored as the ball dropped loose.

After half-time, though, Borough were a rejuvenated team and had Maidstone in all kinds of trouble. More adventurous, they stopped hitting long balls, started to build up attacks and began to look like a side playing at home. Kinnear, the Kent club’s best player, saved them with a goal-line clearance from Gareth Dale. Guy looked shaky in the air and Maidstone had to clear several goalmouth scrambles.

An equaliser looked inevitable and it came in the 75th minute through Timmy Smithers, whose work rate is astonishing. Smithers caught defender Neil Merrick in possession. He took the ball off the centre-half, ran on and steered it wide of Guy as the keeper left his line.

Then came Guy’s miraculous save and an escape for Borough in the last seconds when Silvester shot wide. But the Manor Park side richly deserved their point. Maidstone could hardly have complained had they taken both.

## Stan Marshall Back As Assistant Manager

Stan Marshall is back with Nuneaton Borough – as assistant manager. Roy Barry announced the news amid the clamour of the winners’ dressing room at Stafford. Only minutes after Nuneaton had beaten Matlock to reach the First Round of the FA Cup Barry said: “I have asked him to be my number two and he has accepted.”

### Tividale v Nuneaton Borough 18-11-1978

**Tividale:** Allard, Isherwood, Brown, Porter, Price, Ferrick, Wilkinson, Norwood, Hughes, Skidmore, Aston. **Subs:** Timmins and Prosser.

**Borough:** Knight, Chinn, Tysall, Smith, Fallon, Lewis, Dale, Alderson, Campbell, Cooper, Smithers. **Subs:** Setchell and Farndon.

Borough made the journey to Tividale to play a Birmingham Senior Cup second round tie.

Tividale prised the Birmingham Senior Cup out of Borough’s

grasp in the heart of the Black Country. Two goals early in the second half ended the Manor Park club’s brief reign as holders. But the result delighted the West Midland League leaders far more than it disappointed Nuneaton. After the colour, tension and drama of their FA Cup clashes against Matlock, they had a taste of football in the raw.

Perched on a plateau with panoramic views of Dudley, Tipton and Oldbury, it’s hardly the place to spend a grey, grim November afternoon. Barely 150 people huddled against the wind – a far cry from the 7,500 who saw the Matlock games.

Borough were without Fleet, who was injured and Phillips, who was rested and manager Roy Barry gambled on playing two players in midfield. Having said that, there was no question of Borough throwing away the tie. They were beaten by a side that badly wanted to win and players who were prepared to work until they dropped.

After surviving several early escapes, Tividale grew in confidence, realised they could win and went on to do just that. Paul Wilkinson, a former Borough reserve team player, shot Tividale in front nine minutes into the second half. He ran in to meet a free kick from Paul Aston and gave Bob Knight no chance.

Ten minutes later they went 2-0 in front when Wilkinson went past Brian Alderson as if he did not exist. He pulled the ball back into the middle – and Jim Skidmore planted it into the net. Borough tried to launch a rally to save some of their pride, but the damage had been done. The only threat to Tividale in the closing stages was the fading light.

Darkness began to enclose the ground as Cliff Campbell beat two players to shoot wide and Dave Lewis blazed high over the bar before the final whistle ended a forgettable afternoon.

## Alderson Released

Former Coventry City and Leicester forward Brian Alderson has played his last match for Nuneaton Borough. He has been told by manager Roy Barry: “Your services are no longer required.” Barry said today: “Unfortunately he has not done himself justice. He has not been fit and we cannot afford to have him under the circumstances. His association with the club is now finished.”

## Fleet Off Transfer List

Gary Fleet, Nuneaton Borough’s gifted midfield player will line up against Crewe with his soccer future secure. He has been on the transfer list since the start of the season at his own request. But, after talks with manager Roy Barry, he has told the club: “I want to stay.”

## Sports Coverage Affected

Sports reports are affected by industrial action taken by the National Union of Journalists.



## Hastings United v Nuneaton Borough 09-12-1978

Borough made the journey to Kent to face Hastings United in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Manager Roy Barry was impressed with his side's performance on Saturday when they drew 2-2 at Hastings. "They were fighting a rearguard action throughout the second half, but stood up to it well," he said. Both Borough goals came from Gareth Dale – in the 10th and 70th minutes.

The first goal came when the Hastings' keeper failed to hold a shot from Fleet. The ball rebounded to the feet of Dale who scored from close in. Hastings equalised when Harris netted, but in the 70th minute Streeter handled in the box and Dale slotted home the spot kick. Borough were forced to soak up a lot of pressure in the closing stages of the game and Harris was again on target following a free-kick.

## Stockley Joins Borough

Nuneaton Borough have secured the signing of Bob Stockley from Atherstone Town. The full-back, who was previously with Wimbledon, where he won a championship medal, is due to make his debut against Worcester City at Manor Park.

## Nuneaton Borough v Worcester City 11-12-1978

**Borough: Knight, Stockley, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Phillips, Fleet, Campbell, Dale, Smithers. Sub: Crawley.**

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

An amazing display of "aggro" between two Borough players led to the loss of a Southern League point. The flare-up came between Gary Fleet and Gareth Dale, who mixed words and came into bodily contact before a stunned crowd. Fleet left the field and was replaced by Crawley, but things never looked the same for a previously buzzing Borough.

Two minutes from the end, Worcester, who had looked second best in the first-half, equalised through Ken Lawrence, cancelling out a 13th minute goal by Campbell. Borough opened brightly with new boy Stockley putting over a succession of beautiful balls to the far post. Showing plenty of versatility, Stockley was switched from the central defensive position to right back and proved what an asset he can be.

In the first half-hour Borough looked as though they would cruise home against third placed Worcester without breaking into a sweat. Only two minutes had gone when Smithers went on a great run down the left and sent his cross over which was a little too long. And soon after he broke away like a hare to go close with a shot at goal.

Campbell was in confident mood and shook off three defenders expertly to put in a shot from 35 yards to test City keeper Rose. In the 13th minute a Stockley cross found Cliff Campbell in the box and the lanky striker tucked the ball

away to give Borough what looked likely to be the first of a hatful of goals. Campbell was having a marvellous game, backed by a Borough brimming in confidence.

Dale went close on at least three occasions and Smithers found plenty of room. Then about ten minutes from the interval, play became negative. In the second period the lethargy continued and frustration set in. Fleet broke from half-way and Dale clearly felt he should have the ball. That's when the downfall began and Borough never looked the same again.

## Fleet And Dale Keep Their Place

On-field differences between Nuneaton Borough's Gary Fleet and Gareth Dale seem to have been settled amicably – in private. Manager Roy Barry has decided to include both players in his squad to face Witney.

## Nuneaton Borough v Witney Town 16-12-1978

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

Witney's first visit to Manor Park was crowned by a superb header which gave the Oxfordshire side two valuable Southern League points. The goal, Witney's second of the match, came 12 minutes before the end when Jefferies latched on to the end of an Aylott free-kick inside the Borough penalty area.

Borough started brightly enough, looking busy, but the bumpy surface was giving trouble to both sides. Heavy rain during the week had made it impossible for the roller, and forking had made some areas particularly uneven. Witney, who came to Nuneaton with a reputation for defensive play showed they could attack, after only three minutes.

Stokes ran through from midfield to test Knight with a long range sizzler. Borough could have gone ahead, but for indecision, after just six minutes. Stockley found Dale down the right and a series of one-twos with Campbell found the latter with a good chance. But he waited just too long before making his effort and the opportunity was wasted. Good efforts came from Smithers, operating down the left and both Campbell and Dale found room without putting the ball away.

Witney's Clarke started a move half-way through the first period which was the non-scoring effort of the match. He put a through ball to Daley, who found Bailey running in from the left. Bailey put in a bender that had Knight groping to the left as the ball curled just outside the post. At the break, both sides had enjoyed opportunities, but had failed to capitalise.

In the 61st minute Witney took the lead following some skilful midfield play. Bailey won the ball from Phillips and passed to John Gilligan who tried a high lob from fully 35 yards. Knight looked as though he had the ball covered – but it slipped through his hands and into the net.

Within a minute Borough were back on level terms through a





penalty by Lang, who had replaced Fleet. It was only Lang's second kick of the match. Baker brought down Dale during a threatening run and referee Mr J. Ball had no hesitation in pointing to the spot. And a minute later Borough looked as though they had taken the lead when Campbell headed home a perfect cross from Brendan Phillips – but up went the linesman's flag for offside. Witney sealed the game in the 78th minute, but Borough still had more chances to come.

Dithering was the main culprit – a malady of which Witney quickly capitalised on to take both points.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 26-12-1978

**Borough:** Marsden, Stockley, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Smithers, Campbell, Phillips, Lang. **Sub:** Cooper.

**Atherstone:** Hall, Montgomery, Shotton, G. Smith, Brown, Gray, Dangerfield, R. Smith, Gallagher, Neale, Tomkinson. **Sub:** Bosworth.

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

Two goals by Gareth Dale stopped this derby becoming just another festive yawn. Borough fielded a side without fiery Gary Fleet and, although the inclusion of Gavin Lang gave them width much of the midfield play was uninspired. After only a minute Nuneaton gave a hint of what was to be the pattern when Phillips knocked a ball into space for the speedy Dale, but the pass proved a little too long.

The home side had decided to exploit their superiority in the quick thrust game. Dangerfield, soon to be sailing for another season in the American league, provided the worth of his name after five minutes when he weaved his way down the centre, only to be halted by hard-tackling Peake inside the box. And he had Borough in all sorts of trouble when he put in a high cross which goalkeeper Marsden somehow lost. But to the relief of the Borough fans, referee Mr G. D. Carr of Redditch blew for a foul.

Dangerfield, combining well with the tall, talented Tomkinson, was proving by far the most dangerous prospect. One of his educated chips put Gray in a good position for a shot, but his effort went wide. After half-an-hour, Atherstone looked the equal of Borough and had certainly produced the most chances – yet it was Nuneaton who went ahead.

Campbell, taking the ball in midfield, pushed it out to Lang who hit a rasping shot from just inside the box. The ball was deflected and fell as a gift to Dale, who tucked it away. Four minutes later Lewis hit a ball to Campbell in the middle of the park and the lanky centre-forward fed it to Dale.

Dale was given time to turn and run at Graham Smith. Smith proved no match for Dale in the ensuing sprint and the Borough forward found he had only goalkeeper Hall to beat which he did with an accurate low shot. Two goals behind at half-time, Adders were left with an uphill battle. In the 63rd minute the home side almost went further in front as Dale left Shotton for dead and went close with a

shot that Hall did well to save. And even Dale had to applaud the Adders keeper when he held another shot from him a minute later.

Neale worked hard, without really looking match fit, in a bid to get Atherstone on the scoresheet as Dangerfield's early threats were subdued. In the last ten minutes there was so little excitement that many of the spectators had already decided to settle for their cold turkey.

## Fleet Back On Transfer List

Gary Fleet is back on Nuneaton Borough's transfer list after a dressing room confrontation with manager Roy Barry. The beginning of the end for the midfield star came when he asked for the meeting with the Borough boss. "I'm fed up and want to get away," said Fleet shortly after. "I have continually been brought off for a substitute in my last few games and I have been by no means the worst player on the park."

## Borough Sign Livesey

Borough have signed former Weymouth goalkeeper Gordon Livesey, who was signed from the Dorset club over the weekend. Livesey, 31, has had more than ten years experience at League and senior non-league level, counting Wrexham and Chester among his previous clubs.

Livesey has been signed on a month-to-month contract. Bob Knight has accepted a free transfer and Chris Chinn, signed as a professional last season, has also been given a free transfer. Gavin Lang has also been placed on the transfer list.

## Nuneaton Borough v Weymouth 08-01-1979

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

Lack of a killer touch cost Nuneaton Borough a point against Southern League Premier Division high fliers Weymouth. Borough, leading 2-1 with just two minutes to go, were caught flat-footed as Weymouth's Barry Lowe put in a high cross for Anny Iannone to snatch a point for the Terras.

It was another disappointment for the majority of the mere 887 fans who turned up for what is usually one of the more attractive fixtures of the season. In the first-half, Borough had taken an early lead through Timmy Smithers. In the eighth minute, Stockley took a free-kick and lobbed the ball into the box and Cliff Campbell's back header found Smithers, who found the net from close in.

Borough may have been a little flattered by their one goal lead at the interval – but they looked winners when they went further ahead after 53 minutes. Smithers tore down the left and crossed a magnificent ball to the head of Cliff Campbell, who managed to nod it down at such an acute angle that Weymouth goalkeeper Roberts could only parry the ball on its way into net.

Then, just when it looked as though Borough were on top, the home side began to waste balls by overplaying the short

game. Silly mistakes led to a growing Weymouth confidence and they reduced the lead through Kevin Dove. McCafferty caught the Borough defence square and crossed to Dove who fired in from close range.

Borough's new goalkeeper Gordon Livsey, signed from Weymouth over the weekend was called on to make some good saves from Iannone, Courtney and Lowe before Iannone's 88th minute equaliser.

## Lewis And Fleet Transferred

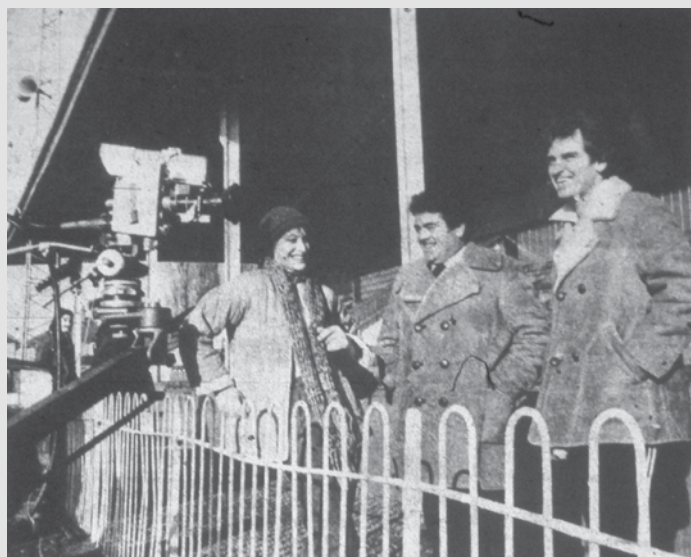
Dave Lewis, the Nuneaton Borough captain, and transfer-listed Gary Fleet, have been sold in a shock deal. Both players signed for Cheltenham Town last night, in a deal believed to involve a £2,000 fee for Lewis and £1,000 for Fleet.

"I'm stunned by the whole thing," said Lewis. "I had no idea that Roy Barry wanted to get rid of me. This has come right out of the blue. What have I done wrong?"

But manager Roy Barry said today: "It's become apparent from Monday's low gate that the Borough fans were expecting something better. To obtain the standard of player needed money was required and one of the players who could bring in cash was David Lewis, who has had a long spell at the club."

"I can promise the fans two new faces by next week." Borough's new captain will be Bob Stockley.

## Manor Park Setting For TV Programme



Manor Park football ground, home of Nuneaton Borough, was turned into a television studio, yesterday, when cameras were there to "shoot" a programme in a drama series. The play stars Carole Royle – who has appeared in episodes of *The Cedar Tree* – and Paul Greenwood.

Veteran character actor Teddy Turner plays the title part "The Sponge Man" – a person wrapped up in soccer, its players and its politics.

## Barry Signs Jon Sammels

Nuneaton Borough manager Roy Barry will tonight sign ex-Arsenal and Leicester City star Jon Sammels. And the player will be included in the Borough team for Saturday's Southern League match at Yeovil. The Sammels signing comes a week after Barry sold club captain Dave Lewis and Gary Fleet.

The former first division star comes to Manor Park on a month's loan from American side Vancouver, who have given permission for him to play for Borough.

"This is a marvellous boost for us," said Barry today. "His experience will be invaluable to us in helping to build a new Borough side."

## Yeovil Town v Nuneaton Borough

20-01-1979

Borough made the journey to The Huish to play Yeovil Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Jon Sammels, the former Arsenal and Leicester star, made an impressive debut for Borough. But even his skill and experience was not enough to save them from defeat. Two goals inside a minute before half-time wrecked their slender hopes of success.

And although Sammels tried to inspire a fight-back after the interval, Borough were unable to bridge the gap. Yeovil had to defend desperately at times and survived several goalmouth escapes as Nuneaton tried to save the game. But the Manor Park side could not add the finishing touches to their often impressive approach work and two more points went begging.

The match opened in sensational style as both sides scored in a hectic first five minutes. Former Leicester City player Dave Platt, who almost joined Borough at the start of the season, shot Yeovil in front. But the home side hardly had time to settle on their lead before Gareth Dale, Borough's leading goalscorer, jabbed home an equaliser from a free-kick.

Then disaster struck for the Manor Park side as the first-half moved to its close. John Clancy restored Yeovil's lead, and barely a minute later, newcomer Trevor Finnigan was brought down in the box by Brendan Phillips and Tony Cottle beat goalkeeper Gordon Livsey from the penalty spot.

## Tomkinson Signs For Borough

Nuneaton Borough have snapped up midfielder player Steve Tomkinson from Atherstone Town. The move was completed yesterday afternoon when Tomkinson, a non-contract player at Sheepy Road, signed professional forms for Borough. Tomkinson was at Atherstone for four seasons and they wanted him to stay.

## Barry Set To Sign Billy Wright

Roy Barry is poised to take another step in his team rebuilding plans. The Nuneaton Borough manager has agreed a deal with Third Division Lincoln City for utility player Billy Wright, who is expected to sign a month long contract, which will tie him to the club until the middle of February.

## Kettering Town v Nuneaton Borough 10-02-1979

**Kettering:** Lane, Ashby, Lee, Easthall, Suddards, Hughes, Flannagan, Kellock, Phipps, Clayton, Felton. Sub: Evans.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Sammels, Dale, Phillips, Crawley, Tomkinson, Smithers. Sub: Campbell.

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

Kettering confirmed their superiority over Borough on a skid pan of a pitch, but only just. For long periods the Manor Park side were the equals of the league leaders. But their finishing again did not match their effort and two more precious points slipped away. Borough are now sixth from bottom in the Southern League Premier Division and their place in the new Football Alliance must surely be in doubt.

Their performance was much better than last week when they went out of the FA Trophy to the Poppies to a penalty. But they badly need the confidence of a win to halt the slide that has sent them plunging down the table. Confusion reigned before the start when a mid-day pitch inspection failed to decide whether or not the game would be played. Borough insisted upon travelling and then had to wait another half an hour while Stevenage referee Mr Maurice Dimblebee took another long look at the ground.

His indecision was justified. Piles of frozen snow surrounded the playing area and in patches the pitch was iron hard. Both goalkeepers made fine saves in the early minutes which set the scene for what was an open, end to end battle. Kettering then went ahead in the 23rd minute when defender Sean Suddards scored with a glancing header from a John Flannagan corner – his first goal for the club for five years. Curiously, Suddards would not have been up there had Richard Dixey not been sent off last week. Dixey is the defender Kettering release for set pieces.

Borough shrugged off the setback, began to attack and set themselves up for an equaliser they deserved. The ball rebounded across the goal and Brendan Phillips, always busy for Nuneaton in midfield, gleefully snapped up the chance. That was ten minutes before half-time, but the second half was only five minutes old when Kettering again struck for what proved to be the decisive goal. Again it was from a Flannagan corner. And again Suddards went up to face the kick. He challenged Trevor Peake in the air and the ball dropped inside the a post with Gordon Livsey helpless.

Borough continued to plug away, although their front runners never looked as dangerous as Kettering. Three minutes from the end Roy Cross, immaculate in the Borough defence almost set up an equaliser. He played a superb pass over the top of the Kettering back four which put Timmy Smithers clear. Smithers ran on and shot as Lane left his line – only to see the ball strike the goalkeeper's left arm. Then with seconds left, Billy Kellock sent over a near post cross for Roy Clayton, who headed inches wide.

## Shotton Joins Borough



Malcolm Shotton, Atherstone Town's unsettled defender, has signed for Nuneaton Borough. The clubs agreed a £2,500 fee. Barry has beaten Yeovil, Kettering and Telford in the chase for the ex-Leicester player. Borough and Atherstone have a gentleman's agreement that the Manor Park club will not approach Atherstone for any more of their players, at least for the time being.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Borough May Buy Manor Park

Top level talks with Council officials may hold the key to the future of Nuneaton Borough Football Club. They could result in the club being offered the chance to buy their Manor Park ground. Negotiations are to be opened to discuss the possible sale – or a long term lease. The go ahead was given at last night's full Council meeting which rubber-stamped the talks. Preliminary discussions have been going on for some time over a new lease, but Borough chairman Noel Kelly expressed surprise at the latest developments.

"We are still waiting to hear from them and until we know more we will have to wait and see. We are trying to negotiate a new lease which is very important."

Borough need a long term agreement with the council before they can launch their ambitious plans for improving the ground. But the chance of buying the freehold would shed a different light on the situation. Holding the deeds would enable them to get the finance they need to put the plans into operation. The Council has owned the ground for more than 40 years since the collapse of the old Nuneaton Town club. Since then, there have been several attempts to buy it back and it was offered to the club in 1968.

## Nuneaton Borough v Dorchester Town 24-02-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Wright, Dale, Phillips, Crawley, Tomkinson, Smithers. **Sub:** Campbell.

**Dorchester:** Best, Bridge, Barley, Jones, Dominey, Forman, Beaney, Steele, Marsh, Roberts, Brinkworth. **Sub:** McManus.

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

Borough rubber stamped Roy Barry's designs for the future with an emphatic win. But the final seal of approval will clearly have to wait while his alterations take effect. For more than half-an-hour, much-changed Borough, with two new players and another making his home debut, struggled to make progress. Dorchester, now at the bottom of the table, matched them in a grim start.

Then an injury to Magpies' centre-half Barrie Dominey and a goal from Borough centre-forward Ian Crawley changed the face of the game. And the Manor Park side went on to win with ease and collect two vital points. With five of their next seven Southern League matches at home they should begin to climb the table.



**Ian Crawley's diving header gives Borough a 1-0 lead just before half-time.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Barry should be able to find precious breathing space while his newcomers fit in – without having to cast anxious glances at the Premier Division table. Malcolm Shotton and Billy Wright, his two latest signings, had mixed debuts. Shotton, his £2,500 signing from Atherstone, was solid and steady at left back. Wright, on loan from Lincoln City, where he operated at right back, has to adapt to a different role and a changed environment.

Steve Tomkinson, also signed from Atherstone, had a joyful home debut. He hit a spectacular 56th minute goal that virtually put paid to Dorchester's hopes of a comeback. The ball dropped to him on the edge of the box and he cracked it back into the net with a superb half-volley. Centre-forward Cliff Campbell, on as substitute, hit the third 12 minutes from time. Campbell went on for injured Ian Crawley, whose goal on the stroke of half-time eased many of Borough's problems.

They had struggled against determined Dorchester, but the goal injected confidence and transformed their attitude. Earlier they had missed chances – two of them set up by

Timmy Smithers, who played with a renewed appetite for the game after an indifferent spell. And they missed more in the second half when player-manager David Best, in the Magpies' goal, was the busiest player on the field.

Twice in the first-half he raced out of his box to tackle Gareth Dale and after the break he was kept constantly alert. But for him, Dorchester would have suffered a far heavier defeat as their defence cracked after the loss of centre-half Dominey, who damaged his right shoulder when he fell heavily after a goalmouth challenge.

## Cooper And Tysall On Transfer List

Full-backs Paul Cooper and Gary Tysall have been put on the transfer list by Nuneaton Borough. Right back Cooper is unsettled and has asked for a move: "He's adamant he wants to go," said manager Roy Barry. And Borough are willing to listen to offers for left-back Tysall following the transfer of Malcolm Shotton from Atherstone.

## Nuneaton Borough v Burton Albion 26-02-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley (Cooper), Cross (Setchell), Peake, Shotton, Phillips, Wright, Tomkinson, Dale, Campbell, Smithers.

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

Devastating Borough blitzed Burton to set a new Midland Floodlit Cup record and boost their hopes of a place in the final. Seven players found the net as Nuneaton buried young Albion under an eight goal avalanche. And they ran up the biggest win since the points for goals competition was remodelled eleven years ago.

Gareth Dale grabbed two goals and the others were supplied by Cliff Campbell, Timmy Smithers, Trevor Peake, Brendan Phillips, Malcolm Shotton and John Setchell. Incredibly, they could have had many more as Burton were totally and completely crushed. Outclassed from the start, they fell behind after eleven minutes and then reeled under a succession of hammer blows.

Campbell launched the goal rush when he scored after a delicate chip from Steve Tomkinson's cultured left foot. Four minutes later a classic goal dealt another savage blow to Burton's confidence. Goalkeeper Gordon Livsey saved at the feet of Liddel, Dale headed on superbly from his kick – and Smithers showed lethal finishing. Another Tomkinson chip set up a third, gleefully snapped up by Peake after 29 minutes, and Burton were in complete disarray. Dale then struck twice in nine minutes and the gap stood at 5-0 at half-time with the promise of double figures.

Campbell headed against an upright and Dale followed up to score and then Dale forced the ball over the line from a Smithers' corner. Another Smithers' corner led to the sixth, scored by Phillips after 51 minutes. Burton then enjoyed a respite as Borough re-shuffled their side – and missed chances. Billy Wright moved into the back four in place of

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



Roy Cross, John Setchell went on at outside left and Smithers dropped into midfield. The crowd had to wait until the 73rd minute for the seventh goal – forced over the line in a goalmouth scramble by Shotton.

Demoralised Burton made a brave bid to plug the gaps, but could not prevent Nuneaton's eighth goal in the closing minutes. Phillips played the ball forward to Dale, who pulled it back and Setchell cracked in a shot that looped off full-back Smith on its way into the roof of the net.

## Borough Accused Of Con-Trick

Nuneaton Borough have been accused of a con trick following their sensational 8-0 win over Burton Albion. Afterwards Burton claimed they had been conned into fielding a weakened side in the belief that Borough would do the same. And the situation has led to an icy relationship between two clubs who have been friendly rivals for years. Burton secretary Dave Mellor said: "After their behaviour on Monday I can assure you Nuneaton Borough will receive no favours from us in the future."

### Nuneaton Borough v Tamworth 28-02-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Wright (Cooper), Dale (Sugrue), Phillips, Campbell, Tomkinson, Smithers.

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

Borough almost ensured themselves of a place in the final with a hard fought win. They found Tamworth a tough proposition, but Borough were still the more positive side. Borough now stand firmly at the top of the table with 56 points. From the kick-off Borough went for goal, but at first struggled in the muddy conditions. Cliff Campbell had an early header saved and Steve Tomkinson looked set to put Borough in front in the opening minutes but he slipped in the mud.

Borough never ceased their pressure on the Tamworth goal and were justly rewarded after 22 minutes. Bob Stockley sent over a perfect cross and Campbell headed Nuneaton into the lead. The goal came after a rare Tamworth defensive mistake. Campbell miscued his first header but the Tamworth defenders seemed to stand like statues while Campbell had a second go and nodded the ball home.

Borough kept up the pressure after the goal but were shaken in the 36th minute. Former Nuneaton player Barry Franklin found himself with time 35 yards out and hit a superb shot to equalise for Tamworth. It was totally against the run of play, but Borough soon settled and Dale had a good chance just before half-time.

Borough were off to a fine start in the second half when alert Timmy Smithers scored an opportunist goal in the 55th minute. Tamworth goalkeeper Stuart Greenfield tried a short goal kick, but Smithers intercepted, ran round the keeper and tapped the ball into the net.

Borough took their goal tally to three shortly afterwards when Sugrue was brought down in the penalty area. Referee George Crook made Malcolm Shotton retake his first penalty attempt which swept past keeper Greenfield. He said that Greenfield had moved and booked Borough's Brendan Phillips when he argued about it. But Shotton's second attempt was as good as his first and he sent Greenfield the wrong way.

After that Borough looked like making it another goal-rush with Campbell, Tomkinson and Fallon all going close. It was only Tamworth's very tight defence which defied the Borough's forwards. They soaked up the pressure and were rarely flustered at the back. Tamworth's best player on the night, Franklin, kept Borough on their toes when he made their second goal ten minutes from time. He dribbled past a couple of defenders to shoot and Bob Mellor picked up the rebound to score. Borough had a couple of scares before the end, but they managed to hold on to their lead.

### Barnet v Nuneaton Borough

03-03-1979

**Barnet:** Blackwell, Oliver, Hulett, McCormack, Brown, Franklin, Woolger, Townsend, Sperrin, Cleary, Turner. Sub: Lees.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Wright, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Tomkinson, Smithers. Sub: Fallon.

Borough made the journey to Underhill to play Barnet in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Improving Borough maintained their progress with an impressive win. They collected a £20 fine, picked up both points – and provided more proof that Roy Barry's rebuilding is paying off. The fine was for a delayed start as Borough were held up on the M1 and the match kicked off 20 minutes late.

Borough put in a performance that oozed confidence and skill. And the cloud of disappointment that had threatened to settle over the club has been lifted.

When the match eventually got under way Borough quickly stamped their authority on the play. Right from the start it was clear that their previous week's build-up had been right. Borough had scored fourteen goals in three matches with wins over Dorchester, Burton and Tamworth – and their confidence was there for all to see. They took the game to Barnet instead of settling back after the pre-match confusion. And only missed chances, a disallowed goal and some narrow escapes kept Barnet in the game.

The goal, scored by Steve Tomkinson in the 10th minute after Cliff Campbell had headed on to the bar, was ruled out for offside. Whenever the Londoners tried to attack they found the Borough's re-shaped back four in tremendous form. Malcolm Shotton had an outstanding game at left back, by far his best performance since his £2,500 move from Atherstone. Tomkinson continued to blossom in midfield where Brendan Phillips and Billy Wright also did well.

Phillips was always busy and Wright is beginning to settle into Southern League soccer. He was unlucky not to score



when he rattled an upright with a rasping drive in the second half. With Trevor Peake and Roy Cross blocking all avenues in the heart of the back four, Borough formed an impregnable barrier to Barnet attacks.

But the player who made the biggest contribution was Timmy Smithers, who scored the first goal and helped to set up the other. Smithers made the vital breakthrough with a left foot shot following a corner in the 53rd minute. And it was from his cross eleven minutes later that centre-forward Cliff Campbell headed the second. Campbell got to the ball before two defenders and a hesitant goalkeeper to score with a header. The lanky striker presented problems in the air for the North Londoners and with Gareth Dale buzzing on the right flank, Borough turned in the kind of performance that makes managers happy.

Goalkeeper Gordon Livsey was rarely troubled, but what he had to do he did well and Bob Stockley skippered the side from right back with the same coolness and efficiency that Barry demands from the bench. In short it was a performance that made a mockery of Borough's league position – and they now have their sights firmly set on higher things.

## Nuneaton Borough v Margate

05-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Peake, Cross, Shotton, Phillips, Wright, Tomkinson, Dale, Campbell, Smithers. **Sub:** Cooper.

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

Borough destroyed Margate with three first-half goals and romped to their third Southern League win in a row. They outclassed the Kent club in a blistering start and have now scored 20 goals in their last five games.

The match was barely three minutes old when Cliff Campbell put them into the lead. Timmy Smithers found Trevor Peake from a corner and the centre-half's superb header stretched goalkeeper Brian Parry into a full-length save. But he could not hold the ball and Campbell followed up to force it over the line. Margate were in all kinds of trouble as Smithers began to torment their defence.

Gareth Dale hit a shot wide from close in and Parry was in constant action in the Margate goal. He reached a header from Dale, parried an effort from Campbell and watched a chip from Bendan Phillips land on the roof of the net. Somehow the visitors managed to survive until the 30th minute when a disastrous back pass from defender Keith Pointer paved the way for Borough's second.

Campbell darted in and rounded the goalkeeper to grab a superb opportunist goal – his 18th of the season. Margate's only threat came when Bob Walter shot into the side netting after Gordon Livsey had bravely thrown himself at the defender's feet. But that was just a brief respite before Borough notched their third goal in the dying minutes of the half. Parry took a free-kick which was headed back by

Campbell and found Dale clear. He looked offside, but streaked clear, rounded the by now bewildered goalkeeper and scored.

The second half was an anti-climax as Borough, understandably, went off the boil. Margate tightened up on Smithers, showed more aggression in midfield, and stemmed the tide. They attacked more often, but struggled against a superb Borough defence in which Peake was again outstanding. Livsey was as safe as houses in goal and Margate's effort faded as the second half wore on. They managed to pull back a goal when Pearce and Lee combined to set up the chance for Alan Draper in the 83rd minute. But Borough, stung into action, roared back in a grandstand finish.

And Phillips rounded off the scoring four minutes from the end with a stunningly simple goal. Dale beat Parry with a cross to the far post, Smithers hit the ball back across the middle – and Phillips glanced it into the net. Margate could have conceded more as Nuneaton again put their goalmouth under siege. Smithers had one effort blocked and Tomkinson shot wide as Borough staged an impressive finish to a match that was over as a contest before half-time.

## Busby To Grade Manor Park

Sir Matt Busby is due to visit Nuneaton Borough later this month to grade Manor Park for the Football Alliance. He and two more of the game's elder statesmen, Bob Lord and Sheffield United director Dick Wragg, are on the Football League's steering committee which has agreed to look at the grounds of all clubs who have applied.

They are to visit the 31 Southern League and 16 Northern Premier League clubs who are chasing the 20 places in the new league, which starts next season. An "A" or "B" grading will be sufficient to qualify clubs for admission. Borough expect to get a "B" grading.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town

07-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Peake, Cross, Shotton, Phillips, Wright, Tomkinson, Sugrue, Campbell, Smithers. **Subs:** Setchell and Cooper.  
**Atherstone:** Hall, G. Smith, Bosworth, Galley, Montgomery, R. Smith, Kiernan, Gray, Neale, Gallagher, Jennings. **Subs:** Chinn and Usher.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play a Midland Floodlit Cup game.

Borough clinched a place in the final of the Midland Floodlit Cup with a workmanlike win over their arch-rivals. Timmy Smithers shot them ahead before half-time and then second half goals from Cliff Campbell and Steve Tomkinson settled the points. The goals highlighted an unspectacular, often dour, battle that was always fiercely contested.

Adders had Roger Smith and Colin Bosworth booked and Wellingborough referee Brian Hill had plenty to do.

Borough made their almost customary bright start to put the Sheepy Road side under pressure early on. Smithers caused problems, Tomkinson shot wide and Roger Smith shot over

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



for Atherstone. Smithers then made the breakthrough in the 25th minute after a terrific scramble in the Adders goalmouth. The ball bobbed around in front of the goal for what seemed an age before Smithers volleyed it in off Graham Smith.

Roger Smith then had his name taken for a bone-jarring challenge on teenager Paul Sugure, who had a superb first-half. The 18-year-old outside left caught the eye with some dazzling skill and once took on half the Adders defence in a run that spread panic. But Adders enjoyed a good spell and Mark Neale headed into Gordon Livsey's arms from a Kirk Jennings' free-kick.

They were strong at the back where Colin Bosworth turned in a powerful performance, although the service to the strikers was poor. Neale and Stewart Gallagher were forced to chase too many lost causes and run into too many blind alleys for them to have a chance. And Borough's defence, strengthened by ex-Adders Bob Stockley and Malcolm Shotton, has few peers in non-league football.

Adders searched for an equaliser and a brave save from Livsey at the feet of Roger Smith denied them a goal. Sugrue went off 15 minutes from time to an ovation from the Manor Park crowd. He was replaced by John Setchell and Atherstone sent on Chris Chinn for Jennings. Borough then stepped up the pace as the Adders defence cracked in the closing stages.

With twelve minutes to go Phillips was brought down by Bosworth, who lost his composure after more than an hour of good play. Stockley hit the free-kick into the middle – and Campbell beat Bosworth and goalkeeper Ken Hall to the ball to head his 19th goal of the season. Then, with barely a minute left, Borough grabbed their third goal to put the seal on their sixth win in a row. Setchell played the ball in for Campbell. He turned Bosworth superbly and rolled the ball back across the middle where Tomkinson gleefully snapped up the chance against his old club.

## Kelly Hits Back At Lottery Accusation

Borough chairman Noel Kelly has hit back angrily at suggestions that money from the lottery is being used to pay for the trip to Italy. He said: "It's not true. We have covered the cost through sponsorship. Thanks to business people in Coventry and Nuneaton, it will not cost the club a penny."

### Nuneaton Borough v Bridgend Town 10-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Wright, Phillips, Tomkinson, Dale, Campbell, Smithers. **Sub:** Fallon.

**Bridgend:** Annetts, Humphries, Huskings, Slee, Parry, Colwill, Jones, McInch, Griffiths, Vassallo, Bennett. **Sub:** Fisher.

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

Borough climbed another rung in their ladder of success with a battling performance. They shook off the effects of a stunning early goal to collect their fourth Southern League win in a row. And they flew out to Milan for the Anglo-Italian

Tournament in a buoyant frame of mind. But the scoreline disguised an eventful game that was not without its problems for Borough. Bridgend, vastly improved from the team beaten 5-1 last October, went ahead with a stunning goal.



**Lanky striker Cliff Campbell beats Bridgend keeper Annetts to put Borough 2-1 up.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Midfield player Jimmy McInch exploded a shot into the net from all of 25 yards to put them ahead after just six minutes. Borough were clearly shaken. The Welsh club threatened to interrupt their revival and Borough struggled to put their game together. But a bizarre chain of events altered the course of the game and paved the way for their win.

After 20 minutes Timmy Smithers forced full back Ray Huskings into an own goal that provided the equaliser. He moved on to an inch perfect pass from Gareth Dale, and attempted a cross that hit Huskings and flew into the net. Ten minutes later, Bridgend defender Carl Slee was sent off following a clash with Borough striker Cliff Campbell.

The whistle had gone for a foul when Slee senselessly kicked Campbell and the referee had no alternative. Then, four minutes from half-time, Campbell put Nuneaton in front with his 20th goal of the season. Steve Tomkinson threaded a pass through a square Bridgend defence and Campbell ran on to beat goalkeeper Dave Annetts. Bridgend had always looked vulnerable to just the sort of ball Tomkinson played, although they tightened up after half-time.

But they were in trouble and the 1,200-plus crowd waited eagerly for what promised to be another Borough goal-rush in the second half. It looked on the cards when Brendan Phillips increased the lead with the goal of the game in the 53rd minute. He played a one-two off Gareth Dale in the penalty box and chipped the ball into the far corner of the net.

Memories of Nuneaton's runaway success in South Wales flooded back as they attacked in strength. But brave defensive play, missed chances and a fighting performance from Bridgend prevented a rout. Despite being reduced to ten men, they still found time to trouble Gordon Livsey in the Borough goal. Livsey stopped one shot from Gordon Bennett and scrambled another around the post.



## SOS For Stockley

Nuneaton Borough today sent out an SOS to their club captain Bob Stockley. The full-back recently attended his grandfather's funeral and was forced to miss the Italy trip because of the family bereavement. But Borough's message to their club skipper was: "Contact us urgently – you are flying to Milan tomorrow." Club secretary and director John Evans said today: "I have been unable to contact Bob today, but it is imperative that I talk to him tonight. He has been booked on the 10.20 flight from Elmdon tomorrow morning, but does not know anything about it."

### Cremonese v Nuneaton Borough 14-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Farndon, Peake, Fallon, Shotton, Phillips, Wright, Tomkinson, Sugrue, Campbell, Smithers.

Borough made the journey to play Cremonese in the Anglo-Italian Tournament.

Borough lost to a late goal in Cremona after a performance that would have made any town proud. They overcame early problems against a slick Italian Third Division side and grew in stature as the game progressed. And they earned a richly deserved ovation from the appreciative 3,500 partisan crowd.

But a goal from former Turin forward Emiliano Mondinico nine minutes from time upset their hopes of a draw in their first match in this year's Anglo-Italian Tournament. Mondinico, now 32, and the star of the Cremonese side, lashed a shot across Gordon Livsey from the edge of the box with a flash of the finishing power Nuneaton just could not match. Livsey had earlier pulled off several fine saves behind a defence that confirmed once and for all that it has few equals in the Southern League.

Youngster Paul Farndon, at right-back in place of Bob Stockley, improved after an anxious start and the back four performed miracles to keep impressive Cremonese at bay. No-one did more than temporary skipper Trevor Peake, a majestic centre-half in anyone's language. He was superbly backed up by Farndon, Tom Fallon and particularly left-back Malcolm Shotton. But the player who really captured the hearts of the Italians was teenager Paul Sugrue, the youngest and smallest on the field.

Sugrue took a battering from the home side's defence – nine of the 15 free-kicks Cremonese conceded were for offences against him. Brendan Phillips, one of the stars of last year's tournament also turned in a performance that again made him the centre of much interest.

Borough also owed a huge debt to midfield anchorman Billy Wright, whose coolness early on helped to hold the side together when their nerves threatened to get the better of them. The speed of the Cremonese front-runners and their running off the ball almost turned the early stages into a nightmare for Nuneaton.

But Borough survived, pulled themselves together and their

confidence began to flood back. And they had Cremonese in trouble in the first 20 minutes of the second half during a spell that silenced the firecrackers and banner wavers on the terraces.

Borough's performance removed a lot of fears. Cremonese were easily the best side they have met on their three trips to Italy and they can now go into Saturday's match against Junior Casale with fresh hope.

## Billy Wright Leaves Borough

Billy Wright made his farewell appearance for Nuneaton Borough in Italy this afternoon. On loan from Lincoln City, he intends to rejoin the Third Division club as soon as the Italian trip is over. Wright, still only 19, said: "I am going back. I have 16 months of my contract to go and want to stay in the League.

### Junior Casale v Nuneaton Borough 17-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Smithers, Phillips, Wright, Tomkinson, Sugrue (Setchell), Campbell, Crawley. Subs: Farndon, Raybould, Barry.

Borough travelled to meet Junior Casale in an Anglo-Italian Tournament game.

Borough's dreams of success were shattered by a 90 minute nightmare in Northern Italy. Intimidated by some of the most brutal tackling they will experience, they lost their concentration and were kicked out of their stride. And the match deteriorated into nothing more than a chronicle of confusion, chaos – and almost total disbelief. Only their attitude to defeat prevented even more ugly scenes following a sensational chain of events.

No referee in England would have stood for it – the match would never have been finished. There were 44 free-kicks, both Ian Crawley and Malcolm Shotton were booked, Brendan Phillips hit an upright, Gordon Livsey saved a penalty, the linesman was pelted by angry fans, Cliff Campbell was sent off. And the Junior Casale coach was ordered to the dressing room for shouting at his players to kick the opposition.

But beneath it all was the undeniable fact that Nuneaton played badly against an unimpressive Italian side in a dreadful match. Only a shadow of the team that did so well at Cremona four days earlier, they went to pieces after making a bright start. But while Cremonese were hard, Junior Casale showed the ugly face of Italian football.

They stalked the Borough players like black shirted assassins, totally cynical in their outlook and without any conscience. Winger Paul Sugrue was fortunate to survive a first-half without serious injury and long before the end Borough stopped looking for goals and started looking for their opponents. It was a different story in the early stages on a spongy pitch, softened by three days of rain.

Nuneaton looked to have the measure of the Italians, despite





Casale's unquestionable skills. Borough's hopes were raised in the 20th minute when Brendan Phillips left two defenders in his wake – only to see his shot plant a mud-stain on a Casale upright. By then though, Casale had made their intention abundantly clear, Borough began to falter and Pozzi was again denied by Livsey as free-kicks began to litter the match. Sugrue was subjected to three horrendous tackles from Legnani as he tried to run with the ball and went off at half-time. Legnani was shown a yellow card before Malcolm Shotton, magnificent for Borough at centre-half in place of injured Trevor Peake, was booked for dissent.

Pozzi shot Casale in front four minutes from the break following a corner and Livsey saved a penalty from the same player four minutes into the second half. Bob Stockley sold himself in a rash tackle and Billy Wright was forced to fetch down Palladina in the box. Pozzi wriggled his hips as he ran up to take the kick, but his arrogance turned to annoyance when Livsey pushed the ball away. It fell to Motta who hit a first time shot from point blank range only to see Livsey push it over the top.

That should have kept Borough in the game but they struggled to lift themselves and there was an air of lethargy about everything they did. And Pozzi dealt them another blow just two minutes later when he beat Tom Fallon in the air to a cross from Bracchi and glanced the ball past Livsey. The back four still performed well with Timmy Smithers in superb form at left back as his replacement up front, Crawley, was booked for retaliation.

As the shadows lengthened after a gloriously sunny afternoon Borough made one last desperate effort to raise their game and find the goal that would have given them hope. But they could not penetrate the Italians, who are past masters at preventing the opposition from finding the net. And their chances slumped even further when Campbell was sent off in the 77th minute for striking Airone, who had spent most of the afternoon elbowing him in the ribs.

## **Bath City v Nuneaton Borough 21-03-1979**

**Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Fallon, Cooper, Tomkinson, Phillips, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. Sub: Setchell.**

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

Borough's unbeaten run came to an end at Bath – after they had twice been in front. They were shattered by a quick-fire hat-trick from City winger Peter Rogers, expected to rejoin former Bath manager Brian Godfrey at Exeter before next week's transfer deadline.

Rogers struck with three goals inside twelve minutes shortly after the interval to transform the game. The first-half went exactly to plan for Nuneaton, who showed few effects of their tiring trip to Italy. Despite the absence of Trevor Peake, they defended capably and went ahead nine minutes before half-time. Moments after Cliff Campbell's header had rebounded

off the bar, Brendan Phillips pounced on a loose ball to score from just inside the area. It might have been a two goal half-time advantage for Borough. Steve Tomkinson's shot on the stroke of half-time took a wicked deflection off a Bath defender and grazed the bar.

Gordon Livsey only had to make one save in the first 45 minutes – a tip over the bar from Glyn Broome's headers – but he was picking the ball out of the net within two minutes of the re-start. Martyn Wheeler jinked past two defenders down the right wing and when his cross came over, Rogers was on hand to score from close range. Four minutes later Borough regained the lead, thanks to an awful blunder in the Bath defence.

Goalkeeper Kim Book dropped a back pass by full back Martyn Rogers and Tim Smithers merely had to steer the ball into the gaping goal. Fortunes changed once more straight from the kick-off. Wheeler broke clean through and when his shot slipped away from Livsey, Rogers joyfully poached his second goal.

The winner came in 59 minutes when Wheeler again carved up Borough's left flank and Rogers converted another perfect centre. Borough threw on young John Setchell in place of Tomkinson with 17 minutes left, but their hopes of a draw disappeared when Phillips' on target 87th minute drive was kept out by a lunging Bath defender with keeper Book beaten.

## **Nuneaton Borough v Redditch United 24-03-1979**

**Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Cooper, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Sugrue, Smithers. Sub: Setchell.**

**Redditch: Edwards, Grice, Taylor, Sykes, Clements, Smart, Williams, Tuohy, Bastable, Cotton, Jones. B. Smart.**

Borough welcomed Redditch United to Manor Park to play a Southern League Premier Division match.

Brendan Phillips shot Borough in front after a superbly worked move. But the Worcestershire side hit back to equalise with a goal five minutes into the second half from Gary Bastable and an untidy match in difficult conditions ended all square.

Trevor Peake was able to play and Borough brought in teenager Paul Sugrue for his debut. The sides struggled to cope with a blustery wind and a bog-like pitch. Borough pressed in the early stages and a cross from Stockley was taken out of the air by Edwards as Campbell ran in. Again Borough attacked against a solid Redditch defence, but neither side made much headway early on.

Dale had the ball in the Redditch net after 16 minutes, but Campbell had already been pulled up for a foul on Edwards, who needed treatment. Then Sugrue did well to get in a cross, Cooper prodded the ball forward and Edwards saved as Dale closed in to challenge. Borough continued to attack and Clements was forced to concede a corner when Dale headed on from a cross by Stockley. That was in the 21st minute and barely a minute later Borough took the lead with a goal from Phillips. Sugrue hit a right wing corner hard and

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



low, both Dale and Peake left the ball, Cooper ran in and shot and the ball rebounded off Edwards for Phillips to score from close range. The goal, clearly a well worked move, brought delight from the Borough players – and manager Roy Barry.

Moments later, Sugrue weaved his way past Jones and Taylor only to see his centre booted clear. Then Cooper was booked for a rash kick against Taylor in an incident off the ball. Borough moved Smithers wider on the left and Edwards saved a header from Dale following a Stockley free-kick. Cotton forced a corner, Borough managed to clear and then Edwards twice rescued his side in goalmouth scrambles.

But Redditch were only inches away from an equaliser when Jones pulled the ball across the Borough defence only to see it run out to safety, when just a touch would have been enough. Redditch, now with the wind at their backs, went close early in the second half before Borough found themselves in trouble and Bastable equalised for Redditch four minutes after the break.

Cooper, carrying a heavy burden in midfield lost the ball to Grice, whose cross was headed past Livsey by the Redditch centre-forward. Shotton began to push forward from defence and was involved in a goalmouth scramble that Redditch were fortunate to survive.



**Redditch goalkeeper Reg Edwards is struggling as Cliff Campbell heads what should have been his 21st goal of the season – only to have it disallowed.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Two minutes later a clearance off the line by Grice saved the visitors before Campbell had the ball in the net for a goal that was disallowed.

## Nuneaton Borough v Wealdstone 26-03-1979

**Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Peake, Cross, Shotton, Phillips, Cooper, Smithers, Sugrue, Campbell, Dale. Sub: Setchell.**

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

Borough powered their way to a superb win over Wealdstone in the wind, rain and mud. Conditions were atrocious –

incessant rain swept the pitch that was slowly churned into an ankle deep bog. But Borough rose above it all to outclass the North Londoners with an impressive display of exciting football.

Centre-forward Cliff Campbell set them on the victory trail with an early goal, his 21st of the season. And then defenders, Bob Stockley, Trevor Peake and Roy Cross all scored as Borough reduced Wealdstone to a shambles. The visitors were fortunate to escape with a 4-0 defeat as Borough took control of the game.

Their skills shone through on a dreadful night with pools of water in places, shimmering in the light. And the 800-plus crowd, a magnificent turn out considering the conditions, loved every minute of it. Campbell set them alight in the sixth minute after busy Gareth Dale had done the spadework. Defender Alan Fursdon failed to cut out the ball, Campbell flicked it up in the air and then headed it over goalkeeper Ian Cranstone.

Wealdstone, who defended in depth and tried to curb Borough on the flanks, then had two quick breaks before Borough increased their lead with a moment of joy for club skipper Bob Stockley. Cranstone punched out a Paul Sugrue corner and the ball dropped on the edge of the box for Stockley to drive a left foot shot through a ruck of players for his first goal for the club.

Cranstone made two brave saves with Borough in full cry before Stockley almost scored again, this time with his right foot. The Wealdstone goalkeeper denied Dale a goal with a one-handed save and Brendan Phillips shot wide as the visitors struggled to stem the tide.

Wealdstone manager Alan Fogarty re-shuffled his side at half-time, but they were soon in trouble and Campbell missed a chance five minutes into the second half. Paul Cooper, impressive for Borough in midfield, managed to block a shot from Bobby Moss, but Wealdstone's suspect defence was soon in more trouble.

Centre-half Horgan almost conceded a goal when he headed a Sugrue corner on to his own bar as the players slithered in the goalmouth mud. There was only one team in it and Borough ended the match with a flourish. Eleven minutes from time Trevor Peake powered a free-kick from Timmy Smithers into the net to make it 3-0.

And two minutes later Roy Cross enjoyed a richly deserved moment of triumph when he steered a superb shot into the net for his first goal for the club. Campbell had one headed off the line and Peake had a goal disallowed for offside with Wealdstone in disarray.

They had been completely outplayed by a totally committed Borough side who made a mockery of the conditions. Never again will they be able to complain about the pitch. They set their standards last night in conditions that will surely not be as bad again this season.

## Sugrue Signs Professional



Paul Sugrue played for Nuneaton Borough against Wealdstone last night with the ink barely dry on his contract. The teenage winger signed professional forms for the Manor Park club before the match. But he still has his sights set on League football: "That's still my ambition," he said. "And Nuneaton have said they will not stand in my way."

Sugrue, the smallest player at the club, was with Walsall, who Sugrue claimed "messed me about." Sugrue then went to Coventry Sporting and Bedworth before signing for Borough as a non-contract player this season. A broken collar bone and a chest infection kept him out early on, but he fought his way back – and has blossomed into an exciting prospect.

Borough manager Roy Barry persuaded Sugrue to sign after talks over the weekend: "He has exceptional skill and deserved a contract," said Barry. "He could go all the way and we wouldn't hold him. I will not stand in any player's way if the club that comes in deals with us fairly."

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Atherstone To Withdraw Alliance Application

Atherstone Town intend to withdraw their application for the Football Alliance. They have told the steering committee they would rather play in one of the feeder leagues, preferably the Northern Premier.

## Worcester City v Nuneaton Borough 28-03-1979

Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Peake (Setchell), Cross, Shotton, Phillips, Cooper, Smithers, Sugrue, Campbell, Dale.

Borough made the journey to St George's Lane to play Worcester City in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough lost to the championship favourites after an incident packed match. But the scoreline disguised a superb performance by the Manor Park side after a sensational series of events. City scored inside the first minute, Borough goalkeeper Gordon Livsey was beaten after a twice taken penalty and Trevor Peake was taken to hospital with a suspected broken leg.

And man of the match Brendan Phillips was ordered off amid astonishing scenes that followed Livsey's penalty save 20 minutes from time. The Borough keeper pushed out the spot kick from Ken Lawrence and Malcolm Shotton hooked it away for a corner. But Mr Rice insisted that it be re-taken, Phillips ran 20 yards to complain, was sent off – and Barry Lowe converted the second attempt.

City struck a hammer blow in the opening seconds when Malcolm Phelps was given a free header from a Graham Selby free-kick. Livsey flung himself full length and managed to get a hand to the header, but could not prevent it from crossing the line. Jimmy Williams then mis-hit a shot with the goal gaping in front of him and Borough looked to be in desperate trouble.

But they pulled themselves together and began to fashion some magnificent attacks on a pitch that quickly became a quagmire. Phillips showed incredible skills in midfield where transfer listed Paul Cooper maintained his best form. Peake had shots blocked in quick succession before he limped off in the 14th minute after taking a kick on his shin. He returned seven minutes later, but was no more than a passenger and was taken to hospital at half-time.

Timmy Smithers dropped back to left back and Malcolm Shotton moved across into the middle of the back four. Cliff Campbell headed wide and then missed another chance with the Manor Park side in control. Instead of being level Borough then found themselves two goals adrift in the 56th minute.

A wind assisted goal kick from City keeper Jim Cumbes forced Roy Cross to concede a corner. The ball was dropped in at the near post and Graham Allner scored with a header that went in off Phillips. Still Nuneaton plugged away – before the 70th minute penalty against Stockley for a tackle on Pemberton reduced them to ten men and settled the game.

But Borough still managed to produce some anxious moments for City and the 2,000-plus crowd. Tudor missed a superb through ball from Sugrue and Campbell slid the ball wide as Cumbes came out. Then a free-kick by substitute John Setchell led to a shot from Dale that was blocked and a spectacular save by Cumbes from Smithers.

## Nuneaton Borough v Bath City 31-03-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Fallon, Cooper, Dale, Sugrue, Campbell, Smithers, Setchell. **Sub:** Crawley.

**Bath City:** Book, Ryan, Rogers, Brown, Bourne, Gover, Crompton, Broom, Jenkins, Bryant, Taverner. **Sub:** Higgins.

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

Borough dug themselves out of the clinging mud to beat Bath City much more easily than the scoreline suggests. The Southern League champions grabbed a goal in injury time to add respectability to the result. By that time, though, Borough had the points in the bag and were more than good value for their sixth win in nine Premier Division games. And their claims for a place in the Football Alliance are stronger now than they have been all season.



**Ian Crawley is frozen in mid-air as he dives full-length to head goalwards in the 37th minute. The ball rebounded and Crawley followed up to put Borough ahead.**  
Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

Versatility was the keynote of their display against Bath. Manager Roy Barry reshuffled his side to cope with the absence of Trevor Peake and Brendan Phillips. And he then had to make more readjustments when teenager Paul Sugrue was injured early on. Ian Crawley went on as substitute – and scored eight minutes before half-time. Gareth Dale set up the chance, Crawley hit the bar with a header, and then followed up to score.

The goal dismissed many of Borough's doubts after the teams had struggled on a half-rolled pitch that played tricks with the ball. Bath, less committed to positive play, coped much better in the opening stages. But Nuneaton played with patience and determination and worked hard. Tom Fallon, at centre-half in place of Peake, again showed his potential and no-one covered more ground than Timmy Smithers in midfield.

After City's early flourish – new signing Steve Crompton missed one excellent chance – Borough settled. Tough

tackling left back Malcolm Shotton particularly relished the conditions. Winger John Setchell showed experience beyond his years and failed to allow himself to be intimidated by City's right back Nigel Ryan and Borough began to take control. Crawley almost increased the lead after a super 35 yard run early in the second half before Gareth Dale made it 2-0 on the hour.

Dale forced his way through to hit a shot that goalkeeper Kim Book pushed on to the inside of an upright before it went over the line. That virtually wrapped up the points, although Borough could easily have doubled the score.

Apart from veteran Colin Tavener in midfield and a courageous performance by Book, City had little to offer after the two goal burst. They managed to score in injury time when Crompton crowned his debut with a goal from a glancing header. But it was too late to alter the course of the game and few people would deny Borough their win which lifted them to a mid-table position in the league.

## Two Borough Players In Southern League Squad

Trevor Peake and Brendan Phillips have been named in the Southern League Representative squad for the match against the Isthmian League at the end of the month. The two Nuneaton Borough players are in a party of 16 players for the prestige game at Maidstone on Sunday, April 29. Winger Timmy Smithers has been asked to stand by as one of the reserves.

## Wealdstone v Nuneaton Borough 07-04-1979

**Wealdstone:** Cranstone, McVeigh, Fursdon, Watson, Horgan, Boyle, Brannigan, Moss, Johnson, Duck, Wilkinson. **Sub:** Bookman.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cross, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. **Sub:** Setchell.

Borough made the journey to the Lower Mead ground to face Wealdstone in a Southern League Premier Division match.

Borough travelled back from Wealdstone pleased with a point – but disappointed they did not get both. Which just about sums up a dreary game that hovered somewhere between below average and mediocre.

Whatever excitement there was, came from Borough, by far the more inventive side. Wealdstone did not know how to win and Borough decided long before the end that they would not lose. On the chances the Manor Park side were streets ahead of the North Londoners – goalkeeper Ian Cranstone was their man of the match. He saved from Ian Crawley, somehow denied Cliff Campbell a goal and then thwarted Brendan Phillips.

Compared with Cranstone, Borough keeper Gordon Livsey was one of the crowd. After a first half which should have seen them two goals up, Borough decided to tighten up at the back. Livsey had twice been forced to race out of his box to boot clear with Borough pushing too far forward and leaving themselves exposed. Manager Roy Barry, worried that Wealdstone might

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



suddenly snatch a goal they did not deserve, moved Roy Cross behind the back four. In the first-half the stylish ex-Port Vale skipper had played in front of the defence.

Even after the switch Borough looked more likely to win and Cranstone pulled off one astonishing save from Campbell. The Borough contingent were ready to acclaim a goal as the ball headed towards the net. But Cranstone appeared from nowhere to fling himself across his line and scramble the ball away for one of a whole string of corners that Wealdstone conceded. Two well worked free-kicks almost brought Borough the breakthrough with Wealdstone, by that time completely bottled up.

And then Phillips nearly won the game on his own in the closing minutes. He twice weaved his way into the box to spread panic among the home side's defence. Once inside the penalty area, Borough's midfield star is among the most dangerous players in the Southern League. Unfortunately he does not get there often enough – otherwise he would surely be among the leading scorers in the premier division. With barely two minutes left Phillips turned across full-back Alan Fursdon and hit a left foot shot that Cranstone did well to block.

In the end though, the scoreline was blank – mainly due to Borough's poor finishing and Cranstone's brave display.

## Cheltenham Town v Nuneaton Borough 09-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cross, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Cooper, Smithers. **Sub:** Crawley.

Borough made the journey to Whaddon Road to face Cheltenham Town in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Striker Gareth Dale added the finishing touches to an impressive all-round performance from Borough. Dale struck twice in the second half to sink struggling Cheltenham and take his Southern League tally for the season to eleven. He shot Borough in front in the 49th minute with a brave effort. Full-back Bob Stockley lofted the ball into the middle and Dale beat goalkeeper Nigel Berry in a 50-50 chase to score.

Then he wrapped up the points 14 minutes later when he snapped up a hasty back pass for Robins' defender John Murphy and rounded Berry before planting the ball into an open net. Cheltenham pulled one back in the dying minutes following a mix up. But Nuneaton were rarely in any danger and coasted to their seventh win in eleven games. And the two points lifted them into the top half of the premier division table.

Borough always looked more organised and better balanced than Cheltenham who included former Manor Park favourites Dave Lewis and Gary Fleet. Efficient and composed, particularly at the back where Trevor Peake turned in a rock solid display, they often outclassed troubled Cheltenham. Lewis and Fleet, obviously keen to do well, tried to inspire the Robins early on.

Lewis went close with a header and Fleet beat two defenders in a run from the right. But their team-mates failed to

respond as Borough tightened up their game and developed their play. Cheltenham tried hard to impress new manager Terry Paine, the ex-England and Southampton winger. Just after Dale's first goal, Lewis had a first time shot palmed out by Gordon Livsey. But after Dale had made it 2-0 the points were in the bag for the Manor Park side.

Cheltenham's goal, two minutes from time, was an odd affair, and no more than a consolation for the Gloucestershire side. The ball was headed on from a free-kick, it bounced off Livsey's chest – and cannoned in off Cheltenham substitute Dennis Brown.

## Borough Cutbacks

Nuneaton Borough have sacked Social Club steward Cliff Howe and administration manager Arthur Moss as part of sweeping economy measures. The club has also closed down its lottery and souvenir shop in Queen's Road. And, in future, almost the entire operation at Manor Park will be run by the board and voluntary labour.

Other cutbacks have also been made which chairman Noel Kelly estimates will save Borough around £300 a week. He said: "We are not in financial trouble. The club is solvent – but we intend to keep it that way."

## Nuneaton Borough v Chieti

04-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cross (Tomkinson), Dale, Sugrue (Setchell), Crawley, Cooper, Smithers

Borough welcomed Chieti to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Tournament match.

Borough went out of the Anglo-Italian Tournament after a night of disappointment. What should have been a great adventure turned sour as Chieti beat them with a late goal. And they could now finish without a point – or a goal – from their third excursion into Europe.

Sutton United's win over Pisa which puts them through to the final, was purely academic from Nuneaton's point of view. For Borough went into the game with only a remote chance of success – and finished with none at all. They twice hit the woodwork, but never played well enough to upset the Italian Third Division side. Even a series of team changes failed to lift them and the result was no more than they deserved.

Without their top scorer Cliff Campbell and the skills of Brendan Phillips in midfield, Borough were pedestrian. They lacked the flair to prise open Chieti's blanket defence and were light years behind the Italians in individual skills. Only winger Timmy Smithers and Trevor Peake reached anything like their true form as they dug their own grave in the Manor Park mud.

The match had hardly got under way before Chieti defender Rossi was booked, rather harshly, for a tackle on Smithers who had gone past four players before being stopped. Referee Alan Seville had clearly decided to clamp down

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



heavily from the start. He need not have bothered. Two others players, Chieti midfielder Berlands and Borough's Paul Cooper also had their names taken, but the match was trouble-free. Chieti never showed the uglier side of Italian football – only the skill and organisation that Nuneaton could not match.

Manager Roy Barry pulled off Paul Sugrue and sent on John Setchell to play wide after 25 minutes. Setchell immediately got in a cross which Crawley headed into the air and Dale appeared to be bundled off the ball by Di Brino. Berlanda was then booked for pulling back Crawley before Tom Fallon headed into the side netting.

Borough opened the second half with hope. Smithers chipped the ball into the midfield. Dale headed down and goalkeeper Di Carlo pushed a shot from Crawley outside. Then Crawley hit the bar and an upright from another Setchell cross before Fallon hit the angle from a corner.

But Chieti quickly regained their composure and began to attack, spurred on by the news relayed from the bench that Pisa, their great rivals, were a goal down at Sutton. And they scored eleven minutes from time with a classic goal. Riccardino took the ball to the line and pulled it back across the middle for Beccaria. He could have shot – instead he pushed it square for centre-forward Antignani to beat Gordon Livsey.

Borough suffered another blow a minute later when Roy Cross was helped off with a knee injury. By that time, though, the match, and any hopes they had of success in the tournament, had slipped away. Chieti sat back and soaked up their last desperate attacks without too much bother to become the first Italian side to win at Manor Park.

## Nuneaton Borough v Pisa 14-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Ward, Peake, Cooper, Dale, Sugrue, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. **Subs:** Fallon, Setchell, Tomkinson, Marsden.

**Pisa:** Mannini, Biagini, Miele, Capon, Franceshi, Dariol, Quarella, Cannata, Di Prete, Minozzi, Croci. **Subs:** Marianelli, Rapatini, Bencini, Girardi.

Borough welcomed Pisa to Manor Park to play an Anglo-Italian Tournament match.

Pisa gave a sun kissed Manor Park crowd a glimpse of the darker side of Italian football. Four of their players were booked and two sent off as they abandoned their skills after Borough had taken a 21st minute lead. At one stage it looked as if overworked referee Ken Baker from Coventry would struggle to finish Borough's final match in the Anglo-Italian Tournament.

The trouble started almost as soon as Paul Cooper had shot Nuneaton in front. Before the goal Pisa showed skills Borough could not match. Superbly led by number nine Claudio Di Prete, Pisa threatened to outclass the Manor Park side. Sadly though, Di Prete started Pisa's slide when he was booked just before half-time for a foul on newcomer Eric Ward. He was

sent off in the second half as was defender Marco Capon, who had also previously been booked.

Borough went 2-0 up with a Gareth Dale penalty after Paul Sugrue had been fouled by Emer Franceshi and Dale scored the third in the closing seconds with a spectacular diving header from a John Setchell free-kick.



**Gareth Dale flings himself full length to score a spectacular goal against Pisa in the closing minutes of the game.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Nuneaton Borough v Barnet

16-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cooper, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Ward (Sugrue).

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

Borough plunged to defeat after a rock bottom performance. They lost their way against a far from impressive Barnet side who won with a goal either side of half-time. Borough were dreadful – like a side in an animated trance. Without drive, purpose or direction. And a numbed 800 plus Bank Holiday crowd watched in stunned silence as the North Londoners took the points. To make matters worse, Borough missed a penalty which might have put them back in the game. But they can have no excuses after an abysmal display.

For twenty minutes the sides struggled to control the ball and string more than two passes together. The lanky Barnet defender Tony O'Hare showed his danger when he had a header touched over the top by Gordon Livsey. Barnet went ahead ten minutes before half-time when Livsey handled outside the box. The ball was swung into the middle and it went across the Nuneaton defence to the far post where O'Hare scored with a free header.

Eric Ward then gave Cliff Campbell a chance, but his shot was so weak it hardly reached Kevin Blackwell in the Barnet goal. Substitute Paul Sugrue went on for Ward at the start of the second half and was quickly involved. But Barnet still looked likely to increase their lead and Livsey pushed a shot from Russell Townsend around the post.

Timmy Smithers volleyed wide from a Campbell pass

before the points were settled by Barnet's second goal and Borough's penalty miss. George Cleary made it 2-0 to the visitors in the 58th minute. Livsey palmed out a free kick from Steve Turner and Cleary lobbed the ball back into the net. Barely a minute later Smithers was brought down by Barnet full back Chris Hullett and Birmingham referee Alan Corr awarded a penalty.

Gareth Dale stepped up to take the spot kick – only to see his shot beaten down and saved by Blackwell. That settled it. Borough were on their way to defeat and there was nothing they could do about it. Barnet were able to defend their lead which wasn't all that difficult and they went on to avenge their 2-0 defeat at Underhill last month.

Now Borough need to bounce back quickly, but will need a vastly improved performance to stand any chance in their local derby at Atherstone.

## Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 17-04-1979

**Atherstone:** Hall, Usher, Brown, Head, Montgomery, R. Smith, Kiernan, Gray, Gallagher, Neale, Jennings. **Sub:** Allcock.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Peake, Fallon, Shotton, Phillips, Cooper, Dale, Crawley (Sugrue), Campbell, Smithers

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

Mark Neale grabbed a late equaliser to end an entertaining Southern League derby. Neale, the Adders striker who lives just a football kick away from the Borough ground, struck in the 80th minute to level the scores. And the goal from Neale, who was once wanted by Nuneaton, was a fitting climax to one of the best matches between the two clubs in recent seasons.

Both sides shrugged off disastrous results on Monday to produce controlled, end to end football with flashes of skill. And a crowd of nearly a thousand seemed to enjoy the last Southern League derby between the two teams. If Borough qualify for the Football Alliance and Adders move into the Northern Premier League the sides will not meet for some time.

So it was a delight to the crowd that both sides improved – especially Atherstone after a 7-1 hammering at Worcester. Teenager Eric Ward was replaced in midfield by Gareth Dale and Ian Crawley up front and Paul Sugrue as sub. Adders defender Graham Smith missed the match through injury and Maurice Head, usually a midfield player, was put into the back four with Gary Brown coming in for Colin Bosworth, who was also injured

Both sides had chances early on. Gordon Livsey saved a Stewart Gallagher effort from a Mark Neale cross and then Paul Montgomery cleared off the toes of Crawley. But Adders were just a shade more positive in the early stages and went ahead after 23 minutes. A Roger Smith corner caused a lot of problems and leading scorer Gallagher glanced a header home through a crowd of players.

But Borough were level within six minutes – after a mistake by Adders player-manager Gary Brown. He hesitated too long in his own penalty area and was robbed by Dale, whose cross-cum-shot was met by Cliff Campbell who struck the ball home. Brown threw his arms down in disgust and admitted later: "It was all my fault." Both sides created more chances and the game ran fluently. Hall pushed away a Dale shot after a fine run by the Borough player.

Borough went into the lead for the first time near the start of the second half. Malcolm Shotton looked to have sunk his old team mates with a superb goal. The Geordie defender met a Timmy Smithers corner to score with a fine left foot drive. Borough enjoyed another spell of pressure when Smith cleared from Campbell after Smithers had given him a chance with a speedy run. But it always looked as though Adders could share the points and they struck with ten minutes left.

The Sheepy Road side equalised with a well worked goal from a set piece. Gallagher flicked back Ray Usher's corner and Maurice Head fired in a low shot. Livsey could not hold the ball and it ran loose to Neale who gratefully accepted the chance. Professional pride was still at stake, but for once both sides forgot their "don't give them an inch" policy and they enjoyed themselves.

## Italian Tourney Memento



Nuneaton Borough and Pisa extend the hand of friendship before their match in the Anglo-Italian tournament at Manor Park. The two clubs exchanged pennants and other souvenirs to remind them of the tournament, which involved games in England and Italy.

In the centre of the picture, Borough manager Roy Barry and Mayoress Mary Woodcock show a poster of the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. On the far left is Mr Renato Sergiacomi, who is the secretary of the Italian Semi-Professional League who watched Borough beat Pisa 3-0. Next to Mr Sergiacomi is Mayor Don Woodcock and on the far right Borough chairman Noel Kelly.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Borough Will Learn Of Fate In May

Nuneaton Borough will know in three weeks time whether they are in the Football Alliance. Borough are already confident of a place in the new semi-professional “Super League.” But the names of the founder clubs will be officially announced in the second week of May

### Hillingdon Borough v Nuneaton Borough 04-04-1979

**Hillingdon:** Toogood, Osborne, Langridge, Davies, Leather, Millett, Ragan, Wainwright, Reeve, Melledeew, Williams. **Sub:** Ryan.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cooper, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Ward, Smithers. **Sub:** Tomkinson.

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

Borough earned a well-deserved point with their 50th Southern League goal of the season. And there are few that will have given manager Roy Barry more pleasure.

For the goal came in the 72nd minute from a carefully rehearsed free-kick that worked to perfection. Skipper Bob Stockley went to take the kick, but dummied over the ball and then began to gesticulate to a colleague on the other side of the field.

When all of the Hillingdon eyes turned to see the object of his attentions, Smithers quickly lobbed the ball to the far post. The home side’s defence was wrong-footed and in the confusion that followed, Gareth Dale blasted home the equaliser. It was a piece of imagination that was not in keeping with the rest of the game, which had “end of season” written all over it.

Chances were at a premium on a hard, uneven surface and there was little excitement for the sparse crowd. Hillingdon had a good chance in the opening minute when Reeve collected a long throw and made space for himself in the six yard box. But, after having done the difficult job, he then fluffed his shot and the ball ran tamely back to goalkeeper Gordon Livsey.

Borough’s only real chance before half-time was in the 12th minute when Hillingdon defender Leather headed back towards his own goal. Goalkeeper Toogood casually pushed it on to the bar and Smithers ran in on the rebound. With the goal at his mercy, he saw his shot blocked to safety by Toogood’s brave save.

Hillingdon rocked the Manor Park side with a goal only seven minutes into the second half. Livsey palmed out a Williams’ corner and the ball hit Cliff Campbell before dropping for Reeve who gleefully accepted the chance. That looked as if it would decide the points as Borough struggled to make openings. They rarely looked capable of equalising, but the free kick ploy put them back in the game.

And once there, they went looking for the winner in the closing stages. But good defensive work by Hillingdon kept them at bay and they travelled back with a point from a match that threatened to slip away from them.

## Retained List

Nuneaton Borough manager Roy Barry is looking for a new goalkeeper for next season. For neither Gordon Livsey or Ian Marsden have been retained by the Manor Park club. They will be released – along with winger John Setchell – when their contracts end in May. Injury-plagued Gavin Lang, who has 12 months of a two-year contract to run, was also offered a free transfer, but declined. The rest of the professionals have been retained in what Borough hope will be their first season in the Football Alliance.

### Nuneaton Borough v Telford United 23-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Peake, Cross, Shotton, Phillips, Cooper, Tomkinson (Sugrue), Dale, Campbell, Smithers.

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

Borough promised a lot and produced nothing with a shoddy performance. They made a bright start, forced several goalmouth scrambles and worked hard. But they were unconvincing and their loss of form has cast a long shadow over their hopes of a place in the Football Alliance. A fortnight ago they were confidently predicting they would get in. Now, that is far from certain as a stop-go season splutters to a close. Certainly they need to improve to deserve a place among non-league soccer’s elite.

After the first 20 minutes Telford were always the better side and their winning goal in the 74th minute was always on the cards. It was fashioned by a flash of inspiration by midfielder man Martin Gavin, the best player on the field. He took on the Borough defence, switched direction, accelerated to the line and sent over a perfect cross for Frank Stromeck to score.

Stromeck, plucked out of the West Midland League by the Shropshire side, planted a powerful header past stranded Gordon Livsey at the far post. Borough can point to the fact that they had several chances to score. Brendan Phillips hit an upright just before half-time and the Manor Park side had three shots saved on the line. But they were isolated incidents in another low key display by a Nuneaton side that, in the words of Roy Barry, has “gone off the boil.”

Telford, young and eager to impress, showed their threat in the 38th minute from a quick break. Stromeck headed down to Allcock and then drove the return pass wide as Livsey left his line. Borough always struggled to match the Shropshire club in midfield where Gavin reigned supreme. And the second half scrambles served only to underline their poor finishing.

Timmy Smithers set up a chance for Phillips after an hour only to see his mis-hit shot scrambled around the post by John Martin. Smithers then tried to chip goalkeeper Peter Caswell with Gareth Dale wide open in the middle. Then came the Telford goal, barely a minute after Borough had changed their side by sending on Paul Sugrue for Steve Tomkinson and withdrawing Smithers into midfield. Cliff Campbell shot



# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



wide and Phillips had a shot headed from between the posts by Frank Moore, who then deflected the ball wide after a flash of skill from Sugrue. But it was not a case of unlucky Borough. They got what they deserved and the fans began the show of their disapproval long before the end.

Just before the final whistle midfielder Paul Cooper was helped off with a leg injury that could add to their end of the season problems. They still need points – but will have to improve to steer themselves back on the right course.

## Dartford v Nuneaton Borough 25-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Smithers, Cross, Peake, Crawley, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Tomkinson, Sugrue (Ward 65).

Borough made the journey to Watling Street to face Dartford in a Southern League Premier Division game.

Missed chances again proved Borough's downfall as they battled through the wind, rain and mud. In complete control for the first half-hour, they should have put the result beyond doubt. But they failed to put the ball in the net and paid a heavy price. Borough arrived at the ground with only minutes to spare and manager Roy Barry had to reshuffle his side. Timmy Smithers was moved to left back in the absence of Malcolm Shotton with Ian Crawley in midfield.

After only six minutes centre-forward Cliff Campbell beat the Darts offside trap and raced through unchallenged. He hurried his shot and goalkeeper Roger Keen was able to save when he should have been beaten. Then in the 18th minute, Paul Sugrue latched on to an error by defender Alan Dorney, but was foiled trying to take the ball round the keeper.

Dartford did not appear in the game as an attacking force until the 30th minute when John Mitchell fired a shot straight at Gordon Livsey. But seven minutes later, after Roy Cross had been booked for a foul on Gary Huxley, the lowly Kent club got the vital goal. Gary Julian flicked the ball on to Mitchell whose cross was headed home by Huxley.

Still Borough plugged away as torrential rain swept the ground. They set up almost one-way traffic in the second half – but were unable to pull back the deficit. Sugrue sent a shot over the bar. Gareth Dale brought a fine save from Keen and substitute Eric Ward went close. It was all to no avail and the Manor Park side, desperate to return to winning ways, were left to reflect on their missed opportunities.

## Nuneaton Borough v Hastings United 28-04-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Ward, Cross, Fallon, Peake, Tomkinson, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. **Sub:** Sugrue.

**Hastings:** Armstrong, Sargeant, Petkovic, Morriss, Lambert, Sillett, Westburgh, Sands, Streeter, Fraser, Green. **Sub:** Batten.

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

Borough overcame the legacy of a battle scarred season to

beat Hastings and steer themselves back on course for the Football Alliance. Two goals inside the first 20 minutes gave them total control and they went on to collect their first win in six matches. Injuries forced them to play without full-backs Bob Stockley and Malcolm Shotton and midfielder player Paul Cooper. Manager Roy Barry took stock of the situation and decided to attack – and it paid off.



**Hastings' goalkeeper Jerry Armstrong dives in vain as Gareth Dale's header bounces awkwardly at the near post a split second before crossing the line to make it 2-0.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

He played only three men at the back, committed his side to go forward and saw them wrap up the points inside the first 20 minutes. Timmy Smithers shot them in front in the 14th minute when he stabbed the ball home to add the finishing touch to an impressive move. Gareth Dale made it 2-0 with a lunging header for his 14th goal of the season just six minutes later – and the game died as a competitive event.

Borough were in complete control, rarely stretched by a Hastings side whose confidence had been drained by the two goal start. They were able to sit on their lead and the game lost most of its sharpness. Chances were missed, but at least this time they had goals in hand and, for once, were not made to pay.

The second half was drab, saved only by a 57th minute penalty that presented Nuneaton with their third goal. A shot from Tom Fallon was pushed out by the Hastings goalkeeper and the referee decided that midfielder player Derek Morris handled as Timmy Smithers tried to hit the ball back into the middle. The decision looked harsh, but Steve Tomkinson stepped up calmly to send the keeper the wrong way for his second Southern League goal for the club.



**Armstrong goes the wrong way as Steve Tomkinson drills the ball home from the penalty spot in the 57th minute.** Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Nuneaton Borough v AP Leamington 03-05-1979

**Borough: Livsey, Ward, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Tomkinson (Crawley), Sugrue, Phillips, Campbell, Dale, Smithers.**

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

Trevor Peake, the “king” of Southern League centre-halves, scored a majestic goal to give Borough both points. Peake climbed superbly to meet a Paul Sugrue free kick at the far post four minutes from half-time to win the match. But his delight was tempered by a booking seven minutes earlier which could jeopardise his chances of another appearance in the Southern League representative side.

A wild tackle on Leamington’s highly rated striker Duncan Gardner was quickly stamped on by referee Maurice Robinson. And Peake, now has 20 penalty points – enough to warrant a three-match suspension. He was one of four players booked in an untidy game, crucial to Leamington’s hopes of a place in the Football Alliance. Mr Robinson also took the names of Brakes’ defender Frank Houston, midfielder Roy Morton and ex-Borough favourite Bobby Vincent.

But the game was never that bad tempered. Apart from one 20 minute patch in the first half when Borough were on-song the teams struggled to put their passes together. Vincent, Leamington’s top scorer with 20 goals, had their best chances. He shot into the side netting from an inch-perfect pass by Steve Briscoe after half-an-hour and he saw a shot scrape the bar and go over with Borough in trouble just before half time.

Leamington launched a last-ditch spell of pressure in an attempt to save a game that had slipped away from them. But Borough were generally the more positive of the two teams in a match that was often scrappy. They could have had a penalty as early as the sixth minute when Sugrue, always a threat, was brought down by Tom Gorman. Brendan Phillips had two shots blocked, Gareth Dale had one kicked off the line as Nuneaton forced several scrambles.

Timmy Smithers nearly cashed in on a slack back-pass from Alan Jones, but Borough tended to take too much time. Their crosses were never early enough to create any real panic among the Leamington defenders. But the pressure was more on the Brakes, anxious to clinch a place among the “elite” – and it showed.

Borough could afford to be a little more relaxed. Their place in the Alliance is virtually assured. But they would have done much better had centre-forward Cliff Campbell been given more support up front. Campbell, top scorer with 21 goals, showed flashes of skill despite being barracked by certain sections of the crowd. Borough were always competent at the back where youngster Eric Ward continued to mature and Malcolm Shotton, Trevor Peake and Roy Cross played with composure.

Ten minutes later Barry sent on substitute Paul Sugrue for centre-forward Cliff Campbell. But even the tiny winger, already an established favourite with the fans, failed to inject any real spark into the game. In the closing minutes Hastings, who had struggled through, suffered another blow when Morris was laid out after a challenge on Borough keeper Gordon Livsey. He was stretchered off with a head injury, but recovered sufficiently to join his team-mates for the long trip home.

With the other results going in their favour. Borough can now plan for the Alliance. But they will need to show a dramatic improvement in their remaining six games to convince their supporters that they will do well among the “elite”.

## Dorchester Town v Nuneaton Borough 01-05-1979

**Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Barry, Fallon, Peake, Thomas, Sugrue, Palmer, Crawley, Tomkinson, Smithers.**

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

Patched up Nuneaton defended stubbornly to leave Dorchester with a well earned point. With three players injured and three unable to get time off work, Nuneaton were well below full strength even before Cliff Campbell failed to show up at his pick up point and left them without a substitute.

But with manager Roy Barry doing a great job as an emergency sweeper in his first game for several seasons, Nuneaton soaked up heavy pressure, particularly in the second half and were well worth their draw. With a first half wind and slope advantage, Nuneaton also did their share of attacking with wingers Paul Sugrue and Timmy Smithers giving Dorchester’s Beaney brothers an uncomfortable time on both flanks.

It was Smithers who snapped up his side’s best chance of the first-half to put them ahead in the 21st minute. The wind helped a long through ball evade Dorchester’s defence and Smithers burst through to hit the ball beneath the advancing David Best in the home goal.

Dorchester were denied a penalty when Gordon Livsey pulled down striker Peter Poore as he dribbled around him and Barry Harman also let Nuneaton off when he miskicked from five yards. The home side launched a series of fierce attacks from the resumption and it was no surprise when Harman forced a close range equaliser after 55 minutes.

Livsey saved superbly from a header by teenager Trevor Senior and when Billy Foreman netted direct from a corner, Nuneaton were relieved to get a free kick for obstruction on the goalkeeper.

Dorchester’s attacking brought them a dozen corners in the second half, but Nuneaton gave little away at the back and it was the home side who had the luckiest escape after 75 minutes. Ian Crawley hooked spectacularly past Best and defender Hedley Steel worked wonders to head out from under the bar when a goal seemed certain.

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Witney Town v Nuneaton Borough 05-05-1979

**Witney:** Baker, Hartigan, Light, Jefferies, Stokes, McFarlane, Aylott, Hiron, Dallaway, Daley, M. Gilligan.

**Borough:** Livsey, Cooper, Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Cross, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Sugrue, Smithers. Sub: Ward.

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

Gareth Dale scored a superb equaliser for Borough. His 70th minute effort cancelled out a Jeffries' goal in the first minute of the second half. Paul Cooper passed a late fitness test, but Steve Tomkinson was ruled out as unfit and 18-year-old Paul Sugrue was drafted into the side. In the first minute Borough almost shocked Witney by taking the lead. Sugrue took a free kick out on the left, the ball was headed on by Campbell, but Shotton was just unable to make contact as he lunged forward.

In the eighth minute Sugrue jinked his way across the face of the area but his tame shot lacked direction. Some feeling crept into the game following an off the ball incident between Phillips and Jeffries which resulted in referee Brian Hill lecturing the tall Witney defender. Witney should have been punished in the 15th minute when Sugrue dispossessed Witney full back Jimmy Light. The youngster cut into the area but his final shot lacked power and Baker got down to save.

Sugrue was causing all manner of problems for the Witney defence and Light went into the referee's book after the full back had hacked the youngster down in the 18th minute. In the 25th minute, another Witney player went into the book for dissent. Nuneaton were pulling the Witney defence apart but just could not find the net. In the 27th minute Baker brilliantly saved a shot from Gareth Dale and one minute later, Campbell wasted an opportunity, shooting against the keeper.

After putting on so much pressure, Borough were lucky not to fall behind in the 34th minute. Daley found acres of space at the far post but with only Livsey to beat, the Witney striker snatched at his attempted chip shot and the keeper was relieved to see the ball sail over the bar. Young Sugrue was again in the wars, twice being chopped down by a Witney defender, but the referee waved play on.

Nuneaton brought on substitute Eric Ward for the injured Sugrue, but the first minute of the second half saw Witney take the lead. McFarlane got in a low curling shot which struck the foot of a post and Alan Jeffries hammered home the rebound.

Smithers was deeply involved as Borough fought to get back on terms and the left winger was unlucky when McFarlane headed out a goalbound shot in the 53rd minute. Moments later, Nuneaton had penalty appeals waved aside when Smithers went crashing in the area. Nuneaton deservedly equalised in the 70th minute. Timmy Smithers ran on to Livsey's long clearance and a neat flick put Gareth Dale clear to score a great goal reminiscent of his effort against Matlock in the FA Cup.

## Nuneaton Borough v Hillingdon Borough 13-05-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Ward, Dale, Stockley, Phillips, Sugrue (Crawley 72), Smithers, Campbell.

**Hillingdon:** Phillips, Osbourne, Langridge, Davies, Leather, Millett, Ragan (Hutchins 86), Wainwright, Reeve, Melledew, Williams.

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

Out-of-sorts Borough could only manage an unimpressive draw in their last home league game of the season. They never got to grips with Hillingdon's defensive ploys in an easily forgettable match. Hillingdon's manager, Allen Batsford, formerly with Wimbledon, is a past master at playing away from home – and coming away unbeaten.

And Hillingdon, just like Wimbledon used to be in their Southern League days, are very difficult to beat away from home with their tactics. Borough could afford to play with just three defenders at the back with Bob Stockley drafted into midfield. Hillingdon stifled Borough with a display keyed on defence. They often had seven or eight players back in defence for great parts of the match.

And with Borough ineffective up front the game soon fizzled out, after a controversial start, into a dull end of the season affair. Tiny Paul Sugrue was soon the victim of some harsh tackling by the visitors. Sugrue, who has had quite a bruising time since winning a place in the team, was constantly brought down by the opposition. Most of the free-kicks awarded to Borough were for fouls on Sugrue. And the teenager was at the centre of an ugly incident in the 24th minute. He inoffensively caught Hillingdon's Millett as the defender cleared. Surprisingly, Millett got up and clearly struck Sugrue – knocking him to the ground.

Millett was booked and can count himself extremely lucky not to be sent off. And to add to the crowd's anger, Sugrue also had his name taken. Seconds later, Malcolm Shotton became the third player booked – for a foul on Ragan. But generally, Borough struggled to find their rhythm in a disappointing match. With Hillingdon almost redundant in attack, Borough should have had more room to create but no-one could supply the necessary sparkle.

The one real bright spot in the match was the performance of midfielder Eric Ward. Ward looked confident and composed and showed a lot of vision and intelligence.

## Redditch United v Nuneaton Borough 09-05-1979

**Redditch:** Edwards, Grice, Taylor, Bilboe, D. Jones, Casley, Smart, Shaw, Williams, Tuohy, Cotton. Sub: J. Jones.

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Shotton, Cross, Peake, Fallon, Dale, Phillips, Crawley, Ward, Smithers. Sub: Sugrue.

Borough made the journey to The Valley to take on Redditch United in a Southern League Premier Division match.

A typical end of season local derby produced two points for



Nuneaton which on balance they just about deserved. On a hard pitch both sides had difficulty controlling the ball and both were down to almost half speed after a hectic end of season programme. Redditch should have taken the lead after just four minutes when Cotton broke through on his own, but put his shot wide.

But five minutes later Borough were ahead when Brendan Phillips chipped a free-kick from just outside the penalty area over the defensive wall and past keeper Edwards. Cotton twice had chances to put Redditch level, with solo efforts, before Phillips again was Nuneaton's marksman five minutes from half-time with a good shot which was saved at the second attempt by Edwards.

Then Dale and Crawley combined well only for Edwards to save and then Dale broke through on his own to force Edwards into making a half save right at the edge of his area. A dreadful error by Taylor gave Borough their second, just three minutes into the second half. Taylor put the ball right at the feet of Dale who was just eight yards out, and he gave Edwards no chance.

Redditch pushed hard to get back into the game and Cotton again missed a good opportunity when put through by Bilboe, only to put his shot straight at keeper Livsey's legs. Then Redditch should have pulled a goal back when Fallon brought down Taylor just inside the penalty area, only for Grice to see his first penalty miss in five years as Livsey made an excellent diving save.

Redditch's man of the match, debut making Tasley, was injured 15 minutes from time, and spent several minutes receiving treatment off the pitch. But he came back, although limping, to put in one of Redditch's best attacking moves with a glancing header from a Jones cross, which was just wide in the dying minutes of the game.

Nuneaton did just about enough to take the points, but on the whole it was a drab and lifeless game, watched by only 263 people.

## Official: Borough In Alliance

Nuneaton Borough will be in the new Football Alliance next season – and that's official. Gordon Graham, secretary of the Alliance steering committee, announced today that Borough were among the teams in the semi-professional "Super League." He said: "At the moment there are only 11 certs – and Nuneaton is one of them.

## Phillips And Peake Again In Southern League Side

Brendan Phillips and Trevor Peake are again in the Southern League representative side for the inter-League final at Yeovil on Sunday. The Nuneaton pair will definitely play if they have no injury problems after Nuneaton's match at Gravesend.

Barry Watling, manager of Maidstone, and one of the men who picked the team, said: "They both played very well in our first match and deserve to keep their place."

## Gravesend & Northfleet v Nuneaton Boro' 11-05-1979

**Gravesend:** Smelt, Idle, Coghill (Tomkins 74), Keirs, Osborne, Stonebridge, Wallace, Glozier, Woon, Dudman, Keys.

**Borough:** Livsey, Cooper (Barry 71), Shotton, Fallon, Peake, Farndon, Sugrue, Crawley, Campbell, Ward, Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Gravesend and Northfleet to play a Southern League Premier Division game.

Disappointing Borough offered little resistance to below strength Gravesend. Injury hit Borough posed the home side few problems clearly missing Brendan Phillips and Gareth Dale. The one player who looked capable of keeping Nuneaton in this end of season fixture was Ian Crawley. He caused some problems and scored his side's lone goal.

Gravesend took a first-half lead when Phil Stonebridge turned in a Kevin Wallace pass after 13 minutes. But after Andy Woon had hit a shot narrowly wide Borough rallied for the rest of the half. After 53 minutes Crawley put them back into the match latching onto a bad back pass and beating Lee Smelt.

Just five minutes later Gravesend regained the lead. As Nuneaton's defence were slow to clear, Stonebridge sneaked in to score his second goal with a dipping shot that left Livsey standing. On the hour Gravesend's Peter Osborne was booked for dissent and Nuneaton won a number of free kicks.

Crawley could have scored again after John Keirs had made an error in the home box but Smelt was quickly off his line to clear. The issue was put beyond doubt when Bob Dudman's free kick was parried by Livsey and Osborne followed up to force the ball over the line.

## Nuneaton Borough v Atherstone Town 13-05-1979

**Borough:** Livsey, Stockley, Cross, Fallon, Shotton, Ward, Campbell (Cooper), Dale, Sugrue, Crawley, Smithers. Sub: Barry.

**Atherstone:** Hall, R. Smith, Bosworth (Brown), G. Smith, Montgomery, Gray, Kiernan (Usher), Head, Gallagher, Neale, Jennings.

Borough welcomed Atherstone Town to Manor Park to play the first leg of the Midland Floodlit Cup final.

So-sad Gordon Livsey was sent off by Football League referee Peter Reeves in a sensational end to the first leg of the Midland Floodlit Cup final yesterday morning. Livsey, clearly upset by the decision, said after the game: "Until now I have not been booked in 17 years of football – never mind sent off."

Goalkeeper Livsey got his marching orders from Reeves, who was in charge of this year's League Cup Final, just a minute from the end of the match. He scrambled away a shot from Steve Gray and as he clambered to gather the ball Mark Neale challenged strongly injuring the keeper. No-one could criticise Neale – he had to make the challenge – and even now there is some doubt that the Adders striker caught him as Malcolm Shotton was also tangled up.

As Livsey left the field few people realised he had been sent



off – most thought he was injured. With Timmy Smithers in goal, referee Reeves signalled that Roy Barry could not come on as sub – and then it sunk it that he had sent Livsey off.

That incredible incident apart, it was a typical local derby with neither side giving an inch. Adders were undoubtedly the better side on the day and provided most of the action up front. They are now in a useful position for the second leg at Sheepy Road on Tuesday night.

Ian Crawley missed Borough's best chance early on when he should have done better, after Colin Bosworth had fluffed a back-pass. The striker stumbled and the chance was gone. Borough skipper Bob Stockley denied his old team-mates with a clearance from the toes of Steve Gray. Three players, Joe Kiernan and Graham Smith for Adders and Borough's Crawley, were booked in the first-half – but it was not a dirty game.

Few chances were created throughout the match – you could count them on one hand – and most of them came from Atherstone. Mark Neale powered a header against the crossbar and then Gray missed his shot with only Livsey to beat. Borough forced one rare breakthrough but Cliff Campbell mistimed his effort.

So, unfortunately, the only memorable incident from the Sunday morning encounter was Livsey's dismissal – something he wants to forget.

## Phillips Man Of The Match

Brendan Phillips won the man of the match award in the Inter-League cup final at Yeovil yesterday. The Borough midfield player scored the only goal of the game after 68 minutes. Phillips volleyed the ball home after Redditch's Mick Tuohy had knocked the ball down.

### Atherstone Town v Nuneaton Borough 13-05-1979

**Atherstone:** Hall, Usher, G. Smith, Brown, Montgomery, Kiernan, Gray, Head, Gallagher, Neale, Jennings. Subs: Balac and Jones.

**Borough:** Marsden, Stockley, Peake, Cross, Fallon (Sugrue), Shotton, Phillips, Ward, Dale, Crawley (Campbell), Smithers.

Borough made the journey to Sheepy Road to play Atherstone Town in the second leg of the Midland Floodlit Cup final.

Slick Adders lifted the Midland Floodlit Cup for the third year running with an impressive victory. Adders were always the better side and were deserving winners.

Only a fine performance from Borough keeper Ian Marsden, making his farewell appearance for the club, prevented Atherstone from winning by a greater margin. Marsden pulled off a series of superb saves to keep Adders at bay. It was in attack where Adders held the key to their victory.

Stewart Gallagher and Mark Neale, Atherstone's twin strikers, looked streets ahead of Gareth Dale and Ian Crawley, who tried hard but made little impression. Only Brendan Phillips worried Adders with a series of probing runs, but the front runners made little use of his services.

It was Phillips who won Borough the penalty that put them into the lead after 19 minutes. He was brought down by Adders' player-manager Gary Brown after racing into the penalty area. Ex-Adders' defender Malcolm Shotton saw his spot kick brilliantly pushed away by Ken Hall. He followed up and despite fluffing the rebound the ball agonisingly crept over the line out of Hall's reach.

Right on half-time Stewart Gallagher scored his 30th goal of the season to put Adders on level terms. Marsden let a superb cross from Joe Kiernan slip out of his hands and Gallagher wasted no time in thumping the ball home.

Just four minutes into the second half, Adders were in front. Maurice Head looked to have wasted a good chance when he skied his shot but it fell for Mark Neale to power a header past Marsden. Cliff Campbell replaced Crawley, but made little impression as Adders attacked again. Marsden made a fine save from Gallagher, who has had a superb first season with Adders. Four seasons ago Gallagher, then with Coventry Sporting, scored the two goals that knocked Tranmere out of the FA Cup – and he is now repeating this form.

Paul Sugrue was sent on but his arrival was too late to change the state of the game. The sides now go their separate ways – Borough into the Football Alliance and Adders to Northern Premier League football. But on this form it should not be too long before Atherstone join their old rivals in the Alliance.

## Southern League Premier Division 1978-79

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Worcester City	42	27	11	4	92	33	65
Kettering Town	42	27	7	8	109	43	61
Telford United	42	22	10	10	60	39	54
Maidstone United	42	18	18	6	55	35	54
Bath City	42	17	19	6	59	41	53
Weymouth	42	18	15	9	71	51	51
AP Leamington	42	19	11	12	65	53	49
Redditch United	42	19	10	13	70	57	48
Yeovil Town	42	15	16	11	59	49	46
Witney Town	42	17	10	15	53	52	44
Nuneaton Borough	42	13	17	12	59	50	43
Gravesend & Northfleet	42	15	12	15	56	55	42
Barnet	42	16	10	16	52	64	42
Hillingdon Borough	42	12	16	14	50	41	40
Wealdstone	42	12	12	18	51	59	36
Atherstone Town	42	9	17	16	46	65	35
Dartford	42	10	14	18	40	56	34
Cheltenham Town	42	11	10	21	38	72	32
Margate	42	10	9	23	44	75	29
Dorchester Town	42	7	11	24	46	86	25
Hastings United	42	5	13	24	37	85	23
Bridgend Town	42	6	6	30	39	90	18

## Matlock Town — 4th Qualifying Round

Borough welcomed Matlock Town to Manor Park to play a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Dale, Phillips, Fleet, Campbell, Crawley, Smithers. Sub: Smith.

Matlock: Barker, Smith, Wilson, Chambers, Stott, Lukasik, Whiteley, N. Fenoughty, Hall, T. Fenoughty, M. Fenoughty. Sub: Porteous.

Gareth Dale etched his name deep into the chronicles of Borough's FA Cup history with a breathtaking goal. Borough were on their way out of the competition as the final seconds ticked away. Then, with barely a minute left, Dale grabbed a sensational equaliser and Manor Park erupted.

Excited fans engulfed the former Redditch striker and there was hardly time to restart before the whistle ended a memorable match. If the replay is only half as exciting, the fans are in for another treat. Two teams totally committed to attacking football staged an epic battle for the 3,000-plus crowd.

But justice was done in the end and few people would deny Nuneaton their second chance. They started the game without skipper Dave Lewis, ruled out by an ankle injury suffered in training. Then, with the match just 27 minutes old, they lost centre-half Trevor Peake with a back injury.

To lose two players so vital to their

hopes would have dispirited most teams – but not Borough. Graham Smith, clubman supreme, plugged the gap left by Peake in magnificent style. And Borough should have been in front at half-time as they weathered Matlock's early onslaught and then took command.

The Northern Premier League leaders survived a series of goalmouth scrambles that turned their penalty area into a battlefield. But they had the man of the match in blond haired defender Alan Lukasik, who almost denied Nuneaton single handed.

Lukasik twice cleared off the line and was always in the thick of the action – and there was plenty of that. Cliff Campbell was denied a goal by keeper Dave Barker after he had burst clear.

Ian Crawley headed into the goalkeeper's arms with the visitors under more severe pressure. And the Matlock goalkeeper Barker then pulled off a point blank range save from Timmy Smithers.

Matlock must have been relieved to hear the half-time whistle, but they survived another near miss with the second half a minute old when Smithers went desperately close.

Then, in the 55th minute, they went ahead with a goal that stunned the terraces into silence. Player-manager Tom Fenoughty hit a cross from 40 yards and with Knight on his near post, the ball sailed over the keepers'

head and dipped into the far corner of the net.

But Borough lifted themselves off the floor and Dale, who operated at right back throughout the first-half, set up an equaliser for Campbell. The big centre-forward turned superbly to slam the ball into the net for his sixth goal in three games.



**Matlock goalkeeper Dave Barker stretches high to take the ball out of the air as Cliff Campbell puts in a challenge.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

More excitement mounted as the tie moved towards its closing stages with everything in the balance. Then Matlock restored their lead with another goal that will haunt the Borough defence. Left back Andy Wilson was allowed to run 40 yards past three defenders.

He reached the line and pulled the ball back – and Tom Fenoughty was there to snatch his second goal. That was the signal for Matlock to produce some of the cool, composed one touch football that is a hallmark of their game.

Nothing it seemed could save Borough and disappointment started to spread through the crowd. But it turned to joy



**Gareth Dale latches on to a header from Cliff Campbell after a long free-kick had beaten the Matlock defence – and hammers the ball into the net for an unforgettable goal.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



as Dale moved on to a pass from Gary Fleet, left Wilson stranded and steered the ball into the net.

And Borough pulled off a result that a week ago would have been unthinkable – and it's far from over yet.

## Matlock Town — 4th Qualifying Round Replay

Borough made the journey to Matlock for a 4th Qualifying Round FA Cup Replay.

Borough: Knight, Cooper, Cross, Smith, Tysall, Phillips, Alderson, Fleet, Campbell, Dale (Fallon), Smithers.

Magnificent Borough last night searched back through the pages of time. They wrote another gripping chapter in their FA Cup annals after a stupendous final qualifying round replay. Now, when the fans mention Swansea and Rotherham, they have to add Matlock to their list of memories.

Two almost perfectly matched sides staged another breathtaking battle that produced almost unbearable tension and excitement.

And it's far from over yet. For, after three and a half hours of nerve jangling football, they have to meet again to decide who goes through to the First Round. Borough played their part to the limit in an unforgettable game that drained the 3,000 crowd.

Matlock's picturesque Causeway Lane ground was turned into a cauldron of excitement on a spring-like Autumn night. There was joy as Borough swept ahead with a goal inside the first four minutes. Ecstasy as they made it 2-0 early in the second half.

Then doubt, as Matlock reduced the arrears 15 minutes from the end of normal time. And agony as the Northern Premier Leaguers equalised with just three minutes left to force the tie into extra time.

But when it was all over the players and the fans knew they had taken part in and witnessed something special. A pulsating battle that will grow in

stature as the years go by. Few of the people privileged to be there will ever forget. They will remember how injury hit Borough – the underdogs – went into the lead.

Gary Fleet and Gareth Dale set up the move. Dale crossed, Timmy Smithers beat goalkeeper Dave Barker in the air and Cliff Campbell ran in to make sure as the ball headed towards the net. They will talk about the second goal when their grandchildren are going to Manor Park. How Roy Cross hit a long free-kick out of defence, how Campbell headed it on. And how Dale moved on to the ball with astonishing speed and hit a shot from 20 yards that thudded against the underside of the crossbar and went in.

But above all, they will reflect on a night when Borough battled against the odds to keep their Cup hopes alive. Few people gave them a chance after Saturday's 2-2 draw at Manor Park. They travelled to Derbyshire without Trevor Peake and Dave Lewis and Ian Crawley failed a fitness test.

Matlock, runaway leaders of the Northern Premier League were red-hot favourites. But they reckoned without the spirit of a Borough side that simply refused to give in. Even youngster Tom Fallon who went on as a substitute for Dale five minutes into extra time played an invaluable part.

The only disappointment was the performance of Brian Alderson, who struggled to make a contribution at all. But Matlock deserve the high praise for the way they came back. To save a game after losing two goals to a Borough side in such a mood was nothing short of miraculous.

Top scorer Peter Scott cut Nuneaton's lead following a goalmouth scramble in the 74th minute. And in the 87th minute Alan Lukasik, one of the best players Nuneaton will come up against this season, equalised.

The blond-haired defender was given a free header from a Joe Whiteley cross to

take the match into extra time. Matlock pounded by Nuneaton before half-time, had come back from the dead.

To be fair though, they did enough in the second half to warrant their escape and the 2-2 scoreline was a fair reflection on the game.

Then, as the battle moved into extra time, Matlock – lifted by their goals – piled on more pressure. But Borough weathered the storm, pulled themselves together and the atmosphere was electric as the minutes ticked away.

Lead-footed players ran themselves almost to the brink of exhaustion before the whistle ended what must have seemed an eternity for the Nuneaton fans. Too many Borough players played too well to be singled out for special mention.

There were too many incidents and too many near misses to be captured in cold print. It was a night of emotion – two hours to savour in the years to come. And it's a pity that when it is eventually all over, one side will have to sit back while the other takes on Crewe Alexandra in the First Round.

## Matlock Town — 4th Qualifying Round Second Replay

Borough made the journey to Marston Road, Stafford, to play a FA Cup 4th Qualifying Round Second Replay.

Borough: Knight, Cooper, Smith, Fallon, Tysall, Fleet (Crawley 80), Lewis, Phillips, Dale, Campbell, Smithers.

Borough last night emerged from a five hour journey through a tunnel of tension and doubt – in triumph. Goals from Timmy Smithers and Cliff Campbell earned them a place in the First Round of the FA Cup. And they now march proudly forward to take on Fourth Division Crewe Alexandra.

But few people will forget their three epic cup battles against Matlock Town. Two evenly matched sides staged a superb shop window display for all that is best in non-league football. They

stretched their fans' nerves almost to breaking point – and at the end their relief flooded over.

Hundreds of Borough supporters spilled over from the terraces to turn the pitch into a delirious sea of blue and white. They chaired the players towards the dressing rooms after another unforgettable night. The excitement never matched the fever pitch of last week's tortuous two hours at Matlock. Some of the skills the sides showed in the first match at Manor Park were missing.

But last night the result was all that mattered – and no-one could deny Borough their victory. Stafford's Marston Road ground provided an impressive backdrop and, for one man, the perfect stage.

For while all of the Borough players deserved the acclaim of the fans, one stood out above the rest – Gary Fleet. He orchestrated the side from midfield with a performance that bordered on brilliance. There can have been fewer better individual performances in the history of the Manor Park club.

And when he went off with a calf injury ten minutes from time, the whole crowd rose to applaud his skills. Fleet's contribution was immeasurable. Sometimes he only scratches the surface, but last night he exposed the full range of his undoubted ability to the fans.

Then there was teenager Tom Fallon, who grew in stature the longer the game went on. Fallon, drafted in at the last minute for flu victim Roy Cross at the heart of defence, shook off a shaky first-half to play superbly.

Gary Tysall, at left back, had his best game for the club, Graham Smith once again showed his experience at centre-half and Timmy Smithers ran himself into the ground. So, too, did Gareth Dale and Cliff Campbell added another chapter to a story that now reads like Roy of the Rovers.

Paul Cooper was both aggressive and



**Borough striker Gareth Dale is just beaten to the ball in a challenge with a Matlock defender as the Manor Park side launch another attack.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

adventurous at right-back. Dave Lewis returned to anchor the side in midfield and Brendan Phillips, like many of his team-mates, improved after a doubtful first-half.

Bob Knight was as dependable as ever in goal and Ian Crawley chased everything when he went on as substitute in the tension packed closing minutes.

The opening stages were just as hectic as the sides set the pattern for the shape of things to come. Both goals had narrow escapes before Smithers stunned Matlock after eight minutes with a superb goal. Tysall played the ball down the line, Campbell flicked it on and Smithers unleashed a left foot shot from the edge of the box that went across goalkeeper Dave Barker and into the far corner of the net.

Despite the goal Borough tried to hit long passes up to their front runners, but their defenders struggled against

the strong blustery win. Matlock had a goal ruled out for offside in the 19th minute of an action packed start. But they equalised three minutes later from a corner. Melvin Palmer headed on from the near post and the ball went across the goalmouth to left back Andy Wilson.

He pulled it back and Peter Scott, top scorer for the Northern Premier League leaders, was there to add the finishing touch. Matlock then began to apply pressure and doubts started to creep into Borough's play. But Fleet had showed flashes of what he could do and in the second half he was a revelation.

Borough stopped pumping long balls forward, started to build up from the back – and looked a much better side. But the tie balanced on a knife edge as first one side attacked and then the other. Nuneaton improved at the back and started to put their moves together with more conviction.





**Fever pitch excitement shows on the faces of two Nuneaton Borough fans as they watch an epic FA Cup battle at Matlock last night.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

But Matlock showed what a good side they are in possession and the excitement and tension began to increase as both sides survived near misses. Then, with just 15 minutes left, Fleet set off on another of his magical runs that took him past three players.

He played the ball out to Dale, ran in for the cross, miskicked, and the ball went through to Campbell. The centre-forward showed supreme coolness as he brought the ball under control and

then beat Barker for the winning goal and provided a fairy-tale ending to the tie. Three weeks ago he had not scored a goal – now he has scored nine in the last seven games.

The closing stages tore at the fans' nerves as Matlock tried to save the match and Tysall managed to get his foot to the ball when Tom Fenoughty looked sure to equalise.

Matlock screamed for a penalty when substitute John Whiteley tumbled into

the box. But Borough were home and dry after three stupendous matches.

It was a pity that one of the sides had to lose – but Borough now wait to welcome Crewe.

## **Crewe Alexandra – 1st Round Proper**

Borough welcomed Crewe Alexandra to Manor Park to play a 1st Round Proper FA Cup tie.

Borough: Knight, Cooper, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Lewis, Dale, Phillips, Campbell, Fleet, Smithers. Sub: Smith.

Crewe: Rafferty, Wilkinson, Roberts, Rimmer, Bowles, Bevan, Davies, Purdie, Coyne, Wilshaw, Robertson. Sub: Nelson.

Crewe hauled themselves into the next round across the debris of Borough's broken dreams. The Fourth Division side, who started as underdogs, cast aside their doubts with two goals inside ten minutes before half-time.

And they then sat back to defend their lead as Nuneaton set up an almost constant stream of attacks after the break. Borough's hopes of glory were choked in a crowded goalmouth as the Fourth Division side closed ranks.

They pulled almost every player back to turn their penalty area into a "no-go" area. And they stripped the tie of much of its glamour with strong arm tactics that incensed the crowd.

In the end they were competent enough and sufficiently professional to earn the right to go through. But Borough will long be haunted by the memory of missed chances that could have made all the difference.

Twice they hit the woodwork and Gareth Dale and Timmy Smithers missed chances they are unlikely to forget. Crewe manager Harry Gregg provided the perfect summing up: "I was frightened to death," he admitted.

"I am sure I had two heart attacks when they hit the post. But they missed their chances and we took ours – and that's what football is all about."

No-one will argue with that. Right from



**Jubilant Nuneaton Borough fans prepare to invade the pitch at the end of the FA Cup tie that put Borough into the First Round.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



**The tie is barely two minutes old as Gareth Dale heads over for Borough with the Crewe defence in all kinds of trouble.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

before the end as they searched in vain for the goal that would have set the tie alight. Dale lifted a shot over the top from point blank range and Smithers did the same – chances they would have put away in a league game.



**Crewe keeper Rafferty punches clear as Borough try to find a way through the Crewe defence.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

the start, it was clear it just wasn't Borough's day. For 15 minutes they had Crewe in all kinds of trouble. But they failed to score when they were on top.

Dale flashed a header wide. Smithers had an effort cleared off the line and both Dale and Campbell hit the woodwork. Then the Fourth Division side stripped the tie of much of its glamour with the two goals that stunned the crowd.

Centre-forward Peter Coyne grabbed the first after 33 minutes in a split second that showed the difference in finishing between the two sides. Dai Davies played the ball in from the left and Coyne was in like a flash at the near post to slip the ball past Bob Knight.

Borough knew they faced a monumental task. So did a silenced crowd, huddled against rain, then sleet and finally snow and whipped by a biting wind.

Ten minutes later their problems increased when Crewe centre-half Paul Bowles moved forward on to a pass from Warwick Rimmer to grab the second. Once ahead, Crewe

had no intention of allowing their lead to slip.

Defence became their sole aim and Knight spent a frozen second half as no more than a spectator in the Nuneaton goal. Try as they might, Borough could not find a way through the forest of players in the penalty area.

Too many long balls played into the hands of Bowles, Crewe's best player, and his back four partner Bernard Purdie. The effort was there. So was the determination and the will to win – but there was nothing Borough could do about it.

Desperation crept into their play long



**A picture that will haunt Cliff Campbell as the Borough centre-forward watches his shot hit the post with goalkeeper Kevin Rafferty helpless.**

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune

## Kettering Town — 1st Round Proper

Borough made the journey to Rockingham Road, Kettering, to play a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy tie.

Nuneaton Borough came within minutes of landing a plum home tie with Northern Leaguers Scarborough, in their game against Kettering.

They led from an early Cliff Campbell goal, scored after four minutes, in their first round FA Trophy match against Kettering. But the Poppies, the Southern League pacesetters, who earlier this season defeated Borough 3-0 at Manor Park, equalised through Billy Kellock in the closing minutes to salvage a replay, which has been arranged for Monday night.

## Kettering Town — 1st Round Proper Replay

Borough welcomed Kettering Town to Manor Park for a 1st Round Proper FA Trophy Replay.

Borough: Livsey, Stockley, Tysall, Cross, Peake, Fallon, Dale, Smithers, Campbell, Phillips, Crawley. Sub: Cooper.

Kettering: Lane, Ashby, Lee, Easthall, Dixey, Suddards, Flannagan, Kellock, Phipps, Clayton, Felton. Sub: Hughes.

Unhappy Borough were frozen out of the FA Trophy by cool, clinical Kettering. A second half penalty stripped them of their last chance of glory in an already threadbare season. And Wembley disappeared from the Manor Park club's horizon for yet another season.

Borough's major triumph was getting the first round replay played in the first place. Unfortunately the team's effort did not match up to the work put in by their supporters before the start. Too many players turned in below par performances on what became a glue pot of a pitch. But referee Gilbert Napthine's decision to play was totally justified. Borough can have no moans on that score – nor about the 66th minute penalty that won the match. Paul Cooper held quicksilver Roy

Clayton in the box and Roger Ashby stepped in to score from the spot.

Borough's team plans were upset by an unfortunate chain of events just before half-time. Ian Crawley was carried off with a gashed forehead after a clash with Suddards. A few minutes later Tom Fallon limped off with a groin strain and Cooper went on as substitute.

Down to ten men, Nuneaton struggled to re-arrange themselves – but then Kettering found themselves a player short. Suddards did not re-appear after half-time and Lyndon Hughes was sent on. Then centre-half Richard Dixey kicked Borough goalkeeper Gordon Livsey and was sent off.

The Poppies' defender had already been booked for a foul on Brendan Phillips. So Kettering were also down to ten men – and Borough could hardly offer any excuses. No-one attempted to; the simple truth of the matter was that too many players failed to contribute.

Trevor Peake, Roy Cross, Brendan Phillips, Gareth Dale and Livsey emerged with their reputations intact. The performances of some of the others left much to be desired. Kettering always looked the more accomplished side and in Billy Kellock they had the man of the match.

Kellock, once offered to Borough in exchange for Phillips, was a model

of skill and economy in the tricky conditions. He hardly wasted a ball all afternoon and Nuneaton had no-one to match his performance.

Cliff Campbell missed Borough's best chance in the first-half when a Timmy Smithers corner skimmed his head. He also had a shot saved on the line after Kettering had scored. Those chances apart, Borough rarely raised much hope. Too much of their play lacked conviction and, what is more to the point, several players lacked effort.

They improved after half-time and the second half was much better than the first. But Borough can now say goodbye to any hopes they had of winning something this season – and they can't really complain.

### Barry Angry About Penalty

Roy Barry was still angry over the penalty that put Borough out of the FA Trophy.

The target of his wrath was full-back Paul Cooper, whose second half offence led to the spot kick.

He held Kettering centre-forward Roy Clayton in the box – a foul the manager condemned.

Barry fumed: "It showed a lack of concentration, a lack of discipline and a lack of professionalism."



A moment that will haunt Cliff Campbell, as he goes up to meet a Timmy Smithers corner, but fails to connect with time and space to do better.

Photo: Nuneaton Evening Tribune



## Nuneaton Borough 1978-79

Back: Alf Scattergood (President), Noel Kelly (chairman), Roy Cross, Trevor Peake, Gary Tysall, Tom Fallon, Bob Stockley, Billy Wright, Ken Storer (director), Stan Marshall (assistant-manager).

Front row: Dave Looms (trainer), Timmy Smithers, Cliff Campbell, Gareth Dale, Ian Crawley, Steve Tomkinson, Roy Barry (manager).

### Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1978-79

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
08.05	Dudley Town	A	PSF	1-1	Lang	
08.07	Northwich Victoria	A	PSF	0-0		
08.12	Enderby Town	A	PSF	1-1	Dale	
08.14	Telford United	H	DJM	1-2	Phillips	
08.19	Burton Albion	A	SLC1-1L	1-1	Dale	466
08.21	Burton Albion	H	SLC1-2L	5-1	Smith, Phillips, Smithers, Postin, Lewis	1119
08.26	Weymouth	A	L	0-4		
09.2	Yeovil Town	H	L	0-0		1308
09.04	Telford United	A	L	0-1		
09.09	Gravesend & Northfleet	H		0-0		1103
09.16	Macclesfield Town	H	F	2-1	Campbell, Dale (pen)	806
09.23	Margate	A	L	1-1	Phillips	582
09.27	Worcester City	A	SLC2	0-4		1248
09.30	Kettering Town	H	L	0-3		1141
10.03	Bedworth United	A	MFC	0-0		339
10.06	A.P.Leamington	A	L	0-0		
10.11	Grantham Town	A	MFC	3-0	Crawley (3)	
10.16	Maidstone United	H	L	3-3	Smithers, Peake, Dale	1111
10.21	Dartford	H	L	1-1	Dale	1174
10.24	A.P.Leamington	A	MFC	2-2	Lewis, Campbell	
10.28	Bridgend Town	A	L	5-1	Campbell (3), Fleet, Dale	

# Nuneaton Borough 1970-1979 – Part 2



## Southern League Premier Division: Fixtures, Results & Scorers- 1978-79

Nuneaton Scores First

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Score	Scorers	Attendance
10.30	Cheltenham Town	H	L	3-0	Lewis, Campbell (2)	1385
11.04	Matlock Town	H	FAC4Q	2-2	Campbell, Dale	3111
11.07	Matlock Town	A	FAC4Qr	2-2aet	Campbell, Dale	2862
11.11	Maidstone United	A	L	1-1	Smithers	740
11.14	Matlock Town	At Stafford	FAC4Q2r	2-1	Smithers, Campbell	2461
11.18	Tividale	A	BSC2	0-2		
11.25	Crewe Alexandra	H	FAC1	0-2		4826
12.09	Hastings United	A	L	2-2	Dale (2)	
12.11	Worcester City	H	L	1-1	Campbell	
12.16	Witney Town	H	L	1-2	Lang (pen)	
12.26	Atherstone Town	H	L	2-0	Dale (2)	1360
01.08	Weymouth	H	L	2-2	Smithers, Campbell	
01.17	Kettering Town	A	FAT1	1-1	Campbell	
01.20	Yeovil Town	A	L	1-3	Dale	
02.03	Kettering Town	H	FAT1r	0-1		1357
02.10	Kettering Town	A	L	1-2	Phillips	1219
02.24	Dorchester Town	H	L	3-0	Crawley, Tomkinson, Campbell	984
02.26	Burton Albion	H	MFC	8-0	Campbell, Smithers, Peake, Dale (2), Phillips, Shotton	360
02.28	Tamworth	H	MFC	3-2	Campbell, Smithers, Shotton	394
03.03	Barnet	A	L	0-2		
03.05	Margate	H	L	4-1	Campbell (2), Dale, Phillips	1072
03.07	Atherstone Town	H	MFC	3-0	Smithers, Campbell, Tomkinson	640
03.10	Bridgend Town	H	L	3-1	Huskings (o.g.), Campbell, Phillips	1223
03.14	Cremonese	A	AIT	0-1		3500
03.17	Junior Casale	A	AIT	0-2		
03.21	Bath City	A	L	2-3	Smithers, Phillips	861
03.24	Redditch United	H	L	1-1	Phillips	1052
03.26	Wealdstone	H	L	4-0	Campbell, Stockley, Peake, Cross	819
03.28	Worcester City	A	L	0-3		
03.31	Bath City	H	L	2-1	Crawley, Dale	1009
04.07	Wealdstone	A	L	0-0		
04.09	Cheltenham Town	A	L	2-1	Dale (2)	321
04.11	Chieti	H	AIT	0-1		923
04.14	Pisa	H	AIT	3-0	Cooper, Dale (2, 1 pen)	800
04.16	Barnet	H	L	0-2		872
04.17	Atherstone Town	A	L	2-2	Campbell, Shotton	982
04.21	Hillingdon Borough	A	L	1-1	Dale	489
04.23	Telford United	H	L	0-1		782
04.25	Dartford	A	L	0-1		510
04.28	Hastings United	H	L	3-0	Smithers, Dale, Tomkinson	817
05.01	Dorchester Town	A	L	1-1	Smithers	
05.03	A.P.Leamington	H	L	1-0	Peake	739
05.05	Witney Town	A	L	1-1	Dale	
05.07	Hillingdon Borough	H	L	0-0		
05.09	Redditch United	A	L	2-0	Dale, Phillips	
05.11	Gravesend & Northfleet	A	L	1-3	Crawley	416
05.13	Atherstone Town	H	MFCF1L	0-0		
05.15	Atherstone Town	A	MFCF2L	1-2	Shotton	

KEY : L = Southern League Premier, FAC = F.A.Cup, FAT = F.A. Trophy, SLC = Southern League Cup,  
 BSC = Birmingham Senior Cup, MFC = Midland Floodlit Cup, AIT = Anglo Italian Tournament, PSF = Pre season friendly,  
 F = Friendly DJM = David Jackson Memorial

# Acknowledgments

A great debt is owed to the dedicated people who spent many long hours researching library records, archives and county records to provide the information for this website and its e-books.

Credit is due to the late John T. Moore, who dedicated many long hours of research, as well as to Roderick Grubb, Robert Forryan, Scott Renshaw, Andy Pace, Brian Anderson, Paul Sawyer, Rob Everitt, Kevin Brown, Geoff Cooke, John Hobson, Dave Hall, and the man behind the inspiration for this project Mike Turner.

Others, too numerous to mention, have also contributed - their names may not be mentioned but their services and knowledge of both the football club and the town have been invaluable.



[/FromTown2Town](#)



[@FromTown2Town](#)