

## Jesus College football – early 1970s

In other posts on this site, Phil Atkinson has described how the early 1970s saw a fantastic time for Jesus College rugby, and so it was. Although the son of a Welsh rugby player, I had grown up in North Yorkshire and played with a round ball only. The Jesus College soccer side of the late 60's had won the league and reached a Cuppers final, but most had moved on by the time I arrived at Jesus in 1971.

We were still able to put out a competent side in the league in 1971-72, captained by the Welsh wizard Gerry Protheroe and organised by goalkeeper Andy "Tufty" Leech, the one remaining member of the previous year's "Bolton barricade" defence, which featured also centre halves Gordon Moss and Alan Simkin. We finished fifth out of eight in the First Division.



Jesus College AFC 1971-72, missing A D Leech, on fast-bowling duty in The Parks.

With Ian Ross and Norman Wright joining the team after their Wembley exploits against Cambridge, we were among the favourites for Cuppers. Our first game was covered by the Oxford Mail with the headline "Anything you can do we can do better".

Jesus College went one better than their University soccer Cuppers rivals St Edmund Hall, when they smashed six goals past luckless Corpus Christi yesterday. It took Jesus just 13 minutes to crack the Corpus defence, Dave O'Reilly forcing the ball under the diving John Gidney, and after that Corpus had their best spell, making Jesus work hard for any reward they gained for the rest of the first half. In fact they had to wait until the 41<sup>st</sup> minute for their second goal, Paul Clarke giving Gidney no chance with a fine individual goal.

After the interval, traffic towards the Corpus goal was unrelenting, substitute Paddy Thomas adding to the score with a sharp shot from Martin Harries's centre. Harries was to prove a skilful, if selfish left winger and he took the corner in the 55<sup>th</sup> minute from which Norman Wright – with Ian Ross the only Blues on the field – rapped in the fourth. The final goals came in the 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> minutes. First Harries struck home a penalty awarded for hands, and then Dave Morgan headed in a Clarke shot that was bending away from goal.

[That last sentence is disappointingly banal – I have a mental image of an acrobatic header from a pinpoint Paul Clarke cross!]



Gerry Protheroe (middle) lurking to attack an Ian Ross corner

Sadly, that was as good as it got – we lost to Merton in the next round.

In the 1972-73 season, the side that I captained was distinctly weaker than the year before. As well as losing Ross and Wright, we were short of the goals of Martin Harries (graduated) and the creativity of Gerry Protheroe (in the Blues squad). Boosted by moonlighting rugby players Bob Upton and Phil Atkinson in their postgraduate years, we actually won two and drew two of our first five games, but then proceeded to lose all the next five, where we only scored two goals – and one of those was an own goal! We went ahead early in our final relegation battle against Hertford, but their late equalizer meant that we finished ninth out of 12 in the first division and were relegated. That our leading scorer in the league was defender Mike Holly with 4 goals tells its own story.

Adding Gerry Protheroe to the league team boosted our progress in Cuppers, with victories in the group stage over Pembroke (5-0, two from Paul Waine and a hat-trick from left-back Dave Fulton), Brasenose (3-1, with two goals from Dave O'Reilly), and a 4-4 draw with a strong Magdalen side (two more for O'Reilly). Dave O'Reilly scored another two in the 3-1 quarter-final defeat of Exeter, which brought us up against Cuppers favourites St Catherine's in the semi-final at the New College ground, hosting some 200 spectators. A robust early tackle on Blues striker Glover seemed to keep him quiet (at the cost of a booking for yours truly), but we were unable to match the strength of St Cat'z across the team and lost the game 2-0: Cat'z went on to beat New College in the final.



1973-74 saw us playing in the Second Division under the captaincy of Nick Thurston. The almost unchanged defensive group of Leech in goal plus Lloyd, Morgan, Fulton and Kay made us hard to beat and the added striking power of freshman Kevin Bogue ensured that we scored goals as well. Eight of our eleven league games were won and we finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the division of 12. However our goalscoring touch seemed to desert us in Cuppers with a 0-0 draw with Hertford followed by a 2-0 defeat by St Peter's. Disaster loomed when we fell 3-0 down in the first 20 minutes up Harcourt Hill at Westminster College, but as Cherwell reported it:

... after 35 minutes Pyle was fouled, allowing Morgan to score from the penalty spot. A sudden Jesus breakaway led to a goal by Kevin Bogue, and five minutes later centre-half Dave Morgan ... dispossessed a defender and shot home the equalizer. A tense and exciting period followed and Jesus eventually scored their winning goal after a breakaway by Minihan.

Although that dramatic comeback regained us our self-respect and pushed us up to second in the group of four, it wasn't enough to take us into the knockout stages of Cuppers.





Jesus College AFC 1973-74

However our competitive season wasn't over, as our Cuppers semi-final appearance the previous year led to us being one of four Oxford college teams selected to play five-a-side against Cambridge colleges at the Varsity games at Crystal Palace in March, with a squad of Nick Thurston, Andy Leech, Paul Waine, Kevin Bogue, Chris Hann, Clive (Slim) Minihan and myself. We won our first game against Fitzwilliam College Cambridge 5-4 on penalties after a 0-0 draw, but in the semi-final we lost again to our nemesis St Catherine's Oxford by 2-0, before winning the 3<sup>rd</sup> place playoff with a 2-0 victory over Trinity, Cambridge, with goals from Thurston and Hann.

I followed previous sporting mathematicians Chris Hicks and Bob Upton into the Department of Biomathematics for a postgraduate year, so gained a fourth season of college football. However playing in the top division made it much tougher than the previous season and my records show a 2-2 draw against Trinity (both goals from Bogue) as the only game where we avoided defeat. The All Star XI beat the college 1-0 with a goal from Bob Upton. My biggest memories of that year are of two horrific injuries – Andy Meehan (who had gallantly replaced Andy Leech in goal) got a boot stud right through his cheek in a friendly in Cambridge, and the versatile Rob Anderson broke an ankle after scoring against Univ in the league. Our Cuppers run was equally disappointing, with a goalless draw against Pembroke and 2-1 defeats against both Worcester and Hertford.

A disappointing set of results to end with – but overall a wonderful four years of sport and comradeship with a great group of people.

David Morgan - Mathematics 1971;  
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