

Nigel's Webspaces News

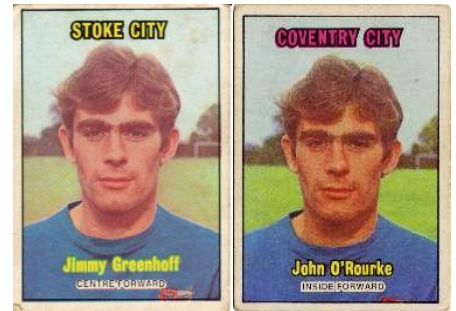
A newsletter distributed by [Nigel's Webspaces](#), a website dedicated to the history of English football cards 1965/66 to 1979/80.

Issue 2

Due to your positive feedback I have decided to publish a new issue every two months. Hopefully, with your help, I will be able to maintain a good standard of articles. Feedback is always welcome, along with ideas for future articles and features. I have included a new segment called 'My story' where you tell the tale of how, why, where and when you collected football cards. Adrian Dale has kindly contributed the first in this series of tales.

Discoveries and finds

The last two months saw the unearthing of a 1971 letter from A&BC Chewing Gum director Tony Coakley explaining to a young boy just how there came to be the Greenhoff/O'Rourke variant cards. A copy of the letter is [published here](#), while you can read about all of the [A&BC football card variants](#) here. The letter sold on ebay for £46 and went to an avid collector. Tony Coakley himself said he was 'amazed at the interest' when told.



Website updates

A U.S. based collector has recently focussed his collecting talents on A&BC Chewing Gum wrappers, and is kindly making these wrappers images available to this website. A&BC issued their wrappers with advertisements and inducements to purchase other items via 'special offers'. This page of [1970/71 Orange back wrappers](#) gives an idea of the varieties available. I am sure that the other A&BC Footballer sets e.g. green backs, purple backs, blue backs etc. also had this variety of wrappers. If you are lucky enough to own any of these wrappers why not dig them out of your collection and let me know which items were offered on your wrappers.

Recent sales

When you spot what you think are interesting items or prices, either on ebay, in dealers catalogues or auctions, please forward a link or email to cards@littleoak.com.au.

- An empty (unused) [Panini Mexico 70 World Cup](#) album sold for £1,232 in September. Two part-filled albums have been offered in recent months, one with 190 stickers sold for £426 and the other with 122 stickers passed in for £255. An unopened packet of stickers from this set sold for £77.
- A number of A&BC Chewing Gum wrappers have sold, fetching good prices – an early 60s (I'm not sure which year) £58, 1969/70 green backs, series 3, £30, 1971/72 purple backs, series 2, £34.
- An unopened packet of [Top Sellers](#) Football 73 cards containing 6 cards sold for £26.

Player interviews

As most of my readers would know, Nigel's Webspaces is based in Tasmania, Australia. One of the ways in which the website reaches out to people is through exclusive player interviews. The first was with ex-Nottingham Forest and Derby County player [Terry Hennessey](#) in 2007. Terry now lives in Australia and was kind enough to spend some time on the phone being interviewed. In 2009 we followed up with an interview with [Derek Smethurst](#), ex-Chelsea and Millwall who kindly answered some questions via email. If you are in contact with any of the players from the period 1965/66 to 1979/80 and would like to nominate them to be interviewed for this site about appearing in football cards then please get in touch.

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Nostalgia



The picture above appeared in the December 28, 1974 edition of Shoot magazine. It shows the Leeds United side with their Admiral sponsored shirts. This edition of the classic football magazine notes that '*Chester are the only club in the Football League never to have won promotion. This season, though, manager Ken Roberts has a squad more than capable of reaching the Third Division*'. And Shoot was quite prophetic, as Chester came fourth in Division Four that season (on goal difference) and were promoted. That same season Chester went through to the semi-finals of the League Cup, beating Blackpool, Preston North End, Leeds United and Newcastle United along the way. They narrowly lost the semi-finals 5-4 to Aston Villa.

Shoot also reports '*St. Mirren's manager Alex Ferguson was recently booked during a Scottish Second Division match following a remark he made to the referee*'. Who would have thought?

Extra time

Since this will be the last Newsletter before Christmas (yes, it is that close), let me wish every reader a happy and safe Christmas. Issue 3 of the newsletter will be out in early January 2010.

If you want to tell your story about collecting football cards as a boy, spending your pocket or newspaper round money only to discover that you've got John Hollins again (!) then please volunteer to be a 'My story' contributor.

Regards,

Nigel

My story - Adrian Dale

As a regular visitor to Nigel's Webspaces we have struck up an online friendship. I mentioned to him that to save some of his workload on the new Newsletter he should invite people who write in to record their experiences when collecting cards. Nigel quickly turned this to his advantage by writing to me, "does that mean you are offering your services to be the first!" what could I say, it wouldn't be the first time my thoughts or actions had put me in the mire...so to speak, so I find myself sitting and writing this...

I was born in Bristol, England in September 1952. I can remember "bomb sites" that I used to play on in my street before 1960. I mention that year as then I was seven going on eight and I had fallen in love with the beautiful game called football. It was all I spoke about, thought about, wanted to be it was in fact my whole world and I'm sure many of you reading this were the same. Anything to do with football was quickly devoured, the sports papers, the

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Charles Buchan football monthly that was one shilling and my dad would buy for me if I had been good, so I didn't get too many magazines!!

Then my world changed and the change came in the guise of A&BC football cards. They had been going for a few years before 1960 and I had a few odd cards in a box but I didn't know where they came from, who sold them or how much they were and hadn't given them much thought. Well all that changed the day my Auntie Joan said, "Adrian, do you want to come to the shops with me?" It was always good for a bar of chocolate so I jumped at the chance.

We lived in a rough area of Bristol called St Pauls, and we walked up our road and onto Ashley Rd which bordered the Stokes Croft where all the shops were. Even now, at 57, I can remember the whole shop layout of the street but all gone today. On the corner of the two roads mentioned was a small tobacconists, paper and sweet shop which was officially called D.Hill Newsagents. However we called the shop "the little mans". I can only think it was because the shop was so small as Mr Hill was a large man who sat behind his counter always with a cigarette in his mouth, a cup of tea and reading the racing form.

This was the days of Woodbines, Senior Service, The Daily Sketch newspaper and Cliff Richard was the number one pop star, followed by Tommy Steele. Anyway the little man liked his football, had played a few games for Bristol Rovers reserves, not made the grade and opened up the shop. He knew I was football crazy and said to me whilst pointing behind me, have a look over there Adrian, I might have something you would like. I turned around and there on the counter in a box with a stand of two footballers tackling each other was A&BC 1960/61 black back series in a green and black design wrapper and priced at 2d, that is tuppence... aka before decimal currency.

For a seven/eight year old boy this was as good as it gets. I can remember picking up the waxed wrapping, opening up the wrapper and slowly peeling it back to reveal number 13 Kevin McHale of Huddersfield Town which was the very first card I bought. The other two in that first pack were Frank Haffey and Alex Scott. From this moment on I was hooked and spent ALL my pocket money which was six pence on the cards. I then found other boys at school who were collecting them, and I remember swopping a "dinky car toy" for six cards to improve and increase my collection as well as other such wheeling and dealings.

On the top of that very first card was a flat slab of pink bubblegum with a faint white powder covering it. I picked it up and lay it flat on my tongue and then started to chew and bite into the confectionery that deposited an infusion of sweetness and smell that I can remember to this very day. I blew the white powder off the three cards, they were pristine, the corners and edges sharp and the bright colours of the cards beckoned this young boy, so much that I was hooked and in heaven.

I still have that first set. They were brightly coloured taken in dressing rooms of the players or outside with beautiful clear blue skies. They were a young boy's dream that caused my imagination to run wild, so much so that I used to take them to bed with me and look at them before I went to sleep, so that I could dream about football.

Now while these cards were and are everything I have said and more I wonder why it is that we cling to them, hang onto them, build websites, and ask each other questions. Well if I can be so bold I would like to offer up the following reasons and it is not important whether you collected in 1960 plus as I did, before or even in the 70's. I think what the cards represent to us is an innocence, a return to the past when life was simpler, when we shared and exchanged friendship and wonderment with close friends as well as in the school playground.

A&BC football cards captured the moment, the time of the day and I believe that many of us, perhaps arguably all of us and I include myself in this would like to go back to those days and just maybe start all over again !