

Blackburn Rovers Players From 1880's to 1990's
Blackburn Rovers Players During the 1980's

ALAN AINSWORTH



Born in Bolton in 1953 he first joined Blackpool as an apprentice in 1970 turning professional in 1971. He later moved to Birmingham City in 1978, Everton in 1981, Barnsley in 1982 then Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1984. Alan joined the Rovers in 1985 and signed a full contract in 1987 as a midfield player. Signed by Bobby Saxton he proved to be a hard-working midfielder. During Don Mackay's time he had more games and gained regular first team football and proved best in fighting for the ball. In 1989 he left the Rovers and joined Rochdale after 65 first team appearances, scoring five goals. He then joined Horwich in 1990 and Flint town United in 1992.

STEVE ARCHIBALD



Born in Glasgow in 1956 he first joined a number of minor Scottish clubs before moving to Clyde in 1974, then a move to Aberdeen for £25,000 where he came to the attention of English clubs. As a result, he moved to Tottenham Hotspur for £800,000 in 1980 then on to Barcelona in 1984 for £900,000. He joined the Rovers on loan for a season in 1987 as a centre-forward and Scottish International for Don Mackay and raised the club's spirits being a famous player that was a skilful and a powerful forward. In total he made 22 first team appearances scoring six goals before moving to Hibernian in 1988, then St Mirren in 1990 and Ayr United in 1992.

OSSIE ARDILES



Born in Argentina in 1952 he first joined local sides before a move to Tottenham Hotspur in 1978 for £325,000 then Paris St. Germain on loan in 1982. He joined the Rovers on loan in March 1988 to the end of the season then moved on to Queens Park Rangers, and then Fort Lauderdale Strikers in 1989. A popular player, skilful midfielder with deft skills but injury at key parts of the season stunted his progress at the Rovers. In total he only made six first team appearances for the Rovers. Later he moved into football management with Swindon in 1989 and Newcastle United in 1991, West Bromwich Albion in 1992 and Tottenham Hotspur in 1993.

MARK ATKINS



Born in Doncaster in 1968 he first joined Scunthorpe United in 1986 and moved to the Rovers in 1988 for £45,000 and under Don Mackay became the permanent right-full-back. Later in his Rovers career he moved into midfield when Tony Parkes was caretaker manager. A good, dedicated club member who liked to run forward in the flanks when attacking. He was a versatile player and a member of Rovers Second Division play-off Final in 1992 to join the new Premier League. Later in his time at the Rovers he made 42 substitute appearances to add to his total of 272 first team appearances for the club scoring 34 goals before joining Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1995

SIMON BARKER



Born in Farnworth, Bolton in 1964 he joined the Rovers as a schoolboy in 1980 turning professional in 1982. At the Rovers this talented midfielder achieved England Under 21 with four caps and was a member of Rovers winning Full Members Cup team. He proved to be a skilful attacking midfielder with passing skills to open up defences. Classed as one of the best right sided midfield players in the Second Division. A creative player who liked to get forward. In total he made 208 first team appearances scoring 41 goals before leaving to join Queens Park Rangers for £400,000 at a time when the club were struggling financially.

NORMAN BELLE



Born in Sunderland in 1955 he first joined Wolverhampton Wanderers as a youth apprentice in 1971 turning professional in 1973. During his 10 years there he played mostly at centre-forward but could be moved into midfield. He joined the Rovers in 1981 signed by Bobby Saxton to add height to the attack and power. Although marshalled closely by opposing defences he was able to make chances for others. He got a serious knee injury at the start of the 1983/84 season causing him to retire from first class football having made 65 first team appearances scoring 10 goals.

SEAN CURRY



Born in Liverpool in 1966 he first joined Liverpool in 1983 and developed as a centre-forward. He joined the Rovers in 1987 signed by Tony Parks when he was the caretaker manager. A small well-built striker who played neat football, but his lack of height and pace limited his progress even though he showed skill. In 1989 he left the club to join Hartlepool United and later moved on to Preston North End after a total of 35 first-team appearances and 18 as substitute scoring six goals for the Rovers.

ALLY DAWSON



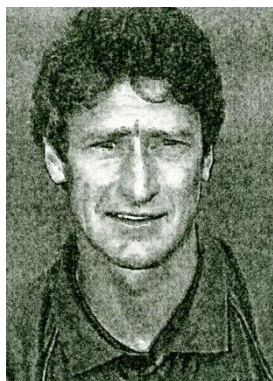
Born in Renfrewshire, Scotland in 1958 he first joined Glasgow Rangers in 1975 and then the Rovers in 1987 for £50,000. He was a former Scottish International as a defender and when signed by Don Mackay was seen as a great catch due to his success in Scotland. A cultured player who could cover full-back and central midfield he suffered injuries at Rovers that held him back making 38 first team appearances and 10 as substitute before leaving in 1989 to join Airdrieonians then moved on to be the manager at St Andrews in Malta.

HOWARD GAYLE



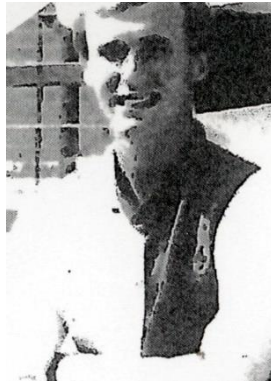
Born in Liverpool in 1958 he first joined Liverpool F.C. as an apprentice in 1974 turning professional in 1977 before being sent out to various clubs on loan. He then joined Birmingham in 1983 then moved to Sunderland for £75,000 in 1984 then on to the U.S.A. at Dallas then to Stoke City in 1987. Howard joined the Rovers later in 1987 for £5,000. Being the first player of colour at Ewood he soon became very popular and flourished under Don Mackay and formed a powerful goalscoring partnership with Simon Garner. Capable of playing on the right-wing or centre-forward he made a total of 119 first team appearances and 25 as substitute scoring 34 goals before leaving to join Halifax Town in 1992 and later Accrington Stanley in 1994.

TERRY GENNOE



Born in Shrewsbury in 1953 he first joined his local side before joining Bury in 1973. He then went out on loan to various clubs including the Rovers in 1974 before joining Halifax town for £3,000 in 1975. Terry then left to join Southampton for £35,000 in 1978 and later put out on loan to Everton and Crystal Palace before joining the Rovers in 1981 for £60,000. Signed by Bobby Saxton to take the goalkeeping place of Jim Arnold who had left. At the Rovers he achieved the most goalkeeping appearances. A tall keeper who bossed his area and read the play well and seemed to improve with age. Injuries finally caught up with him after making 334 first team appearances and retiring in 1992 he became the clubs Education Officer and goalkeeper coach as he was a qualified teacher.

DAVID HAMILTON



Born in South Shields in 1960 he first joined Sunderland in 1978 then moved to the Rovers in 1981 as a midfield player. Signed by Howard Kendall he proved a good utility player and one who could cover his own position. He was switched to cover the injured Mick Rathbone's position at full-back but lost his place in 1985 and loaned out to Cardiff City. David then left to join Wigan Athletic in 1986 and later joined Burnley in 1990, Chorley in 1992 and Barrow 1993.

COLIN HENDRY



Born in Keith, Scotland in 1965 he first joined Dundee in 1984 then joined the Rovers in 1987 as a central defender and scored the winning goal in Rovers Full Members Cup win the same year. A tall tough tackling defender, good in the air, with skills to move forward to provide support and goal threat. In 1989 he was allowed to leave for £700,000 to join Manchester City but returned in 1991 for the same fee to continue his successful career with the Rovers and in the Premiership and gained six Scottish International caps between 1993/94. In total he made 399 first team appearances scoring 35 goals. Colin left the Rovers for Glasgow Rangers in 1998 and later moved into club management in Scotland.

KEITH HILL



Born in Bolton in 1969 he joined the Rovers as a schoolboy in 1984 turning professional in 1987 playing as a central defender and entering the First Team the same year. He could also cover full-back positions. However, during his time at Ewood he suffered from injuries and lost his place to Kevin Moran. Eventually Kenny Daglish traded him with Plymouth Argyle in 1992 after he had made 103 first team appearances scoring five goals for Nicky Marker.

ALAN IRVINE



Born in Glasgow in 1958 he first joined Queens Park Rangers then moved on to Everton in 1981, later joining Crystal Palace in 1984 for £50,000 and then Dundee United in 1987. He joined the Rovers on loan in 1989 signing professional for them the same year. At the Rovers he played outside-right after joining them in the twilight of his career. He was a good dribbler and crosser of the ball and became popular during his short stay at the club. In total he made 43 first team appearances, 19 as substitute scoring three goals before retiring from the game in 1992 and became Rovers Youth Team assistant manager.

LENNY JOHNROSE



Born in Preston in 1969 he joined the Rovers as a schoolboy in 1984 and became a professional in 1988 as he moved up through the teams. He joined the First Team during Don Mackay's managerial period as a forward where his speed was his main asset and at times could cover at midfield. However, most of his time was spent in the Reserves or as substitute making only two first team appearances and 26 as substitute scoring 12 goals before Kenny Daglish saw him leave in 1992.

ANDREW KENNEDY



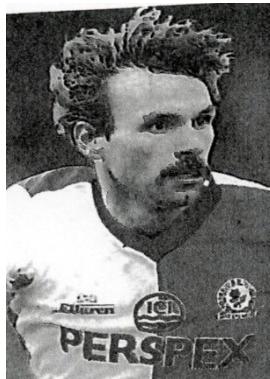
Born in Stirling, Scotland in 1964 he first joined Glasgow Rangers then Birmingham city in 1985 for £50,000. In 1987 he went on loan to Sheffield United and moved to the Rovers in 1988. He was fast, tall and powerful and although a centre forward he often moved to the wing or inside forward positions during Don Mackay's time. Suffering from injuries and after making 60 first team appearances, scoring 27 goals he moved to Watford in 1990 and later Bolton in 1991 and then Brighton and Hove Albion in 1992.

JOHN LOWEY



Born in Manchester in 1958 he first joined Manchester United as a schoolboy in the 1973/74 season turning professional in 1975. After joining Port Vale in 1977 he then joined Rovers in 1980 as a non-contract player signed by Howard Kendall to bring more goals via his experience at centre-forward or midfield. Although losing his centre-forward place when Norman Bell arrived, he re-gained his place in the 1982/83 season in the midfield. He became a busy midfielder and was always in the first team during the 1983/84 season. He again lost his place in 1985 after 151 first team appearances and 16 goals moving to Wigan Athletic in 1986 then Preston North End in 1987 and finally Chester City in 1988.

DAVID MAIL



Born in Bristol in 1962 he joined Aston Villa as a schoolboy in 1979 turning professional in 1980. He moved to the Rovers in 1982 as a central defender on a free transfer. During his time at the Rovers, he was a reliable central defender proving Bobby Saxton's signing of him was a good one. Once Glen Keeley left, David was a regular in the first team. Although not tall he coped well in the air and was quick with powerful tackling skills. A member of Rovers Full Members Cup winning side in 1987. Following the death of his wife he moved on to Hull city in 1990 after making 241 first team appearances scoring Four goals.

DAVID MAY



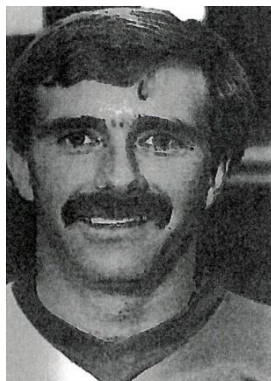
Born in Oldham in 1970 he first joined Rovers in 1984 as a schoolboy before turning professional in 1988 playing centre-half and right-full-back. He greatly improved into an exceptional defender under Kenny Dalglish and Ray Harford especially at right back and was a member of Rovers Second Division Play-Off Winners 1992 before reverting to centre half after the arrival of Henning Berg when the Rovers were in the new Premier League. David dominated in the air and was good tackler. At the end of the 1993/94 season he was out of contract and moved on to Manchester United for £1.25 million, a record for the Rovers. In total he made 123 first team appearances.

JOHN MILLAR



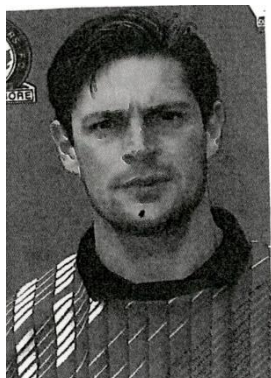
Born in Coatbridge in 1966 he first joined Clyde Amateurs before signing for Chelsea in 1984, then put out on loan to Hamilton Academicals and Northampton Town. A former Scottish Youth International he joined the Rovers in 1987 for £25,000 signed by Don Mackay who played him in midfield although previously he had been a full back. The reason for the move was to give more power and aggression in midfield. Although a small player he was aggressive but lacked creativity. In total he made 145 first team appearances before moving on as a free transfer to Heart of Midlothian in 1991.

IAN MILLER



Born in Perth, Scotland in 1955 he first joined Bury in 1973 then moved to Nottingham Forest in 1975 and on to Doncaster the same year before joining Swindon Town in 1978. He joined the Rovers in 1981 for £60,000 signed by Bobby Saxton as an outside-right. His main skill was in passing the ball past the full-back with speed then making dangerous crosses popular with the fans. A member of the Full Members Cup winning side in 1987 he also became club captain. He left the Rovers on a free transfer in 1989 to join Port Vale and became their youth team coach in 1993. He made 283 first team appearances scoring 18 goals.

BOBBY MIMMS



Born in York in 1963 he first joined Halifax Town as a schoolboy in 1979 turning professional in 1981 and then signing for Rotherham for £15,000 before signing for Everton in 1985 for £150,000. As a skilled goalkeeper he was loaned out to the Rovers in 1987 as other loan deals to Manchester City and Sunderland. In 1998 he signed for Tottenham Hotspur for £325,000 then loaned to Aberdeen in 1990 for £250,000. Whilst at the Rovers he was a member of the team who won the Second Division Play-Off in 1992 to get to the Premiership. He was a very agile goalkeeper and a good shot saver but weaker with crosses. He was sidelined with the signing of Tim Flowers. His Rovers career ended in 1996 after 160 first team appearances.

VINCE O'KEEFE



Born in Birmingham in 1957 he first joined Birmingham City in 1975, then Walsall in 1976 followed by Exeter City in 1978 and Torquay United in 1980. He signed for the Rovers as an experienced goalkeeper in 1982 by Bobby Saxton who had managed him previously at Torquay. Brought in to cover for Terry Gennoe and appeared on many occasions when he was injured including playing in the Full Members Cup Final at Wembley with great success. However, he broke his leg in the 1987/88 season and lost his place. He then went out on loan to Bury and a longer period at Blackpool before joining Wrexham in 1989, then on to Chorley the same year and finally Kidderminster Harriers in 1993. In total he made 68 appearances for the Rovers.

MARK PATTERSON



Born in Darwen in 1965 he first joined the Rovers as a schoolboy in 1979 turning professional in 1983. He was a hard-working midfield player on the left side and eventually took over from Noel Brotherston in 1983/84 on the left wing. Here he proved to be speedy with a good eye for a goal. However, he drifted in and out of the first team and in 1988 moved to Preston North End after making 98 first team appearances and 17 as substitute scoring 22 goals. He later moved to Bury in 1990 and Bolton in 1991.

CRIS PRICE



Born in Hereford in 1960 he first joined Hereford United as a schoolboy in 1976 turning professional in 1978. He joined the Rovers in 1986 for £25,000. Chris was an attacking right full back who was also useful in midfield and made 83 first team appearances before leaving to join Aston Villa in the First Division in 1988 for £125,000, then re-joined the Rovers in 1992 for £100,000. Over time he lost his full back position to David May and left to join Portsmouth for £50,000 in 1993 after 26 first team appearances scoring a total of 14 goals.

JIMMY QUINN



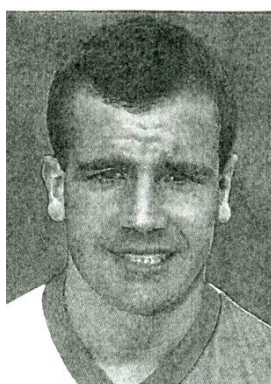
Born in Belfast in 1959 he first played for Oswestry Town then moved to Swindon Town in 1981 for £10,000. He then signed for the Rovers in 1984 for £32,000 as a centre-forward by Bob Saxton. A tall player with long legs and powerful in the air he became a regular member of the Northern Ireland squad earning 13 caps. Although he proved he could score goals his form dropped as did the teams, so he was allowed to move back to Swindon Town in 1986 for £40,000 after making 70 first team appearances plus 14 as substitute and scoring 23 goals. He later made big money with a transfer to West Ham in 1990 for £300,000, Leicester in 1988 for £225,000, Bournemouth in 1991 for £40,000 and finally Reading in 1992 for £55,000.

COLIN RANDELL



Born in Skewen, Near Neath in Wales in 1952 he first joined Coventry City as a youth apprentice and turned professional in 1969. He then moved on to Plymouth Argyle and 1973 and then on to Exeter City for £10,000 in 1977 then sold back to Plymouth for £60,000 in 1979. Colin moved to the Rovers in 1982 for £40,000 as an experienced midfield player by Bobby Saxton. Originally a Welsh International schoolboy and up to Under 23 level. His main skills included an ability to open up defences with good passes as he read the game well due to his long experience before joining the Rovers. He was a regular in the First Team during his initial season, he then lost his place but regained his form in 1983/84. However, he was allowed to join Newport County on loan in 1984 and later left to join Swansea City in 1987. He made 81 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring seven goals.

NICHOLAS REID



Born in Urmston in 1960 he first joined Manchester City as a youth apprentice in 1977 turning professional in 1978. After a loan spell in the U.S.A. with Seattle Saunders in 1982 he joined the Rovers in 1987 as a midfielder on a free transfer, after giving good service to Manchester City gaining valuable experience and gaining six caps for England Under 23s. He left City on a free transfer when they were relegated to the Second Division and was picked up by Don Mackay. After joining Rovers, he became First Team captain due to his experience to help the teams' young players. As a player he was a powerful, speedy defender and was popular with fans for his thrusting runs from midfield. After losing his place in 1991/92 season he only mainly figured as a substitute and led to him joining West Bromwich Albion in 1992 after making 192 first team appearances and 17 as substitute scoring 10 goals. Later he joined Wycombe Wanderers in 1994.

SCOTT SELLARS



Born in Sheffield in 1965 he first joined Leeds as a schoolboy in 1981 and turned professional in 1983. He left to join the Rovers in 1986 for £25,000 as a midfielder. Whilst at the Rovers he gained three Under 23 caps for England and was a member of the team that won the Full Members Cup in 1987 and the Second Division Play Off winners in 1992. Scott was a skilful left sided midfielder and proved a good buy as he developed into one of the best wide midfielders in the Second Division. He enjoyed running at defenders and had a powerful shot and helped the Rovers into the Premier League. In total he made 237 first team appearances and scored 41 goals before leaving to join Leeds again in 1992 for a huge fee of £800,000 and would move on to Newcastle United in 1993 for £700,000.

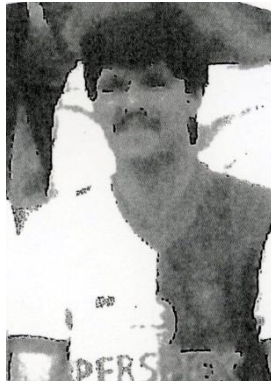
FRANK STAPLETON



Born in Dublin in 1956 he first played for several local Irish teams. In 1972 he joined Arsenal as an amateur turning professional player in 1973 playing as centre-forward. Leaving Arsenal, he signed for Manchester United in 1981 for £900,000. In the latter period of his career, he came to the Rovers in 1989 signed by Don Mackay.

He struggled during his final season at Ewood, not being match fit but in 1990, he regained form and set a new goal scoring record for Northern Ireland games gaining two caps and finished the leading goal scorer for the Rovers in 1990/91. In 1994 he left the Rovers to become player-coach at Bradford City after making 92 first team appearances and scoring 15 goals.

CHRIS SULLY



Born in Camberwell in 1959 he first joined Chelsea at youth level in 1976 as an apprentice turning professional in 1978. He left to join Bournemouth in 1981, then on to Dundee United in 1986 for £15,000 and then signed for the Rovers in 1987 at a cost of £15,000 signed by Don Mackay as a left-back. Chris was an attacking full-back who worked well with Scott Sellars in midfield. Although losing his place to John Miller he fought back from the Central League to become a first team regular. However, the arrival of Alan Wright meant he lost his first team place again and he left to join Port Vale in 1992 on a free transfer. He then moved to Preston North End in 1993. He made 156 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring three goals.

CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON



Born in Walsall in the Midlands in 1960 he first joined Bolton Wanderers in 1977 where he gained experience as a centre-forward. He joined the Rovers in 1983 and moved in the First Team when Norman Bell was injured and couldn't return. Chris worked hard with Simon Garner in the forward line although lacked regular goal scoring except in the 1984/85 season. Jimmy Quinn who cost £40,000 from Swindon eventually took over and he lost form and left the Rovers to join Wigan Athletic in 1986 after making 96 first team appearances. He later moved on to Blackpool in 1988, then Cardiff City in 1990.

JASON WILCOX



Born in Farnworth in the Bolton area in 1971 he first joined the Rovers as a schoolboy in 1986 and turned professional in 1989. He was a speedy left-wing player who progressed through the club's teams and by 1993/94 had reached the England squad. His first senior game for the Rovers came in 1990 against Swindon town. After Scott Sellars left the Rovers in 1992, he became a regular on the left wing and a successful Premier league player. An excellent crosser of the ball often with a dangerous flight and together with Stuart Ripley provided constant chances for Alan Shearer and Chris Sutton plus Mike Newell and Kevin Gallagher to score numerous goals. In total he made 283 first team appearances plus 30 as substitute and scoring 24 goals. On leaving the Rovers he took up youth coaching duties with Manchester City staying for 11 years and becoming Academy Director before leaving to join Southampton where he is at present but is wanted by Manchester United for recruitment for new players.