

Blackburn Rovers Players From 1880's to 1990's
Rovers Players During the 1930's

LEN ASTILL



Born in Wolverhampton in 1916 he joined Wolverhampton Wanderers as a schoolboy amateur in 1931 and made 66 appearances for the club for both the Combination team and reserves scoring prolifically for them and making two first team appearances. He joined the Rovers in 1936 much to the surprise of Wolverhampton supporters who thought he showed great promise. His most effective position was inside-left but could also play outside-left and could use his weight together with making good through balls for the centre forward. In total he only made four first team appearances for the Rovers scoring one goal and lost his place at the Rovers when they fought losing battle against relegation. He left the Rovers to join Ipswich Town in 1937 then Colchester in 1938.

JIMMY BARRON



Born in Burnhope in 1913 he first signed for Blythe Spartans in 1933 as a goalkeeper and moved to the Rovers in 1935 and for two seasons had to fight for his position. He was a well respected goalkeeper and a member of the team in their Second Division promotion season 1938/39. In total he made 118 appearances for the club. WWII ended his Rovers career after helping the club in the War Cup final in 1940 and he moved on to Darlington in 1946.

FRANK BAXENDALE



Born in Leyland in 1914 he first signed on for Leyland Motors in 1932/33 and then joined the Rovers in 1933 as an amateur outside-right winger. He turned professional at Rovers in 1935 and was a fast slight-built winger who mostly played on the left wing. In total he made only 13 first team appearances scoring three goals before leaving to join Falkirk in 1937 for £960 and later Carlisle United in 1939.

JACK BEATTIE



Jack was born in Newhills in the Midlands in 1912 and first joined Aberdeen in 1931 then Wolves in 1933 for £1500 as an inside-right. He joined the Rovers mid-season in 1934/5 as the club moved to strengthen their squad having found sufficient funds (£5000). Jack proved to be a powerful inside forward with a lethal shot although was more successful in Scotland than at the Rovers. In total he made 81 first team appearances scoring 18 goals and left the club in 1937 to join Birmingham in a deal to bring Billy Guest to Ewood.

CLIFF BINNS



Cliff was born in Cowley near Keighley in 1907 and first played for Portsmouth Junior Club near Todmorden. In 1926 he joined Halifax Town as their goalkeeper in 1928 as an amateur before turning professional gaining a good reputation and receiving coaching from the clubs more experienced goalkeepers. Despite Halifax turning down bids from other clubs the Rovers secretary Arthur Barrit secured his services for approximately £1500 in 1930. He proved to be a good goalkeeper who was tall and used his height well with crosses but later his form dipped and then injuries led to him leaving in 1933 to join Workington but returned to the Rovers the same season staying to 1936 after making a total of 196 first team appearances for the Rovers before moving on to Barnsley for £500.

TOM BRENNAN



Tom was born in Calderbank, Lanark Scotland in 1911 and first joined Crystal Palace in 1930 then Tunbridge Wells Rangers in 1932 before joining the Rovers in 1933 for £500 as an inside-forward. He was a good dribbler and could read the game well playing inside-left for the Rovers but soon lost form and was dropped from the first team. Tom had won international honours as a schoolboy for Scotland but in total only made 13 first team appearances for the Rovers before leaving to join Stockport in 1935.

CLARENCE BOURTON



Born in Bristol in 1908 he first joined Bristol City in 1927 before leaving to join the Rovers in 1928. Over the three seasons he spent with the Rovers as an old-style centre-forward he had some outstanding performances. He was a free scoring centre-forward with a rugged style. He lost his place in the team due to the form of Len Butt and it was a shock when he was put on the transfer list with no reason given. In total he made 72 league appearances scoring 32 goals. Clarence left to join Coventry City in 1931 for a fee of £750 and in six years had become very popular with their fans scoring a total of over 170 goals. He later joined Plymouth Argyle in 1937 and then Bristol city in 1938.

CLIFF BRYANT



Born in Bristol in 1913 he went on to join Bristol Rovers first as an amateur and joined the Rovers in 1932 as a half-back. A former England schoolboy who played with style. However, he only made five first team appearances for the Rovers as they already had a talented half-back before leaving to join Wrexham in 1936.

LEN BUTT



Born in Wilmslow, Cheshire in 1910, he first played for Stockport County as an amateur in 1928, then Macclesfield before moving on to Leeds Road and finally in 1935 to Huddersfield Town as an inside-right. During his last season with Huddersfield, he appeared in all their First Division matches. He was brought to the Rovers when they were in the doldrums by their directors in 1937. His first game against Norwich ended a draw but led to only for defeats in their last 18 games to finishing in 12th place in the Second Division. A regular in the Rovers team he was a skilful fast player who was well liked and in the team that won the Second Division title in 1938/39. In total he made 191 first team appearances scoring 96 goals before leaving in 1947 to join York City then Mansfield Town the same year.

CHARLIE CALLADINE



Born in Wessington, Derbyshire in 1911 he first joined Washington F.C. in 1927, then Scunthorpe United in 1928 and then Birmingham in 1930. He joined the Rovers in 1936 as a strong defender, right-half and could adapt to inside-forward. At the Rovers he was a utility player who proved his worth at inside-left with an ability to move the ball forward to the forwards. In total he made 49 first team appearances scoring seven goals before leaving to join Guildford City.

FRANK CHIVERS



Born in Drybrook, Gloucester in 1909 he first joined Huddersfield Town in 1936 as a professional and moved to the Rovers as a left-half in 1938. A hard defender who liked to move forward to support the forwards. He was a member of the Rovers Second Division Champions team in 1938/39 and League War Cup runners up team. In total he made 50 first team appearances for the club but in 1942 he died whilst on service in the pit at Barnbrugh Colliery in Doncaster. The accident occurred five minutes before he was due to start his night shift when a girder and stone block fell on him.

ALBERT CLARKE



Born in Sheffield in 1916 he first joined Mexborough Town, then Torquay United in 1934, Birmingham in 1936 and moved to the Rovers in 1938 as a free-scoring inside-left. Early in his stay at the Rovers he scored a hat-trick against Newcastle United and ranked among the leading marksmen of the Football League. A rather small player who was very strong and a good dribbler at pace he played well linking with Jack Weddle. Nicknamed "Nobby" he was the leading scorer in Rover's Second Division Championship winning team. In total he made 51 first team appearances scoring 30 goals but died in the WWII in 1944 serving with the Devon Regiment.

WALTER CROOK



Born in Whittle-le-Woods in Lancashire in 1912 he first joined Blackburn Nomads. He joined the Rovers from there in 1931 and made his debut against Liverpool on the March 19th 1932. His main position was left-back and captained the side to winning the Second Division Championship in 1939. He also gained a war time cap and played at Wembley in the 1940 War Cup Final. A tough tackler and natural left-footer he was a crowd favourite. In total he made 350 club appearances before leaving to join Bolton Wanderers in 1947. He left after falling out with the manager Eddie Hapgood and later started a coaching career in Holland and managerial stints in England.

ARTHUR CUNLIFFE



Born in Blackrod, Lancashire in 1909 he first joined Chorley in 1927 and moved to the Rovers in 1928 as a winger and outside-right. A fast direct winger with a good ball control who apart from making good crosses also scored goals. He made two appearances for England went on to make 140 appearances for the Rovers scoring 55 goals. When he transferred to Aston Villa for £8,000 in 1933 it created a great sensation as it was not expected. He later moved to Burnley in 1937 and then Hull City in 1938.

PERCY DICKIE



Born in Aberdeen he first joined Scottish side St. Johnston in 1932 as a half-back. Although small in stature he was clever with the ball and also played inside-forward. He signed as a utility player, stocky physique who played half-back at the Rovers but couldn't hold a regular place in the first team. In total he made 49 appearances before moving back to Scotland to join Aberdeen in 1946.

RONALD DIX



Born in Bristol in 1912, a very talented former England Schoolboy player he first joined Bristol Rovers as an amateur inside-forward, then as a professional in 1927. Despite the Rovers finances being in poor shape they paid out £3,000 to bring him to Ewood in 1932 when he was much sought after by other clubs. He played well for the Rovers linking with Jack Bruton on the right-wing. In total he made only 40 first team appearances scoring 15 goals before the club were forced to sell him and Cunliffe to Aston villa for £8,500 as they were in financial trouble in 1933

WILLIAM DUNCAN



Born in Stobswell, Dundee, Scotland in 1913, joined the local club from which he moved to the Rovers in 1933 as a 19-year-old. Although he had skill, he failed to make the grade at the Rovers and only made 3 first team appearances for the club before moving on to Carlisle United in 1935 then Gillingham in the same year.

PADDY GALLACHER



Born in Glasgow in 1913 he first joined Millwall in 1933 and then Third, Lanark in 1934 before moving to the Rovers in 1936 for £1,250. As an inside-forward who was tricky and came with a good reputation but had a tendency to overelaborate in play and back passing skills. In total he only made 11 first team appearances before leaving to join Bournemouth in 1938 later becoming player-manager of Weymouth in 1948.

JIMMY GORMAN



Born in Liverpool in 1910 he first joined Burscough Rangers and Skelmersdale United before

his transfer to the Rovers in 1930. He made his debut in 1931, a dependable defender who had pace and a good physique who could drive forward. As a right full-back he made 225 first team appearances before he moved on to Sunderland in 1937. He had been Rover's captain and when Rovers were relegated to the Second Division he asked for a transfer.

WILLIAM GORMLIE



Born in Liverpool in 1911 he first joined the Rovers as an amateur goalkeeper and after a season temporarily left to join Fleetwood Windsor Villa before rejoining the Rovers in 1931 and had his first senior game in 1932 against Sunderland. He often gave brilliant and spectacular displays for the team. However, he was an unlucky player gaining a head wound that put him in a nursing home, but which then became sceptic and critical. He survived that but in 1933 his career was interrupted by a kidney infection when playing against Chelsea. In total he made 44 first team appearances for the rovers before leaving in 1935 to join Northampton Town managed by Syd Puddefoot then Lincoln City in 1939. In 1947 he took up the appointment of trainer to the Belgium International Team and Belgium Schoolboys and International XI. He also ran a school for football trainers.

BILLY GUEST



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Born in Brierley Hill in 1914 he first joined junior sides and then Birmingham as an amateur left-winger. He turned professional in 1932 and moved to the Rovers in 1937 and played both left-winger and centre-forward. A hard-working player with a strong shot. In total he made 129 appearances for the club scoring 41 goals. Made some appearances in the Second Division Championship side in 1938/39. Billy left the club after 10 years' service to join

Walsall in 1947 after refusing new terms after losing his place to Bobby Langton. He then moved to Peterborough in 1949.

FRED HALL



Born in Chester-le-Street in 1917 he first joined Outston Juniors before signing for the Rovers in 1935. At the Rovers he played both centre-half and right-back, a rugged defender but lacked passing skills and shortly after joining the club were relegated with Aston Villa, another original member of the Football League, into the Second Division. In total he made 38 first team appearances over a long period when mostly a utility player before finally leaving in 1946 to join Sunderland. During the war he played several games for Tottenham Hotspur as a guest player. He had joined the R.A.F. a reserve for England in the Victory match against France in on the 26th of May 1945.

WILLY HALSALL



Born in Liverpool in 1912 he first joined a number of amateur sides including Marine and Bootle before joining Bolton Wanderers and then his transfer to the Rovers in 1932. As a left half-back, he was expected to inspire the Rovers attack with his prompting. He became a regular in the first team in the 1933/34 season and could link well with forwards. However, the form of Charlie Calladine and an injury limited his time at the club. In total he made 71 first team appearances scoring four goals before his transfer to Birmingham in 1938 and then Chesterfield in 1939.

ALEX HAMILL



Born in Dunbarton, Scotland in 1912 he first joined Hamilton Academicals, then Cowdenbeath in 1930 as a forward before joining the Rovers in 1935 for £250. During an initial period playing in the Central League, he played centre-forward scoring eight goals in four games. When he moved into the First team he played inside and outside-right and centre-forward, a rather bustling player. In total he made 24 first team appearances scoring four goals before leaving in 1936 to join Barnsley for £750 and then Carlisle in 1938.

WILLIAM (BILLY) HOUGH



Born in Greenfield, Wales in 1908 he first joined New Brighton as an amateur then Preston North End as a professional in 1930 before his transfer to the Rovers in 1936. He gained a regular first team position in 1938 and was a member of the Rovers Second Division Championship team 1938/39. He was a right full back who made 96 appearances for the Rovers before he retired and left the game in 1942. He also appeared in 40 WWII matches.

JACK HUGHES



Born in Rhosllanerchrugog, Near Wrexham in Wales in 1913 he joined numerous local teams before joining Rhos F.C. He had been an amateur until 1933 when he arrived at Ewood. He first played for Wales in an amateur International and later for Wales in a full International in 1935. Jack made his league debut for the Rovers against Birmingham at Ewood as a goalkeeper and vied for position with Bill Gormlie and Binns. Not very tall but was a very agile and strong keeper with good positioning. In total he made 50 appearances for the club before he suffered a serious spinal injury in 1935. He moved on to Mansfield Town in 1937 then Nelson and Bacup Borough in 1946/47, then Rossendale United in 1947/48 and Darwen 1948/49.

BILL IMRIE



Born in Methil, Fife, Scotland in 1908 he first joined local junior sides and then St. Johnston as a right-half and gained two Scottish Caps before joining the Rovers in 1929 for £4,475 as the club tried to upgrade after the 1928 F.A. Cup final success. A young very strong player who was very competitive, linked well with forwards driving forward and also played centre-half. In total he made 176 appearances for the club scoring 24 goals. He left the Rovers in 1934 to join Newcastle United for £6,500 then Swansea Town in 1938 £800 and Swindon Town in 1939.

FRED KENNEDY



Fred was born in Bury in 1902 and first joined Rossendale United in 1920 then Manchester United in 1925 then Everton in 1925 for £2000 then on to Middlesbrough in 1927 for £600 then Reading 1929 and then Oldham Athletic 1930 and Northwich Victoria 1931 and finally Racing Club de Paris in France 1932 from whom he moved to the rovers in 1933. Despite playing for several clubs it was only at the French club that he made his mark where he won honours. He started at the Rovers at inside left but was only a utility player and lost his place in the First Team with a broken leg and only made 29 First Team appearances scoring eight goals before leaving to rejoin his former club in France in 1934 and then later joined Stockport County in 1937.

ERNEST LANCELEY



Born in Mexborough in 1910 he first joined Charlton Athletic in 1931 before joining the Rovers in 1932. It took two years before he made the First Team as a defender, mostly a right-full back who was two footed and read the game well. A tall slim player who became captain and was a member of the Rovers Second Division Championship winning team in 1938/39. He appeared in 43 war time games, but injury stopped him continuing to play for the Rovers. In total he made 97 appearances for the club before his retirement in 1941 during the WWII.

BOBBY LANGTON



Born in Burscough, Lancashire in 1918 he first joined Burscough Victoria, then Rovers as an amateur and then moved on to Bolton Wanderers. He turned professional and first signed for the Rovers in 1937 making his debut for the club against Swansea City in 1938. Bobby left the Rovers in 1948 to join Preston North End before re-joining the club in 1953. Originally with the Rovers he was a flying winger who could easily outrun defenders before making pin-point crosses. He first left the Rovers when they were relegated to the Second Division, when he returned, he was slower but opened up defenders with his guile. He was in the Second Division Championship side and had seven England caps. In total he made 262 appearances scoring 74 goals. He left the club in 1956 to join Ards then Wisbech Town in 1959.

CHARLES LUKE



Born in Esh Winning, Durham in 1909 he first joined Huddersfield Town in 1931 and then Sheffield Wednesday in 1936 before transferring to the Rovers in 1938. He was signed as a utility player playing at outside-right and was a small player who arrived as a goal scoring winger. He was a tricky swift winger but struggled with form at the Rovers. His best form was at Huddersfield but lost his place at the Rovers after 10 games so only made 10 appearances scoring two goals before leaving the club in the same year, 1938, to join Chesterfield.

GERRY MATTIER



Born in Lisbon, Ireland in 1912 he first played for Coleraine before his transfer to the Rovers in 1937. He was a goalkeeper and made his debut against Swansea the same year and the third goalkeeper to be used in the last three matches. Gerry also played for the Irish league team. He had limited First Team games due to the form of Jim Barron. He could be very good but inconsistent. A brave keeper but injury held him back. In total he made a total of 21 appearances for the Rovers before his transfer to Bradford City in 1939.

JACKIE VANCE MILNE



Born in Stirling, Scotland in 1911 he first played for his school and the Boys Brigade. He then moved to Glasgow Ashfield in 1931 where he attracted the Rovers attention to whom he moved to in 1932 despite a number of clubs seeking his signature. At first, he played outside-right mostly for the reserves, then later in the senior side as outside and inside-left. A tricky winger but also speedy. In total he made 49 first team appearances scoring 15 goals. He was surprisingly transferred to Arsenal in 1935 for £5,000 as the club was in debt. Later he joined Middlesborough in 1937 and played in Mexico during the 1940's.

ROBERT MORTIMER



Born in Bolton in 1908 he first joined, as an amateur, Barrow in 1927, turning professional the same year, then Bolton in 1928, Northampton in 1931, Brentford in 1933, Bournemouth in 1934 and Accrington Stanley in 1935 from whom the Rovers signed him in 1937 as a senior well-travelled experienced player along with William Tyson. He was a small bulky centre-forward who had an eye for openings to the goal and the day after signing scored two goals against Southampton. However, he only stayed to the following year making 16 appearances for the club scoring four goals moving to York City in 1938 for £300 till 1939 and the WWII.

ALBERT PINXTON



Born in Shelton, Hanley in 1912 he first played for Stoke City as an amateur 1930 to 1932, then Nantwich before his transfer to the Rovers in 1933. He was a utility inside-forward who could make goals but not score them, so he only made four first team appearances for the Rovers before his transfer to Cardiff city in 1936 then Torquay United in 1937.

BOB PRYDE



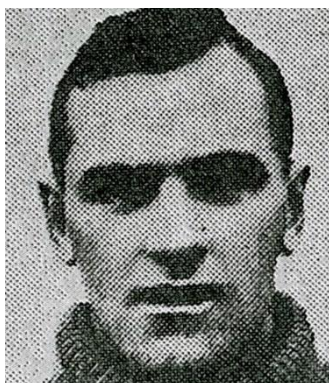
Born in Methil, Scotland in 1913 he joined his first club, St. Johnston, at a time when he became a motor mechanic, joining the Rovers on 6th of May 1933, playing his first senior match in October of that year against Chelsea as left-half. Whilst at the Rovers he played in the half-back line preferring centre-half but also playing left and right half. He was tall and slim but a tough defender who read the game well. He was a member of Rovers Second Division Championship winning team 1938/39 and League Cup War runners up team in 1940. He scored 11 goals in wartime in 180 matches for the Rovers. It was said that his efforts saved the team from relegation in 1946/47 and he also played Inter-League for Scotland that year. He was a dominant and influential player during his 16 year stay at the club and made a total of 525 games scoring 22 goals before joining Wigan Athletic in 1949 as player-manager.

BILLY ROGERS



Born in Ulverston he first joined Preston North End in 1937 before his transfer to the Rovers in 1938. He was signed by Bob Crompton as a physical winger scoring 18 goals in 1938/39 season. As an outside right he made 155 appearances for the club scoring 53 goals. He was transferred from the club in 1947 to Barrow and stayed there till 1953. Billy was a member of the Second Division Championship winning team in 1938/39.

SEP RUTHERFORD



Born in Percy Main in 1907 he first joined Blythe Spartans then Portsmouth in 1927 and as a former Schoolboy International he moved to the Rovers in 1936. There he was a utility forward mainly at outside left, a cultured winger who had an eye for the goal. He only made 14 appearances for the club scoring one goal before retiring in 1937.

TOMMY SALE



Born in Stoke-on-Trent in 1910 he first joined Stoke City as an amateur in 1929, turning professional in 1930, then moved to the Rovers in 1936 for £6,000. At the club he first played inside-left, but his bustling style better suited the centre-forward position. He was a busy marksman and a fine header of the Rovers attack. In total he made 68 appearances scoring 26 goals before his transfer back to Stoke City in 1937 for £3,000 later moving to Northwich Victoria in 1947.

JOCK SMEATON



Born in Perth, Scotland in 1915 he first joined St. Johnston in 1934 before his transfer to the Rovers in 1936. He arrived at Ewood on a free transfer as a young player with good

prospects, however he lacked consistent performances so had limited chances in the First Team. As a utility forward although his main position was inside left, he made 38 appearances for the club scoring nine goals before leaving to join Sunderland in 1938, then St. Johnston in 1947 and became their player-coach in 1948.

LES TALBOT



Born in Hednesford in 1910 he first joined Hednesford Town then joined the Rovers in 1930 where he played mostly as an inside-right, but initially found it hard to break into the First Team. He was a determined inside right and good header of the ball. Later moved to inside left and made 96 appearances for the Rovers scoring 21 goals before he moved on to Cardiff City in 1936 then Walsall in 1939.

ERNEST THOMPSON



Ernest was born in New Biggin in the north-east in 1909 and first joined Carlisle United in 1928 then Bristol City in 1929 before joined Bath City in 1930 the moving to the Rovers in 1931. He was a regular goal scorer for the clubs he played in before the Rovers and started at the Rovers in the reserves then in the First Team leading the forwards where he played both at inside-right and centre-forward. Ernest scored in his debut first team game against Sheffield Wednesday at Ewood, but the team lost 6-1. He was both tall and physically well built but also speedy becoming a leading goal scorer in the Division. In total he made 179 appearances for the Rovers scoring 84 goals before his transfer to Manchester United in 1936 for £4500 later moving on to Gateshead in 1938.

BILLY TYSON



Born in Skerton, Lancaster in 1916 he first joined Southport as an amateur in 1933 then Glentoran in 1934 then Lancaster Town in 1935 and Accrington Stanley in 1936 where he had the most success, before joining the Rovers in 1937. At the Rovers he was a utility inside left, a bustling type of player who made good use of the ball but playing mostly in the reserves. He made the First Team in the 1937/38 season but after making only six first team appearances scoring two goals, he moved on to Boston United in 1938, then Accrington Stanley in the same year and Southport in 1939.

PETER VAUSE



Born in Chorley in 1914 he first joined Leyland Motors before joining the Rovers in 1934. In his early days he attended Balshaw's Grammar School and was a Leyland cricketer, and a teacher at Poulton-le-Fylde. He joined the Rovers as an amateur and his debut first game was at outside left against Huddersfield Town. A mostly reserve team forward he made a total of eight first team appearances scoring one goal before his transfer to Darwen in 1938 then Rochdale the same year.

JACK WEDDLE



Born in Sunderland in 1905 he was spotted by Portsmouth playing for a Junior Durham club in 1927. He played inside left for Portsmouth changing to centre-forward and a prominent player scoring well over 100 goals for Portsmouth. During Bob Crompton's second spell as Rover's manager, he snapped up Jack Weddle the veteran centre-forward at a time when finances were limited. As the leader of the Rovers attack, he proved to be a hard-bitten warrior whose robust bustling methods made it easier for the inside-forward to get goals. Always a strong challenger, very strong in the legs and as fearless as he is hard as befits a ex-pit lad. In total he made 91 appearances for the Rovers scoring 32 goals before he retired in 1948. Later he would become the Rovers Head trainer in 1949 and leaving in 1961.

ARNOLD WHITESIDE



Born in Calder Vale in 1911 he first joined Woodplumpton Juniors from where the Rovers signed him as an amateur in 1932 with him becoming a professional later. He stepped straight out from village football to the First Division. A pocket-sized right half who had been brought out of the cotton mill as a weaver to sign for the Rovers and made his debut against Liverpool at left half. He gave outstanding club service and was a human dynamo. He was a member of Rovers 1938/39 Second Division Championship side and at the end of the season he was put on the transfer list but had no takers, so he re-engaged and became a star of the promotional side playing at Rovers through the war. He eventually became a stalwart in the defence at right half-back and in total made 416 appearances for the Rovers before leaving in 1949 to join Wigan Athletic on a free transfer.

CRAWFORD WHYTE



Born in Ryhope in 1917 he first joined Crawcrook Albion before being signed by the Rovers in 1930 as a left-back. He made the First Team in the 1933/34 season and was a strong defender who could clear well and keep pace with most attackers. He lost his place to Walter Crook, so he left in 1935 after making 88 appearances for the club and moved on to Bradford City in 1935 then Tranmere Rovers and then Hartlepool United in 1937.