

Blackburn Rovers Players From 1880's to 1990's
Rovers Players During the 1940's

JIMMY BALDWIN



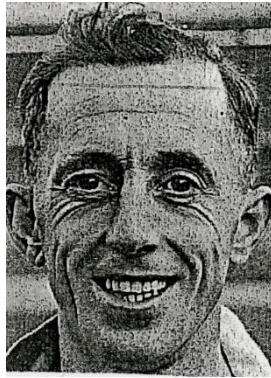
Born in Blackburn in 1922 he first joined Mill Hill St. Peters side before joining the Rovers in 1943 as an amateur and turned professional in 1945. He was a hard-working half-back and a strong tackler who went on to make 109 first team appearances for the club scoring four goals before he was transferred to Leicester City in 1950 for £10,000. In 1964 he returned to the Rovers to coach and train young players. He became Yarmouth player manager in 1956.

FRANK BEE



Born in Nottingham in 1927 he first joined Nottingham Forest as an amateur, then Sunderland in 1947 and in 1949 transferred to the Rovers for £6,000. He was a utility inside-left, he had trickery talents but lacked pace and only made four first team appearances for the club before moving on to join Peterborough United in 1950.

ERIC BELL



Born in Bedlington in 1922 he first joined Blythe Spartans whilst he was a cobbler. He moved to the Rovers in 1945 and became one of their best discoveries as he only cost a donation to Blythe Spartans. During his long career at the Rovers, he played inside-left. Although he was mainly a half-back, he could also play full back and left wing, but his preferred position was left-half. He was a reliable player willing to play in different roles to help the club. He gained recognition playing for the international league side. Although not swift he showed constructive polish as the ball was pushed along the ground to the forwards. He was small in stature but made the most of his ball skills. In total he made 360 first team appearances for the Rovers before retiring in 1957.

JACKIE BESTALL



Born in Beighton, Sheffield in 1900 he played for Rotherham United in 1925, Grimsby Town in 1926, he was Birmingham City coach in 1938 and Doncaster Rovers manager in 1946. Due to the poor performance of the Blackburn Rovers team the directors sacked Jack Bruton and Horace Cope in an amicable way. They then appointed Jackie Bestall, the former Grimsby Town and England International as the new manager with Jack Weddle and Jock Wightman as his backroom team in May 1949. The manager was quick to promote from within the club as Bob Pryde left to become Wigan Manager. He was keen to nurture young talent.

JACKIE CAMPBELL



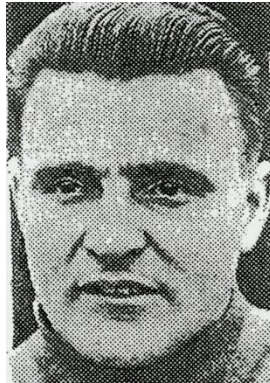
Born in Liverpool in 1922 he first joined Liverpool F.C. after first playing for Bootle Schoolboys before joining the Rovers in 1945 at the end of War League North. Whilst at the Rovers for 11 years he was generally seen as the life and soul of the Rovers party. He played many representative games for the R.A.F. from which he was demobbed in 1948. Over his time at the Rovers, he played various positions including right and left wing and right-half, but when he moved to half back, he became a First Team regular and a loyal club player. He made a total of 265 first team games scoring 25 goals, before moving on to Oldham Athletic in 1956. He later became the youth coach at the Rovers.

DON CARTER



Born in Midsummer Norton in 1921 he first joined Bury before joining the Rovers in 1948 for £5,000. He failed to make progress at the Rovers making only two First Team games and leaving the same year to join New Brighton in 1948 and then Northwich Victoria in 1951.

HERMAN CONWAY



Born in Liverpool he first joined West Ham United and had appeared against the Rovers in the 1940 War Cup Final that they won. He went on to be the most notable signing for the Rovers during the wartime period as a goalkeeper and made 134 wartime appearances but declined the chance to stay for the final season of wartime football and moved to Southend United in order to continue his building trade interests.

LESLIE COOK



Born in Blackburn in 1924, played for his local school and was capped for English Schoolboys as left-half. He attracted the attention of the Rovers and signed in 1939 as an amateur turning professional in 1943 and turned out for them regularly in their regional war football as half-back or forward. However, after the war he was nearly allowed to join Accrington Stanley but as a utility player he was switched to the right back position and became one of the country's best defenders. A resolute and fierce tackling player who worked as a plumber and trained at night. In total he made 149 First Team appearances for the club scoring 10 goals before moving on to Coventry City in 1949 and then Rugby Town in 1955.

ERNIE EDDS



Born in Plymouth in 1926 he first joined Portsmouth in 1944 as an amateur then Plymouth Argyle in 1946 where he played centre-forward although only small and slim. He moved to the Rovers in 1949 signed by the new manager Jackie Bestall. He played 14 games after arrival in the first team but then dropped to the reserves in the Central League. He was used as a utility player but only made 19 first team games as outside-left and half-back scoring four goals before leaving to join Torquay United in 1951, then Plymouth Argyle in 1953 and then Swindon Town in 1955.

BILL ECKERSLEY



Born in Southport in 1925 and first played for High Park before joining the Rovers in 1947 with his debut match on the 1st of May 1948 against Manchester United when the team were already doomed to relegation to the Second Division. However, on 2nd of July 1950, he made his England debut against Spain in round one of the World Cup and went on to gain 17 caps. Although small in stature he was a fiery competitor at left-full-back combining pace and poise and was never ruffled. A popular and respected figure at the club and a natural captain. He retired at the end of the 1960/61 season with 21,000 turning out for his final match. In total he made 432 first team appearances for the club scoring 21 goals. following retirement, he lived in a confectioners shop on Bolton Road very close to the ground but the business failed and so he went back to driving.

BILLY FENTON



Born in West Hartlepool in 1926 he played for Barnsley in 1944 then Horden Colliery Welfare as he was a miner. He signed for the Rovers in 1948 and played at left-wing as a utility player. He had a run of 17 games during the 1950/51 season but then dropped to the reserves. He only made 34 first team appearances for the club scoring seven goals before he moved to York City in 1951 where he was successful and the clubs highest goalscorer.

LES GRAHAM



Born in Barton-on-Irwell, Manchester he first joined Urmston in the Manchester League and then Army football in India who recommended him to the Rovers in 1945. He joined as an amateur before turning professional in 1949 playing inside-right. He soon made his mark on the team as top scorer in his first season. A dark dapper small footballer who showed promise, but his form fluctuated and in total only made 157 first team appearances but scored 44 goals.

He left the Rovers in 1953 to join Newport County for £2,500, then Watford in 1955, Newport County in 1957, Cambridge City in 1959 and player manager at Merthyr Town 1959/60

DAVID GRAY



Born in Dundee in 1922 he first played for Glasgow Rangers then Preston North End in 1947 before Jack Bruton, Rovers manager signed him in 1948 to take up the right-full-back position that had become vacant and was a partner to Bill Eckersley at full-back. A player with skill, flair and pace but injury limited his First Team place after two seasons. In total he made 111 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring five goals before joining Dundee in 1954.

EDDIE HAPGOOD



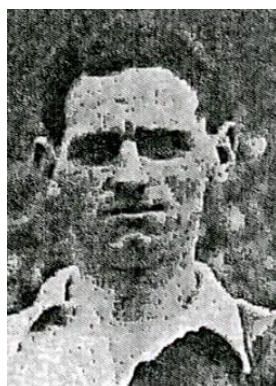
After the Second World War, the 1945/46 season brought normality, with the club playing in the 42 game Football League North. The 1946/47 season so the return to the traditional leagues. After the club sacked Bob Crompton, they eventually signed Eddie Hapgood, the former Arsenal and England full back. He had been a member of the very successful Arsenal team of the 1930's and it was hoped he would bring all his experience and help stabilizing the club in the post war years signing him in 1946.

STAN HAYHURST



Born in Leyland, Lancashire in 1923 he first joined the Royal Navy Football Team during the Second World War after he had enlisted. He signed for the Rovers as a goalkeeper from the Navy in 1943. At first, he played in the reserves as deputy to George Marks. He started in 1948/49 as a First Team goalkeeper but then his form dropped off. In total he made 36 first team appearances for the club mostly at reserve level before he moved on to join Tottenham Hotspur in 1948. In 1951 he moved to Barrow for £1,500 then to Grimsby Town in the same year for £3,500 and finally Weymouth Town in 1953.

GEORGE HIGGINS



Born in Dundee he first joined Lochee Harp, Scotland before moving to the Rovers in 1946. He was previously a young Scottish ex-naval commando and during Rovers away trips he was the vocalist. In total he made 56 first team appearances at fullback before leaving to join Bolton Wanderers in 1951.

KEN HOLLIDAY



Born in Darwen he first joined Darwen Juniors before moving on to the Rovers in 1946. On leaving the Navy, he signed as a professional at Ewood with sheer persistence and the faith of some Ewood staff. He was ideally built to become the reserve centre-half and one of the clubs most improved young players. In total he made 30 first team appearances before moving to Accrington Stanley in 1953.

BILL HOLT



Born in Bolden in 1926 he first joined Bolden Colliery Welfare where he was a miner and moved to the Rovers in 1949. When the new Rovers manager Jackie Bestall was faced with Bob Pryde accepting the player-manager job at Wigan Athletic he moved Bill Holt into his centre-half position and became the automatic choice. A hard-working player but lacked pace which limited his game. In total he made 80 First Team appearances for the Rovers and after losing his place and spending time in the reserves he joined Weymouth in 1953 and then Barrow in 1954 to 1957.

HENRY HORTON



Born in Malvern, Worcester in 1923 he joined Worcester City, moving on to the Rovers in 1947 for £2,000. He played left-half but could also play inside-left which is where he made his mark as a hard-working player. In total he made 98 First Team appearances for the club scoring five goals before moving on to Southampton in 1951, then Bradford City in 1954, then Hereford United in 1955. He was also good cricketer and played for Worcester and Hampshire until 1967.

BILL HUGHES



Bill was born in Colwyn Bay, Wales in 1919 he first joined Colwyn Bay in 1935 then Larne in 1937, then Newry Town. In 1939 he joined Huddersfield town before joining Tottenham Hotspur. During the WWII he played as a guest for Arsenal and Tottenham who went on to sign him in 1945 where he stayed till 1948 when he moved to the Rovers as a goalkeeper. However, at the Rovers he didn't really make his mark as he was a little indecisive with crosses and injury cost him his place which was taken by Jack Patterson. In total he only made 28 first team appearances for the Rovers before leaving in 1950 to join Nelson then Rochdale the same year and later Crystal Palace in 1951.

HARRY JACKSON



Harry was born in Blackburn in 1918. He first joined Darwen in 1936, then Burnley in 1942, then Manchester City in 1946 and finally Preston North End in 1947. He joined the Rovers in 1948 signed by Jack Bruton as cover for Dennis Westcott as the centre-forward but few opportunities came his way so moved to play his natural position of inside-left. He only made two First Team appearances, playing mostly in the reserves. He left the Rovers in 1949 to join Chester.

BOB McCAIG



Bob was born in Lockerbie, Dumfries Scotland in 1923 and first joined Queen of the South in 1944 before joining Carlisle in 1948. He left as a young player to join the Rovers in 1948 and made the first team after a month due to good performances in the Reserves. As a winger he was small but speedy with good ball control and could play on either wing. His last season in the first team was 1950/51. In total he made 32 First Team appearances before leaving to join Stockport County in 1951, he then moved to Halifax Town in 1952 and finally Crewe Alexander in 1952.

CHARLES McCLELLAND



Charles was born in Manchester in 1924 and first joined Hyde United after war time appearances for Bolton Wanderers when he was in the R.A.F. He moved to the Rovers in 1946 and started full-time training for the centre-forward position and had his best First Team games in the F.A. Cup. Charles lost his First Team position as centre-forward with the arrival of Brown and moved to play inside-left in the reserves. In total he made 18 First Team appearances scoring seven goals before moving on to join Exeter City in 1949 the later Portland in 1950 and Cheltenham.

FRANK McGORRIGAN



Frank was born in Easington County Durham in 1921 and first joined Middlesbrough in 1944 as an amateur then turning professional before joining Carlisle United in 1945 and Hull City in 1946. He moved from Hull to the Rovers in 1947 for £6000 as an inside-forward but failed to make his mark in the First Team as he made little impact, therefore he left the same season moving back to Hull City after only five first team appearances in 1947 he moved to Southport in 1948, Scarborough in 1950 and finally Wisbeck Town in 1952

HARRY McSHANE



Harry was born in Holytown in Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1920 and first joined Bellshill Town before his transfer to the Rovers in 1937 as an amateur before turning professional. He was a left-winger for the Rovers and arrived when the club were fighting to avoid relegation. Harry made his debut in the first team as a 17-year-old at Ewood against Chesterfield. During his time at the Rovers he played mostly in the reserves, making only 21 appearances for the club 19 of those being in the reserves scoring 14 goals. He left the Rovers to join Huddersfield Town in 1946 then moved on to Bolton Wanderers in 1947, Manchester United in 1950, Oldham Athletic in 1954 and finally he became coach at Chorley. His son Ian became a famous film and T.V. star.

GEORGE MARKS



Born in Amesbury in 1915 he first joined Arsenal as an amateur in 1936 and became their No. one goalkeeper as a professional and wartime international winning eight caps. Rovers manager Eddie Hapgood (ex-Arsenal) did well to persuade their manager to part with him as he joined Rovers in 1946 at the start of the season for a fee of £5,000. His form at the Rovers was very good but a serious injury led to absence and then a loss of form and confidence. In total he made 74 First Team appearances for the Rovers before his transfer to Bristol City in 1948, then Reading the same year where he later became trainer and coach in 1954.

ARCHIE MILLER



Born in Larkhall, Scotland in 1913 he first played for Heart of Midlothian in 1932, then Selkirk in 1940, back to Hearts in 1941 and joined the Rovers in 1947 as a versatile player. He had previously played full back for Scotland and also as a left half mostly at Hearts. Archie was signed with other Scottish players at a time when Rovers were fighting relegation, and he was at the end of his career. In total he only made six First Team appearances for the club before leaving the following year, 1948, for Kilmarnock for £1,000 then Carlisle in 1950, Heart of Midlothian 1951 and Workington in 1952.

BERT MITCHELL



Born in Cobridge, Midlands in 1922 he first played for Stoke City in 1939 as an amateur and joined the Rovers in 1948 for a fee of £4,000 as a reserve left winger when the team had been relegated to the Second Division. However, he only made three First Team appearances on the right-wing before leaving the club in 1949 for Kettering Town, then Northampton the same year, Luton Town 1951, Middlesbrough 1954 and Southport in 1956.

EDDIE MURPHY



Born in Middlesbrough in 1921 he first played for his town side from 1939 joining the Rovers in 1947 as an inside left. Joining the club after the sacking of manager Eddie Hapgood and signed by Horace Cope. He played inside-left for the Rovers mostly in the 1947/48 season but then Rovers were relegated to the Second Division, and he lost his place. He went on to make 34 First Team appearances scoring seven goals. In 1949 he left the Rovers to join Halifax town, then Redcar Albion in 1955.

GEORGE HUTCH



A former player with Preston North End as a forward he made two guest appearances for the Rovers in 1944/45 during the WWII. After returning from the war, he returned to play for Preston North End.

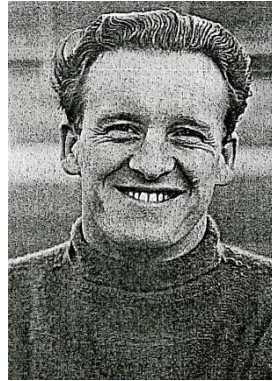
JACKIE OAKES



Born in Hamilton, Scotland in 1919 he first played for Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1935 and then Queen of the South in 1947. The club facing relegation caused the Rovers directors to find the money to take on a number of Scottish players. Oakes signed for a fee of £10,000

as an outside-right. A sturdily built winger with a fine turn of speed, a good sprinter, and a powerful shot. A regular right-winger in the 1946/47 season but lost his place the next season so he was allowed to leave after making only made 37 First Team appearances scoring nine goals before joining Manchester City the following year, 1948, then Queen of the South in 1951, then returned in 1962 as their trainer.

JACK PATTERSON



Born in East Cromington in 1922 he first joined Nottingham Forrest as an amateur goalkeeper. He left to join the Rovers in 1945 as an amateur as the war was ending in the April turning professional later. Jack was kept out of the First Team by the consistency of Reg Elvey. Started main Rovers First Team position in 1948 and ever present in 1950/51 season but then fractured his arm and Reg Elvy was bought to cover which kept him in the reserves mostly after. In total he made 127 First Team appearances before leaving in 1956 to join Kettering Town then Darwen.

BOB PRIDAY



Born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1925 he first joined Liverpool in 1945 as an outside-left. He joined the Rovers in 1949 for £10,000 signed by Jackie Bestall as he tried to upgrade the team in the Second Division. Whilst at the Rovers he found a new lease of life when moving from the wing where he lost his place to inside-left in the 1950/51 season and started scoring goals. In total he made 45 First Team appearances scoring 11 goals before leaving to join Clitheroe in 1951, then Northwich Victoria the same year, Accrington Stanley in 1952 and Rochdale in 1953.

JACK SMITH



Born in Batley, Yorkshire, in 1915 he first played for Huddersfield Town as an amateur in 1932, then Newcastle United in 1934 for £2,500 where he scored 73 goals in 113 games. He then moved to Manchester United in 1938 for £6,500 before joining the Rovers in 1946. There he became the spearhead of attack as centre forward scoring goals freely with head or foot if given the right service. In total he made 43 First Team appearances for the club scoring 17 goals before leaving the following year 1947, to join Port Vale after losing his place in the team.

BOB TOMLINSON



Born in Feniscowles, Blackburn in 1924 he first joined his local Feniscowles team signing for Rovers as an amateur in 1943. He played right full-back signed by Eddie Hapgood from the Navy, but service duties and a run of injuries held his playing career back with a broken toe and wrist. In total he made 36 First Team appearances for the club before leaving to join Accrington Stanley in 1948 then Mossley 1949 and then Halifax Town in 1951.

ALEC VENTERS



Born in Cowdenbeath, Scotland in 1913 he first joined Cowdenbeath in 1930, Glasgow Rangers in 1933 then Third Lanark before Rovers acting manager signed him in February 1947 for £1,000 to join other signings to help the club avoid relegation. The club had previously tried to sign the wily inside forward playmaker a decade earlier. The player now provided a mature guile into the attack and opportunities from inside-forward to help his club escape relegation. In total he only made 25 First Team appearances for the club scoring seven goals before he left the next year, 1948 to join Raith Rovers and retired the same year.

JACK WEBBER



Born in Blackpool in 1920 he first joined Hyde United and was signed by the Rovers in 1947 along with many others as the club fought against relegation. A utility inside-forward, he could use the ball intelligently but had to wait till 1947/48 season for a First Team regular place but soon axed and then playing in the Central League. He only made eight First Team appearances before leaving in 1948 to join Ashton United for non-league football.

JACK WEIR



Born in Fouldhouse, Scotland in 1923 he first joined Leith Renton, then Hibernian where he was a successful centre-forward. The panicking Rovers directors fearing relegation paid a club record £10,000 to sign him in 1947 where he also played on the right wing. However, he struggled with form at the Rovers and lost his First Team place and only managed 23 appearances scoring seven goals before he was sold on to Glasgow Celtic in 1948 for £7,000 later moving to Falkirk in 1952.

JACK WESTBY



Born in Aintree, Liverpool in 1916 he first joined Burscough before joining the Rovers as a young right full-back in 1937. A well-built utility player who turned professional at the Rovers but was kept out of the First Team by the form of other full backs. He played mostly in reserve or youth teams only making two First Team appearances before he left in 1944 to join Liverpool, then Southend in 1947, Runcorn in 1948, Ellesmere Port 1949 and Bootle in 1952.

DENNIS WESTCOTT



Born in Wallasey, Merseyside in 1917 he first joined New Brighton as an amateur then moving to Wolves as a professional in 1936 before the WWII and played in the 1939 Cup Final. He had war time international appearances and held the Wolves scoring record for a season 1946/47 with 38 goals. He was signed by the Rovers in 1948, a week before they were relegated to the Second Division where he played for a season and a half proving to be one of the clubs best ever centre-forwards and captain. His signing had been to improve Rovers chances of returning to the First Division, but it didn't happen although he continued to score goals. He made 66 First Team appearances scoring 37 goals before leaving the club in 1950 to join Manchester City for £12,500, a big shock for the fans. He moved on to Chesterfield in 1952. After retiring he became a publican in the Midlands area but died at Stafford aged 43.

DAVID WILKINSON



Born in Sunderland in 1928 he first joined North Shields before the Rovers signed him as a young player in 1948. An outside left who got in the First Team due to injuries to other players but didn't impress so relegated to the Central League. However, he only made one First Team appearance before moving to Bournemouth in 1950 then Berwick Rangers in 1952.

CEC WYLES



Born in Bourne in 1919 he first joined Peterborough United then Everton in 1938 before moving to Blackburn Rovers in 1945 after playing two guest appearances during the WWII. After signing he mostly played in the reserves as a forward apart from two appearances in the F.A. Cup. A former schoolboy international and centre forward being Rovers leading goal scorer in the 1945/46 season. In total he made 26 First Team appearances for the club scoring 18 goals (none in the football league team). He left to join Bury then Southport in 1946 and finally Bangor City in 1950.