

Blackburn Rovers Players From 1880's to 1990's
Rovers Players During the 1960's

BEN ANDERSON



Ben was born in Aberdeen in 1946 and first joined Peterlee Juniors before joining the Rovers in 1964 as a reserve wing-half or centre-forward. In 1967 he was promoted to lead the first team attack. He was a strong and enthusiastic forward but after a time lost his place. In total he made 21 first team appearances scoring seven goals before leaving in 1968 to join Bury then he moved on to Cape Town City (South Africa) then on to Crystal Palace in 1973.

JOHN BARTON



John was born in Orrell in 1942 and first joined Preston North End in 1957 making his debut against Arsenal in 1958 aged 16 and turned professional in 1959. He made 54 league and cup appearances at Deepdale before signing for the Rovers in 1966 for £6,000 after losing his place at Preston to Else and Kelly. John was an ever-present for the Rovers in the 1966/7 season chasing promotion. He was a small well-built goalie, but lack of height and a series of errors hindered his first team appearances leading to him losing his place to Adam Blacklaw and leaving the Rovers in 1972 to retire from the game. In total he made 72 first team appearances for the Rovers.

LOUIS BIMPSON



Louis was born in Rainford near Liverpool in 1929 and first joined Burscough then Liverpool F.C. in 1953. He was signed for the Rovers by Dally Duncan in 1959 to bolster the reserves as a utility forward player after the Rovers had many injuries. Louis was seen as a handyman to cover various positions including centre-forward, inside-forward but especially the right wing. He played in nine cup ties during the Rovers 1960 F.A. Cup final run with his big moment being the scorer of two goals away at Tottenham Hotspur. In total he made 29 first team appearances for the club scoring eight goals before moving on to Bournemouth in 1961 then later to Rochdale in 1961 and Wigan in 1963.

ADAM BLACKLAW



Adam was born in Aberdeen in 1937 and first joined Burnley in 1954 as a goalkeeper. He became a Scottish International and made 318 first division appearances for Burnley. In 1967 the veteran was signed by new manager Eddie Quigley for £15,000 to replace John Barton as a very experienced goalkeeper. He kept his first team place till injury and loss of form caused him to lose his place to Roger Jones. In total he made 110 first team appearances for the Rovers before leaving in 1970 to join Blackpool then later Great Harwood in 1971.

REG BLORE



Born in Sesswick, Near Wrexham, Wales in 1942 he first joined Liverpool as an amateur in 1958, turning professional in 1959, then joined Southport in 1960 and played for the Welsh Under 23s at centre forward. He joined the Rovers in 1963 for £6,000 as a utility player as cover for Fred Pickering, and to boost the Reserve Team. In action he was a player who could play various forward positions but more a provider and less a scorer and made only 11 first team league appearances covering for injured players before moving on to Oldham Athletic in 1965 for £8,000 and then Bangor City in 1970.

ALAN BRADSHAW



Born in Blackburn in 1941 he was signed by the Rovers from a junior team, he completed a three-year course at Loughborough Training College and taught at Shadsworth Secondary School whilst with the Rovers as a part-time professional. He played inside-right in the Rovers team that won the F.A. Cup Youth Cup in 1959. He signed for the Rovers in 1960 as a non-contract player, became an amateur in 1962 and professional in 1964. He was mostly a reserve team player in forward positions especially on the wing as cover for Mike Harrison. He made 11 first team league appearances scoring two goals before leaving in 1965 to join Crewe Alexandra, then Great Harwood manager in 1992 and later Clitheroe manager.

JOHN BRAY



Born in Rishton in 1937 he first joined Bangor Street Youth Club, then on to the Rovers ground staff in 1953 and signed for the Rovers as a youth in 1954. A strong, bulky full-back who could play either full-back positions but mostly right full-back. He formed a good full-back set up with Keith Newton. By 1959 he took over the right-back position for Ken Taylor. He played in that position for the Rovers F.A. Cup Final team in 1960, however by 1965 he lost his position to Bill Wilson after making 184 first team league appearances and moved on to join Bury.

MARTIN BRITT



Born in Leigh-on-Sea in 1946 he first joined West Ham United as an apprentice in 1961 turning professional in 1963 before joining the Rovers in 1966 for £16,000. A tall strong centre-forward, he was signed as a utility centre-forward to help the club avoid relegation. However, he failed to fully make his mark as a better player than those already on the staff. In total he only made eight first team league appearances before retiring in 1967.

JOHN BYROM



Born in Blackburn in 1944 he had played for Blackburn Schoolboys and Rovers Schoolboys before being signed by Rovers Youth Team in 1959, turning professional in 1961. He made an early start in the league team as both inside-left and centre-forward and scored nine goals in seven games in one spell and showing great promise. However, it didn't last as he was dogged by injury and pay dispute. His second chance came when the costly George Jones, brought in to cover for Fred Pickering when he left failed, so Byrom had a comeback in 1964 when he was aged 20. As a result, he made a success of the centre-forward position. However, he left in 1966 to join Bolton Wanderers for £25,000 to enhance his career, returning to the Rovers in 1976 for one year before retiring with a total of 146 first team league appearances and 64 goals. A local lad made good.

JOHN CODDINGTON



Born in Worksop in 1937 he first joined Huddersfield Town as an amateur and full time professional in 1958 before joining the Rovers in 1967 for £20,000 by Eddie Quigley. He had been with Huddersfield since 1953 and was a very experienced centre-half much needed by the Rovers since Mike England left for first division football. He was bought by the Rovers to bring height to central mid field, a player who commanded his area well but lacked some pace. He lost his place to Dick Mulvaney and after making a total of 83 first team appearances for the club he left to join Stockport County in 1970, Great Harwood in 1971 and Bradford City as coach in 1973.

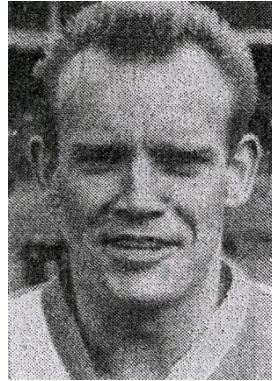
JOHN CONNELLY



Born in St Helens in 1938 he first joined St. Johnston, then Burnley in 1956 and then Manchester United in 1964 for £64,000. At Burnley he earned Championship medals and 20 England caps. He was signed for the Rovers in 1966 for £40,000 by Jack Marshall and was an old-fashioned type of winger, fleet of foot on either wing, a good crosser of balls and an eye

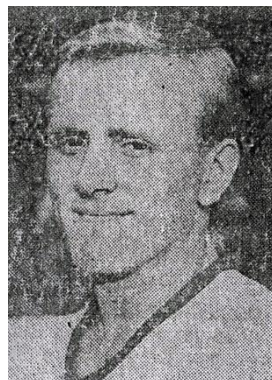
for a goal. He was a fan's favourite for four years at Ewood, earning one England cap and top scorer in seasons 1966/67 and 1968/69. In total he made 163 first team appearances for the club scoring 39 goals before leaving in 1970 for Bury F.C., retiring in 1972.

BOBBY CRAIG



Born in Aidrie, Scotland in 1935 he first joined Third Lanark then Sheffield Wednesday in 1959 before signing for the Rovers in 1962. He was signed by Jack Marshall who had been tracking him for a utility inside-forward. He scored a hat-trick in his second first team game. Family issues led to his form dropping so after making 10 first team appearances for the club scoring three goals, he left the same year joining Celtic for £15,000 then moved on to Canada and Toronto City.

CHRIS CROWE



Born in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in 1939 he first joined Leeds United in 1954 as an amateur turning professional in 1956 before signing for the Rovers in 1960 for a fee of £25,000. Dally Duncan, the manager believed that Chris, a talented inside-forward would inspire the forwards to help avoid relegation. However, he rarely achieved the form his fee promised and was cup-tied. Jack Marshall, the new manager arranged to sell him to Preston North End, but the deal failed for £27,500. In total he only made 62 first team appearances scoring 11 goals before leaving to join Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1962 for £30,000, then Nottingham Forest in 1964 for £30,000, Bristol City in 1967 for £15,000, Walsall in 1969, and Bath City in 1971

MALCOLM DARLING



Born in Arbroath, Scotland in 1947 he first joined Luncarty Juniors before signing for the Rovers in 1964 as a forward youth player. In 1966 he was given a chance to play at outside right allowing Mike Ferguson to move to inside-forward. In total he made 126 first team appearances for the club scoring 34 goals and 15 substitute appearances before leaving in 1970 to join Norwich city, then Rochdale in 1971, Bolton Wanderers in 1973, Chesterfield 1974, Stockport County 1977, Sheffield Wednesday 1977 and Bury in 1978.

DEREK DOUGAN



Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1938 he first joined Distillery in 1955 and gained Irish schoolboy caps, then joined Portsmouth in 1957 and moved to the Rovers in 1959. Dally Duncan signed him after the club had previously tried to sign him from the Irish club Distillery but lost out to Portsmouth. He proved to be an able centre-forward, tall and gangly and was successful with the Rovers F.A. Cup Final Team in 1960. In total he made 76 first team appearances scoring 34 goals before moving on to Aston Villa for £15,000 after a pay dispute, then Peterborough in 1963 for £21,000, Leicester City in 1965 for £25,000, Wolverhampton Wanderers in 1967 for £50,000, retiring in 1975 then became Chairman and Chief Executive of Wolves in 1982

FRED ELSE



Born in Golborne in 1933 he first joined Preston North End in 1953 as a goalkeeper, where he made 215 appearances and gained England "B" success. He left Preston after a dispute over wages. He joined the Rovers in 1961 during the close season as an experienced keeper with a good reputation after Harry Leyland, Brian Reeves and Bobby Jones each had a spell in the first team. He was able to read the game well with good anticipation combined with his athleticism and good handling skills. His fee for signing was £20,000, a record for a Rovers defender. During his first season he saved two penalties in one match against Cardiff City. In total he made 221 first team appearances for the club before leaving to join Barrow in 1966 and later becoming their manager.

MIKE ENGLAND



Born in Greenfield, North Wales in 1941 he joined the Rovers as a youth straight from school in 1957, turning professional in 1959. He made his debut for the Rovers in 1959 against Preston North End. From this he developed into one of the best and versatile centre-halves of his era. An outstanding defender who was tall and commanding, who during his youth played wing-half, full-back as well as centre-half. Commanding in the air and strong in the tackle with good positional play to add to skilful control and distribution. He achieved 20 Welsh International caps and 11 Under 23 Caps. In total he made 184 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring 21 goals being lured to Tottenham hotspur in 1966 for £100,000. At Tottenham he made a further 300 first team league games and during his career won the F.A. Cup, League Cup and UEFA Cup and represented Wales on 44 occasions. After Spurs he joined Seattle Sounders, USA in 1975, then Cardiff the same year and back to Seattle in 1976.

MIKE FERGUSON



Born in Burnley in 1943 he first joined Plymouth Argyl as an amateur in 1959 then Accrington Stanley in 1960 and became available to join the Rovers for £2,500 when Accrington went out of the league in 1962. He made his Rovers debut against Ipswich town the same year. Originally an inside-forward with Accrington Stanley, Jack Marshall moved him to outside-right and he made the position his. A gifted player, a crowd pleaser, who was both tricky and an adventurous attacker scoring memorable goals. However, he could also be frustrating and lacked discipline leading to him leaving. In total he made 249 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring 36 goals before leaving to join Aston Villa in 1968 for £50,000, then Queens Park Rangers in 1969 for £15,000 Cambridge United in 1973, Rochdale in 1974, Halifax 1976, Rochdale Manager 1977, then moved abroad, and eventually became a scout for Tottenham Hotspur.

JIMMY FRYATT



Born in Swaythling, Near Southampton in 1940 he first joined Charlton Athletic part time in 1957, turning professional in 1958, then Southend United in 1960, Bradford in 1963 for £2,500, then Stockport in 1966 for £4,000, Torquay United in 1967 for £5,000, then Stockport County in 1967 for £8,000 before joining the Rovers in 1968 for £25,000 due to the Rovers lack of goals. He had built up a reputation in lower divisions as a burly striker, a powerful shot but deadlier in the air with powerful headers. His debut game was against Bury away which the Rovers won. However, he didn't prove a prolific scorer and seemed more adept at creating chances than scoring himself. In total he made 33 first team appearances in the Second Division with eight substitute appearances scoring Eight goals before leaving in 1970 to join Oldham Athletic for £8,000 then Southport in 1975, then USA and back to Stockport County in 1974. He finally became assistant manager and then manager of Last Vegas Quick Silver from 1977.

ALAN GILLIVER



Born in Swallownest he first joined Huddersfield Town in 1961 and transferred to the Rovers in 1966 after the Rovers failed to sign him the previous year. A tall, strong, well-built centre-forward, he was signed by Jack Marshall to lead the attack and form a partnership with Andy McEvoy. However, the Rovers lost his services due to a back injury, slipped disc, and this led to negotiations with Huddersfield regarding his fitness when he left them for a fee of £18,000. The Football League ruled Huddersfield should repay some of the signing on fee back to the Rovers. This led to the modern routine medical examination of players transferring. In total he made 37 first team appearances scoring nine goals before leaving to join Rotherham United in 1968, then Brighton in 1969, Lincoln City 1971, Bradford City 1972, Stockport County in 1974 and then Boston United.

MIKE HARRISON



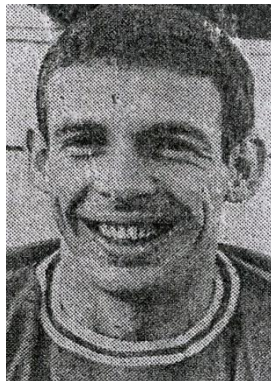
Born in Ilford in the London area in 1940 he first joined Chelsea in 1957 before joining the Rovers in 1962 for £18,000 as an outside-left. His debut game was against West Ham United. He was a former England Schoolboy and under 23 International. A tall, well-built player who was a very swift winger and expert penalty taking using power. Mike proved a good club player and a member of the clubs best forward lines. After losing his place as a winger he moved on to Plymouth Argyl in 1967 having made 181 first team appearances and scoring 43 goals, then Luton Town in 1968 and finally Dover Town in 1970.

JOE HAVERTY



Born in Dublin, Southern Ireland in 1936 he first joined non-league clubs in Dublin then Arsenal in 1954 and was signed for the Rovers by Jack Marshall as an Irish International with caps in 1961 to replace Ally Macleod when he left the Rovers, for the left wing. A small outside-left who could dribble well and had been a crowd favourite at Arsenal but his form at the Rovers dipped as he lacked consistency. However, his career at the Rovers was limited with only 31 first team appearances and one goal before he left the club in 1962 to join Millwall, then moved on to Celtic in 1964, Bristol Rovers 1964, Chicago Spurs in the USA in 1967 and finally Kansas City Spurs in 1968.

BARRIE HOLE



Born in Swansea, Wales in 1942 he first joined Cardiff City in 1959 as a wing-half. He was capped 22 times for Wales and on leaving Cardiff had a choice of the Rovers in the Second Division or Southampton in the First. However, he chose the Rovers for a £40,000 transfer fee in 1966. Barrie was regarded as one of the best attacking midfielders in Britain. A cultured half-back who was skilled at attacking forward at the opposition. He was both tall and slim, read the game well and a gifted ball player. He went on to make 88 first team appearances scoring 15 goals before the club sold him for £60,000 to Aston Villa at a time when the clubs finances were dire in 1968, then moved on to Swansea City in 1970 for £20,000.

BOBBY JONES



Born in Liverpool in 1932 he first joined Southport in 1951, then Chester in 1953 as a goalkeeper and moved to the Rovers in 1958 as cover keeper by Jack Marshall. In 1962 he was placed on the transfer list and had gone back to being a draughtsman. However, he was taken back on as a part-timer, a cheaper option for the club at a time when wages grew quickly. It was left if an offer came up, he could leave. In total he made 52 first team appearances before leaving in 1966 to join Great Harwood and later became their manager.

GEORGE JONES



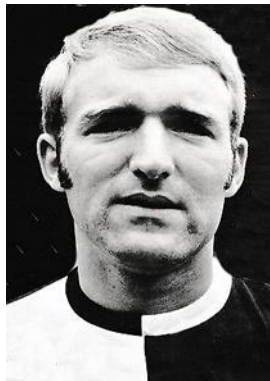
Born in Radcliffe near Manchester in 1945 he first joined Bury as an apprentice in 1961 and turned professional in 1962 before he was signed for the Rovers in 1964 by Jack Marshall for £30,000. He was bought as a promising young forward to cover for the departing Fred Pickering. The 18-year-old England Youth International made his debut against Birmingham straight after signing and scored a goal to help the Rovers win. As a young player he found it difficult playing in the First Division and overshadowed by John Byrom. He came back into the First Team in the 1965/66 season when the Rovers were fighting relegation and became joint top scorer. In total he made 39 first team appearances plus three as sub scoring 15 goals before moving to Bury in 1966 as a 21-year-old for £18,000, then moved on to Oldham Athletic in 1973 for £10,000, Halifax Town in 1976, Southport in 1977, Lancaster City 1978, then player coach at Radcliffe Borough in 1978.

WALTER JOYCE



Born in Oldham in 1937 he first joined Burnley as an amateur in 1953 then turned professional in 1954 and moved to the Rovers in 1964 signed by Jack Marshall for £10,000 as a utility defender to help shore up the squad when the team were struggling. He was a wing-half for Burnley but was switched to full-back when Keith Newton was injured. Later he covered McGrath's place at left-half and again then moved back to left-back as cover. A strong defender with no nonsense attitude with lots of energy who could adapt to different defensive positions. In total he made 134 first team appearances before leaving in 1967 to join Oldham Athletic, then joined the coaching staff in 1969, then became the manager at Rochdale in 1973, Bolton Wanderers as coach/assistant manager in 1976 and coach at Preston North End in 1986.

KEN KNIGHTON



Born in Mexborough in 1944 he first joined Wolverhampton in 1958 turning professional in 1961, then Oldham Athletic for £12,000 in 1966, Preston North End in 1967 for £35,000 before moving to the Rovers in 1969, signed by Carey for £45,000. His main position was half-back to link in with forwards Eamonn Rogers and Stuart Metcalfe. In total he made 76 first team appearances and scored 12 goals before leaving the club in 1971 to join Hull City for a fee of £60,000 after the Rovers were relegated and short of money, then moved to Sheffield Wednesday in 1973, then joined the coaching staff in 1976, became manager at Sunderland in 1979 and then Leyton Orient manager in 1981.

FRANK KOPEL



Born in Falkirk in Scotland 1949 he first joined Manchester United in 1966 before signing for the Rovers in 1969. At United he had been a young reserve full-back and when signed by the Rovers there were rumours about the future of Keith Newton. Whilst at the Rovers however he played more in the reserves and only made 23 first team appearances plus two as substitute before leaving in 1972 to join Dundee United then later became assistant manager at both Arbroath 1982 and Forfar 1983.

IAN LAWTHOR



Ian was born in Belfast Northern Ireland in 1939 and first joined Sunderland in 1958 and transferred to the Rovers in 1961 signed by Jack Marshall. He started at the Rovers as an inside-forward but in the 1962/3 season started as centre-forward and then moved to inside-right due to the form of Fred Pickering at centre-forward. Ian was a hard working inside-forward who had been capped by Northern Ireland so soon adapted to First Division football. In total he made 75 First Team appearances scoring 32 goals before leaving in 1963 to join Scunthorpe United for £12,000 then later to Brentford in 1964, then Halifax Town in 1968 and finally Stockport County in 1971.

ANDY McEVOY



Andy was born in Dublin in 1938 and first joined Bray Wanderers before being signed by the Rovers in 1956 as a youth. He spent time in the reserve team as an inside-forward but in 1960/1 was converted to left-half in the first team and earned a cap from the Republic of Ireland the first of a total of 17. He later moved up to inside-right and in 1964 had the highest league and cup goals scored since Tommy Briggs including five hat-tricks. Andy was a partner in the forward line with Fred Pickering and was skilled at goal poaching around the penalty area and later partnered John Byrom. In total he made 213 first team appearances scoring 103 goals before leaving in 1967 to join Limerick.

JACK MARSHALL



Jack became the Rovers manager at the start of the 1960/1 season taking over from Dally Duncan after the Rovers F.A. Cup Final loss to Wolves. He was well known for his switching of players to different positions such as Fred Pickering from promising full-back to an England centre-forward. During his time at Ewood the Rovers topped the First Division in December 1963 including an 8-2 win against West ham united in the same month. He signed several players during his six-year stay including John Connelly. As he left the club Eddie Quigley took over on a temporary basis and then became manager shortly after in 1967. Jack went on to manage Sheffield Wednesday in 1968 then Bury in 1969 and finally became the Rovers physiotherapist from 1970-79.

DON MARTIN



Don was born in Corby in 1944 and first joined Northampton Town in 1962 and went on to sign for the Rovers in 1968 by Eddie Quigley for £30,000 after Rovers poor season and lack of goals. He was a talented centre-forward who displayed good footballing qualities ideal for the second division. A former England Youth international he was skilful, could read the game well and distribute the ball to the other forwards. In 1970 he broke his ankle and when fit again was only played occasionally by the manager Ken Furphy in the third division. He gained his place in the first team when Gordon Lee became manager in the 1973/4 season. In total he made 247 first team appearances for the Rovers scoring 63 goals before leaving to re-join Northampton Town in 1975 and then on to be Corby player-manager.

STUART METCALFE



Stuart was born in Blackburn in 1950 and joined the Rovers in 1964 from Witton Park School as a schoolboy and representing Blackburn as a schoolboy then became an apprentice in 1966 then turning professional in 1968. He went on to gain caps for England at Youth level and as a member of Rovers Central league Championship side after signing as a professional in 1966. Stuart was a skilful outside-right, but manager Eddie Quigley used him in inside-forward roles and in midfield where he could create problems with his distribution, especially when played with Tony Parks when Gordon Lee was manager. He was awarded a testimonial match in 1978 but by then was no longer in the Second Division side so he moved to Carlisle United then to Carolina Lightning in America for a short spell. Stuart returned to Rovers in 1982 as a non-contract player but had only one league game before ending his career at Crewe Alexandra. In total he made 434 first team appearances scoring 25 goals.

RICHARD (DICK) MULVANEY



Born in Sunderland in 1942 he first joined Marton Colliery, Peterlee, before joining the Rovers in 1964 as a centre-half by Jack Marshall as an understudy to Mike England. By 1966 he was promoted to the first team to give youth a chance and help bolster the defence after Mike England left. He lost his place due to a pierced eardrum and struggled to get back in the first team regularly. Eddie Quigley gave him a new chance in 1969/70 season. In total he made 145 first team league appearances before leaving to join Oldham Athletic in 1971, then Rochdale in 1974.

KEITH NEWTON



Born in Manchester in 1941 he first joined Spurley Hay Youth Club signing as a non-contract youth player in 1958 turning professional in the same year and a member of Rovers 1959 Youth Cup winning team. Originally an inside-forward then as centre-half/left-half in the youth team. He joined the first team in 1960 due to an injury to Mick McGrath at left-half. However, by season 1961/62 he became the first choice left-full-back. Tall and athletic he became a skilful attacking full-back and was fast enough to keep speedy wingers in check and a good tackler with exceptional ability in the air. When Walter Joyce joined the club, he switched to right-full-back and collected Under 23 honours for England and full caps from 1966 becoming a regular full-back for England gaining 19 caps. In total he made 357 first team league appearances for the Rovers before joining Everton in 1969, then Burnley in 1972 and Morecambe in 1978.

FRED PICKERING



Born in Blackburn in 1941 he joined the Rovers as a non-contract youth from school in 1956 turning professional in 1958 as a left back. The manager, Jack Marshall in 1959 experimented with him playing centre-forward for the reserves. He made his senior debut in 1967 against Manchester City scoring two goals that resulted in him making the position his. During the 1962/63 season he scored 23 goals as a powerful target man forming a good partnership with Andy McEvoy. His pace and power proved too much for many defenders. He became unsettled in 1964 and moved to Everton for £85,000, then moved to Birmingham City in 1967 for £50,000, then Blackpool in 1969 for £45,000. He returned to the Rovers in 1971 from Blackpool for £70,000, needed for the club to avoid relegation to the Third Division but by now he was older and past his best and couldn't stop the club being relegated and was released in 1972. In total he made 158 first team league appearances for the Rovers scoring 74 goals. He also gained 3 England Under 23 caps. He then moved on to Brighton and Hove Albion.

BARRY RATCLIFFE



Born in Blackburn in 1941 he first joined Bolton Wanderers before moving to the Rovers in 1958 and turning professional. He played in the Rovers F.A. Youth Cup winning side as a right-winger in 1958. As a utility player he was used mostly in the Reserve team covering when needed in the First team as a left-winger. In total he made 50 first team league appearances scoring eight goals before leaving in 1964 to join Scunthorpe United for £4,000 then moved on to Rochdale in 1965

EAMONN ROGERS



Born in Dublin in 1967 he first joined Larkview, Dublin Juniors before joining the Rovers in 1962 as an apprentice becoming a professional in 1966. During his time at the Rovers, he started as an inside-forward when he was moved to play with Stuart Metcalfe and Ken Knighton in midfield, helping to supply the forwards. A small but talented player who could use both skill and power in his game and was a hard tackler who was very sharp in front of goal. When the Rovers were relegated to the Third Division he decided to leave and join Charlton Athletic in 1971. In total he made 177 first team appearances and scored 39 goals and played in the full Republic of Ireland team earning 14 caps between 1967 and 1971. After Charlton he moved on to Northampton Town in 1972.

GEORGE SHARPLES



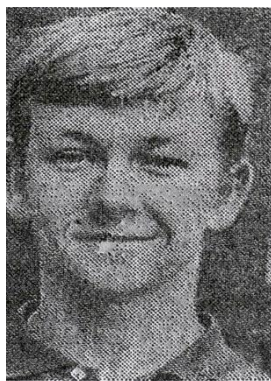
Born in Ellesmere Port, Merseyside in 1943 he first joined Everton on the ground staff in 1959 turning professional in 1960 after becoming a schoolboy international and won a Youth cap. He made 10 appearances at Everton at half-back before joining the Rovers in 1965 for £7,000 playing first in the Reserves as an 18-year-old. George was a well-built capable defender and a good tackler and could read the game well. First played left-half but later regained his first team place at centre-half when Mulvaney was injured. Later he was dropped by Eddie Quigley who felt he lacked height but fought back to regain his place. He broke his leg in 1969 which brought his Rovers career to an end. In total he made 108 first team league appearances before leaving in 1971 to join Southport.

EDDIE THOMAS



Born in Newton-le-Willows in 1933 he first joined Everton as an amateur turning professional in 1951 and went on to become Everton's leading goal scorer in 1959/60. He joined the Rovers in 1960 as part of their biggest transfer fee made up of Roy Vernon going to Everton, Rovers receiving £25,000 and Thomas. Eddie failed to make the first team till 1965 and thereafter had several spells in the first team but never for long. He did score goals more frequently in the Reserves. At the Rovers he played mostly at inside-right or left but failed to score often enough making only 44 first team league appearances and scoring 15 goals before leaving in 1962 to join Swansea Town, then on to Derby County in 1964 for £6,000, Leyton Orient in 1967 for £5,000 and Nuneaton in 1968.

BILLY WILSON



Born in Seaton Delavel in the Northeast in 1946 he signed for the Rovers in 1963 as a junior before turning professional, making his league debut in 1965. He proved to be a good partner for the classy Keith Newton at full-back. Billy was a tough tackling fast left-back who took over from Joyce who was moved to midfield. His partnership with Newton proved to be the best full backs outside the first division. When Newton left and the Rovers were relegated to the Third Division, he became unsettled and eventually left in 1972 joining Portsmouth. In total he made 276 first team league appearances, going on to make 194 league appearances for Portsmouth before retiring.