

The man from Atlanta

Part One: The background

It is May 1966. The forthcoming World Cup is totally insignificant to Boro fans, as following a farcical but tragic defeat at Cardiff City, the club find themselves descending for the first time to the depths of what is now the Second Division.

Back in the previous March, the club had appointed team captain Stan Anderson to the manager's seat, with the brief of saving the club from relegation. On the day Anderson was appointed, the team were second bottom with two games to play.

Anderson's job was huge. The squad was carrying quite a few players who were seeing out their last few days as pro's, and probably couldn't care less about the club. In fact, Anderson at the age of 32 was also seeing out his playing days after an illustrious career in the north east which saw him make over 500 appearances in the combined colours of Sunderland, Newcastle and the Boro.

Following the inevitable relegation, Anderson set to work to get the Boro back to what is now the First Division. He cleared out the deadwood. Then over a period of four months he signed four key players.

Willie Whigham (£10,000) and John Hickton (20,000) came in a few games into the new season. In the pre-season Anderson had brought John O'Rourke (£20,000) from Luton Town and for £9,500 a quietly spoken slightly built lad came in from Southampton, a reserve team winger called David Chadwick. David who? You may well ask...

David Chadwick only missed two games in Boro's promotion year of 1966-67, and was probably an assist in the vast majority of John O'Rourke's goals that season (27) and Arthur Horsfield's (22) and even the 15 that John Hickton bagged.

When people talk about the promotion squad of '67, the names of O'Rourke, Hickton and Horsfield trip off their tongues. But why has David Chadwick become 'The Forgotten Man?'

His contribution to Boro's promotion was as much as anybody else's. Indeed, that season he was the supporters Player Of The Year.

Part of the problem is that he just disappeared. After leaving the Boro, he played in the lower leagues at Halifax, Bournemouth, Torquay (on loan) and Gillingham. But after his final game at Gillingham in 1974, he disappeared from the radar screen.

Part Two: The set-up

Towards the end of last year, mss editor Julie Yates and I were discussing former Boro players, and Chadwick's name came up. Julie mentioned in passing that she had had an e-mail address for him for some time, but was not sure if the address was in use. I remembered hearing some time ago that he was in the USA, but this had not been confirmed. I sent an e-mail and a few days later I received a reply.

After a few more e-mail exchanges and air-mailing a few back issues of mss, David agreed to an interview.

As he is based just to the south of Atlanta, this was a perfect opportunity to organise the interview during a two week period which would also take in snowboarding in Montana and Denver, and a visit to see friends and take in some good music in Memphis. Well - in for a penny....

So, on 4th February I was off, via Washington DC to Atlanta. David had arranged for a limo to pick me up at the airport, and off we went for the 45-minute drive down to Peachtree City, about 30 miles south of Atlanta.

The weather was unseasonably warm, which was greatly appreciated after leaving dreary London. The road down to Peachtree was a six lane highway, but much wider and free of the congestion that we despise on our UK motorways. My driver, a massive black guy, was full of questions about London and his favourite team, Manchester United. Oh well, at least there is one other thing that blemishes world travel,

apart from McDonalds.

David had made a hotel reservation for me and I arrived mid-afternoon with an arrangement to meet him for the interview the next day. However, he turned up at my Hotel soon after I had, to see that I'd arrived safely and to invite me to dinner, which I gratefully accepted. This was a good opportunity to establish rapport before conducting the interview, and to sound him out on some of the questions that I had planned.

Chadwick is still instantly recognisable from his playing days; he has put on a small amount of weight, but his boyish features are still there as well as his mop of blond hair and easy smile. For a guy who enters his 60th year this August, he looks in good shape.

Part Three - The lead-in

On the day of the interview, having enjoyed a great meal and some excellent wine the night before, David picked me up from the Hotel. After breakfast, we drove out to the training pitches, offices, and fantastic indoor training arena where David now coaches the youths of Lightning AFC.

The indoor training arena is something else - I would bet that well over half of Nationwide Division One clubs would drool with envy.

After meeting John Warwick, Lightning AFC's Executive Director (who filled my arms with freebies) it was back to David's home for the interview...and what a home.

On three levels, the living room overlooks a beautiful lake and golf course with a massive wooded area beyond. Unspeakably beautiful. He didn't pay for this on Boro wages of the 1960s....

We set up in the basement room, which is a huge area with plenty of natural light and a bar in the corner adorned with 'CHADDY' across the top and decorated with some of David's memorabilia, including his 1966-67 Boro Supporters' Player Of The Year trophy.

A couple of beers are cracked open, and I ask him to bring us Boro fans up to date on his adventure, which, in his own words, is "A bit of a long story..."

Chaddy fact

Southampton	signed October 1960: 25 apps, 1 goal
Middlesbrough	July 1966: 100 apps, 3gls
Halifax Town	January 1970: 95 apps, 15 gls
Bournemouth	February 1972: 29 apps, 4 gls
Torquay United	(Loan) December 1972: 10 apps, 0 gls
Gillingham	September 1974: 35 apps, 3 gls

**DAVID
CHADWICK**
Middlesbrough



*Chaddy the
Boro player,
around 1968*



*Chaddy at
home with
memories of
1967. Picture:
Shaun Keogh*

Part Four – Living In America

"In 1974 I played my last game at Bournemouth and was a free agent for the first time. I had just turned 30 and had gone through a divorce and some other problems in England at that time. Then this opportunity came up, where Dallas Tornado called me. They wanted me to come to the States and play the summer season.

"I came over, played well, and really enjoyed being here. I went back to England, played one more season at Gillingham, and then came back here again in '75 when the League really took off with Pele and other world class players arriving.

"I played for Dallas Tornado for three years, and then I was sold to Fort Lauderdale Strikers in Florida, and played another year and a half there until I retired in 1977. Then I became the assistant coach with the Strikers before going on to be head coach there and at Atlanta Chiefs."

It all sounds like he took one hell of a chance, bringing his young son over to a new country with an uncertain future for both of them?

Chaddy fact

Gerd Muller – Scored Germany's winner against England in the 1970 World Cup quarter-final.

Terry Paine – Southampton winger
709 League apps for Southampton between 1956-73

John Sydenham – Southampton winger
341 League apps for Southampton between 1956-69

Ted Bates Southampton manager 1955-73.
26th December 1966 **Darlington 0 Boro 3**
27th December 1966 **Boro 4 Darlington 0**

"I had some faith that something good was going to happen. At that point in my life I was going through a very traumatic divorce, had got custody of my son, so it was an opportunity for both of us to start a new life."

Chadwick extended his playing career considerably by going to the USA. He had played more than 300 games in England, where realistically he may have struggled to play through another British winter at professional level. However, he virtually had a second career, because he then played more than 150 games in the States before retiring in 1977.

The key to his continued involvement in the game after retiring from playing was the fact that during his playing career he was quietly earning coaching badges, culminating in garnering a full English badge in 1972. By '77 he had earned the USSF (United States Soccer Federation) 'A' badge, the highest coaching certificate in the US. So I ask, does he have any involvement with the USA national team, who did so well at the last World Cup?

"Yes, I have been USSF national staff coach since 1978. That is basically a fancy title for someone who has the experience I have. I have a full coaching badge in England, and I have been through all of the licensing programmes here. Now I am able to be on the staff and I go out and give courses and instruct for some of those courses.

"America is a huge country, so they have a massive base of players to pick from. They have an outstanding coach in Bruce Arena and some excellent young players, so there is a tremendous surge now for them to have a great run at the next World Cup."

But what about pressure from parents who want their kids to play baseball or basketball? Chadwick smiles wryly and says:

"Sure, that is a factor we have to deal with.

In my experience in our club here in Atlanta, a lot of kids play at under 10, and then what typically happens when they get to about 14 years of age is that they decide they don't like soccer so they go into (American) football or baseball or basketball. But some of them stick with it, they go to college on scholarships and get to play on national teams at under 18 or under 20; we are producing some great players now."

In a recent conversation about Chadwick, Ray Robertson of the Northern Echo told me of his bemusement on seeing Chadwick in action as a coach when visiting the States in '77 with John Hickton. Chadwick, he said, was a very quiet and unassuming young man in his Boro days, and he was astonished to see him barking out orders to the likes of Pele and George Best. How, I asked did that transformation come about?

"When we first came over here, it's true I was a very quiet person. But you have to remember that we were trying to sell soccer to the Americans; we were out many days during the week doing what we call clinics over here. These involved giving performances, showing skills and talking at lunches. All this was aimed at selling the word of soccer over here, and doing that, it forces you to speak and to be a bit more affirmative, and to work hard to be more confident."

Last year David was inducted into the Georgia State Soccer Association Hall of Fame. This must have been a great honour to be recognised in this way? The opportunity to brag does not even occur to him:

"It's a passion, and it's nice to be honoured. You don't do it for the accolades though, you do because you care about the kids, and you care about the sport. I have always said that tin pot trophies don't mean a lot to me. It's all about being able to work with young players and to give ▶

▶ of yourself to the game, and that's what I have always tried to do."

As mentioned previously, David worked with, among others, George Best. I wonder did Best turn on the style on the pitch now and again? This evokes a laugh, as if to say "Where do I start?" but Chaddy comes alive as he replies:

"George was there for about a year and a half, and I rate him as one of the worlds greatest players. He is up there with Beckenbauer, Pele, Bobby Charlton Gerd Muller, Cruyff. It was a treat to have him with us and to coach him; he was outstanding as a person and as a player.

"I remember we tried to sign him after he finished at Fulham with Rodney Marsh, but nobody knew where his registration was. So he trained with us, and while we were waiting for all the paperwork to go through we had a practice match, where we put him in the reserves against the first team. The first team had some world class players like Gerd Muller, so it was a strong side he was up against.

"From the kick-off it went to George on the half-way line, and it looked like he was going to knock it over the full-back. But he looked up for a second, saw the keeper off his line, and he hit it straight over the keeper's head into the net. It was an incredible goal. In the same game, he beat three players, came to the edge of the box and launched a banana shot that curved into the top corner. Everyone was speechless; all of these world class players just stood and applauded. He was an unbelievably talented young man."

Most Boro fans will be aware that John Hickton played in the US, albeit breaking his leg in his first and only game. However not many will know that it was Chaddy who was instrumental in bringing Hickton over. What, I ask are Chaddy's memories of Big John? A big smile beams across Chaddy's face as he recalls:

"I have a great respect for John as a person and as a player; I loved playing with him when I was at Middlesbrough. When we had the opportunity to sign him for the (Fort Lauderdale) Strikers, (where Chadwick was Head Coach) it was ideal for us. It was tragic that in his first game over here that he broke his leg. He is such a great person, and I know her would have done well over here, probably could have done as I did and played another couple of years."

Boro anoraks will no doubt know that Chadwick's place of birth is worth a quiz question. Chadwick was born on Ooctamund, India. What the hell was he doing there, I ask?

"Well, I was just being born! My dad was in the British Army and fought in both world wars. He served in the Indian police force and in the military there during the Second World War when I was born in August 1943. When India got independence in 1947, my dad retired and we moved to Lymington on the south coast."

Part Five - The only way is up

Chadwick started his career as an apprentice with his local club Southampton, for who he played from 1960 until signing for the Boro in 1966. What are his favourite memories from playing at The Dell?

"The greatest day of my career was signing professional, October 10th 1960, I'll never forget that day. That was one of the greatest thrills I have ever had, signing that professional form, as I'd wanted to be a footballer all my life.

Chaddy in the 1967 Boro team

Arthur Horsfield

Gordon Jones



"I scored my only league goal for Southampton against Stoke City, which was significant because my mentor and the person I respected so much was Stanley Matthews, who was playing for Stoke at that time. I watched his moves and tried to practice them. He was the player I wanted to be like. To play against him while I was 17 and to score a goal was fantastic."

However, David's opportunities were limited at Southampton; how did he feel when he heard Boro were interested? Chadwick was approached by Boro at the end of a season in which both teams had left the old Second Division - in opposite directions:

"Oh, I was glad to get away. I had six years at Southampton from 1960, and had only played 25 League games in the first team even though I was in the first team squad. They had two outstanding wingers in Terry Paine who was on the England squad, and John Sydenham. I was an out and out winger then, and everybody played 4-2-4, so I never got my shot.

"When I had the opportunity to go to Middlesbrough, I was so excited; it was an easy decision to make. I was originally supposed to go in part exchange for Ian Gibson. I went up and met Stan and the players, but when I came back I found out that they couldn't work out a deal with Ian Gibson. But I really wanted to go to Boro, and Ted Bates let me go, so I was really relieved at that."

What was his first impression of the rookie Boro manager, Stan Anderson? (who incidentally

is the subject of an interview with this writer in the next MSS)

"I knew Stan because I studied the game and knew he was a great player. He had played for England and I liked him the first time I met him. I remember that at our first meeting he took me onto Ayresome Park. I commented on what a beautiful pitch it was and Stan said, 'Well it should be with all the shit that was on it last year.'

"He was a great guy and I have tremendous respect for him as a manager. Stan was great at building team togetherness. We used to go to Scarborough a few days before a match to play golf and relax. He was a very good manager, and I had dealings with him later when he was at Bolton."

What happened there then, I ask?

"When I became Head Coach of the Atlanta Chiefs, the team I took over was very poor. We needed a veteran striker, and we decided that we would try to get Brian Kidd. At the time, Brian was playing for Stan at Bolton. Stan was great at getting the deal done to get Brian over here, and it was a great signing for us because he scored 22 goals in a 21 game season. I got on real well with Brian - in fact he is godson to my daughter Katie"

So - a skinny unknown reserve player is signed for a not insignificant amount of money by a cash-strapped club under pressure to achieve promotion (Spookily, the exact same scenario as when Anderson spent a lot of money on Spurs' skinny unknown reserve Graeme Souness six years later). What was Chaddy's first impression of the town, and of the shocking start to the new season in the lower division?

"I remember the first time I went to Middlesbrough the *Gazette* had a picture of all the club directors saying that the relegation was all their fault, so I knew then that the people there took their football very seriously.

"Therefore, after the relegation and Stan having signed four new players and it still isn't getting any better, I put Stan and the players under a lot of pressure. But I learned during my managerial experience that it takes time to gel a team together, you can't just throw 11 guys in there and say 'OK, let's go'; it takes time.

"After John Hickton and Willie Whigham came in, the pieces started to fit a bit better. I think that the Darlington games at Christmas were the turning point that set us on our way."

Chaddy fact

MSSer Geoff Stuttard emailed me to ask David if he remembered scoring direct from a corner in 1968 and if he had ever done it again in his career?

"I do remember that; it was an away match against Sheffield United. I was always a good crosser of the ball, and I think in that incident Arthur Horsfield came and stood at the near post and we were going to try to get him a flick-on header. However, it was a very windy day and the ball got blown straight into the net. I think that game ended 3-1 to us, and no, I don't think I ever managed to repeat it."

"Chaddy was an outstanding winger and he would cross the ball perfectly onto my head" **Arthur Horsfield**

David is now chuckling, but it is not at the memory of hammering Darlington, it is the memory of meeting Willie Whigham:

"I remember that Willie Whigham had come down overnight on the train from Falkirk. We had heard a rumour that a new player was coming in but Stan had not shared that with us.

"This tall, skinny...unusual (*laughs*) looking lad walked in and we all thought who is this guy? But I tell you what; he was a good goalkeeper, probably one of the best that I have seen in a one on one situation. With his long legs and long arms sticking out, he did a great job for the Boro."

One of the fun things about meeting former players is a lot of them tell you stories that you dare not print; most you have heard before, and to be honest, the story can change in the telling. However, I had not heard the one that follows; David takes up the story:

"Willie and Arthur Horsfield were really good buddies and were always getting told off for turning up late. There was one occasion when Jimmy Greenhalgh, our trainer got stuck into them when they turned up late again. Willie stood and listened to this torrent from Jimmy - who was right in his face - for a while then decided he had heard enough and head butted him. (*laughs*) Jimmy drew blood and had to put a plaster over the cut. He was quite a character, Willie."

The season culminated in the famous Oxford game, where 40,000 were shoehorned into Ayresome for the greatest night in that stadium's history. What are Chaddy's memories of that night? "Oh, it was magical. Our team was so confident, that when we stepped onto the field it wasn't 'Are we gonna win the game?' It was 'how many are we gonna score?'

"That night I played probably one of my best matches, I hit two corners which John O'Rourke scored from, and John Hickton put away a tremendous header from one of my crosses. It's great that I can look back with pride on my contribution to that night, but the two John's still had to put the chances away. It was a wonderful night."

Part Six - Sliding down the greasy pole

The following season in Division Two saw the beginning of the end for Chadwick as a Boro player. A loss of form in the opening games saw the signing of Mike Kear, another winger, in direct competition with David; that must have been received by him with some despair?

"Oh, it was gutwrenching. I remember going down to my local newspaper shop in Nunthorpe and picking up the paper and it said on the back page that Mike Kear has been signed from Nottingham Forest to replace Chadwick. It was like a dagger going into my heart, and hard to take because I thought I had had a great year. I was voted player of the year by the supporters club. It took a long time to get over that, but you battle on.

"A lot of managers went to 4-4-2 after the World Cup, so I had to adapt my game; I would

sometimes play in midfield, especially when Mike Kear was brought in."

Chadwick was an integral part of the previous years' promotion squad, and now, here he was struggling for form and being put under pressure by the signing of Kear. What did he think caused his on the field problems?

"I was going through some personal problems at that time. I was building a house in Yarm, and had a lawsuit against me to do with the land development, and my wife had just had our son. All of this affected my playing ability and confidence, and I was not playing well. If you don't play well, then you don't get selected.

"I had also picked up an injury, which took some shaking off - I had torn my Achilles tendon. The club physio George Wright helped me through that, but it was a painful recovery. He told me to run it off in training.

Chadwick grimaces at the memory.

"I am telling you, he made me run around and around the pitch at Ayresome for an eternity. I had tears streaming down my face I was in so much pain, but he urged me to keep going. Sure enough, after a very long while something clicked, and the pain went. I was grateful to him for that. Stan and the training staff probably knew that the best thing to do was to move me on. I think Oldham came in but I chose to go to Halifax because Alan Ball's father was the manager there. We missed out on promotion by a whisker, and then I moved to Bournemouth."

Had he, I asked, been back to the Boro at all since leaving?

"The last time I was in Middlesbrough was around 1981, the trip that I signed Brian Kidd; Stan Anderson and I went to see the Boro against Manchester United."

Part Seven - "...And in conclusion"

So, for the younger reader, what sort of player was Chadwick? Very little survives in the vaults of Tyne Tees Television to bear testimony. My view is that he was a similar player to Ryan Giggs, although, as David would readily agree, perhaps not as brave in the tackle. Who does David think he compares to in the modern game, and how would he describe himself as a player?

"I was quick.. I could beat players. I was a good crosser of the ball and a good passer. I think I was a smart, intelligent footballer, and that's where my coaching ability comes from. I don't keep up with English soccer enough now to comment on who I may compare to in the modern game, but those were my strengths."

Would a return to retire in the UK be considered an option, or is he here for good now? Chadwick laughs and replies:

"Well, I have been here for 28 years now, and I don't think my American wife would like the UK. We have a nice lifestyle here. Our family is here - my son who was born in Stockton-on-Tees and was a very good soccer player is here living in North Carolina and our two daughters are here. My mum and dad are no longer alive so if I came home to England it would be a treat, or a holiday, go and see some games - that

Gordon Jones' account of Willie Whigham's suspension: "I remember this because I was team Captain and was involved in acting as a go-between for Willie and dealing with Stan and the club. He was basically banned indefinitely until he apologised. The problem was that we only had young Maurice Short as reserve goalkeeper, but Stan and the club insisted that Willie could not play until he apologised. Willie did apologise eventually and Maurice was not disgraced, because in the one appearance he made during this dispute, we drew at Blackpool. Looking back though, I think it was a conspiracy between the club and the BBC, because that Blackpool match was the first appearance of the Boro on Match of the Day. I think that the BBC were worried about peoples reaction to seeing a face like Willie's on their TV!"

would be fun."

David Chadwick does indeed have a nice lifestyle and a wonderful home. He has been married for 25 years to the beautiful Judy, whom I met later that afternoon while I was leafing through David's incredible scrapbooks.

Now, I have seen a lot of player's scrapbooks, but this is really meticulous. There are match reports from the local Lymington paper from when Chadwick was a schoolboy, around 1957. His 1966-67 promotion season book is a fascinating document; all of the Gazette and other match reports are neatly pasted in chronological order from August to May. I wanted to bring it home and open a Boro museum...

What now? David's looks and physique defy his pending 60th birthday, as does his attitude. So what, I ask, is David's role at AFC Lightning?

"Well, I have a fancy title - Technical Director. I used to be Director of Coaching but the club got so big that I just couldn't do everything. I am proud to say that four of our players have gone onto major league soccer, so we must be doing something right. We bring these lads in at under 10 or under 11, and these four are now playing major league in national teams.

"Clint Mathis is on the national team now, and played in the World Cup. We have another lad called Ricardo Clark who has just signed for New Jersey MetroStars, he is also on the under 20 national team, so they are the successes of our programme, and that is very rewarding.

"All I can do at my age is to try and give back something to the game. I had such a wonderful career, and I feel as if I have been blessed as a person, so to be able to give something back is something I love to do.

"John Warwick (Lightning Executive Director) has a great vision about building a club with good facilities. We have 11 state of the art full field Bermuda grass soccer pitches, and an indoor facility for the winter months, so there is no reason why a player cannot play and learn for 12 months of the year. It is a great environment to work. Seven of our coaches are full badges, so we have the best people in place developing these young players."

That's all very well, but I ask, what exactly is Bermuda grass? (*laughs*)

"Bermuda grass is very short grass which only grows in the warm weather. It is usually used on golf courses, but it is a beautiful surface to play on - a bit like Ayresome Park..."

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