



All together...

It's about this time of year that some clubs bemoan all seater stadia, as the crowd atmosphere can be affected by that fact that the people who want to sing and chant are spread all around the ground. It must be very difficult to get things going if you are into this sort of thing, especially at Boro, because a lot of the newer Boro fans (who let's face it, now form the majority over us lot) are unfamiliar with the words.

Most football chants are boring, because we hear the same tunes sung by the fans of all the clubs, but with the words altered to include the name of their own team or favourite player. So enough of this I say!

What you are about to read may not be poetry in motion, but at least it's new, and includes a couple of good tunes that I do not recall hearing before at football matches:

For instance, in honour of FabRav, to the tune of Queens' *Fat Bottomed Girls*, how about:

Oooh, he's dynamic dynamite

Oooh, for an eyetie he's alright!

Oooh, gonna send those Mackems down

Fabrizio, you make the Boro world go round.

Or, if Ravanelli's reported wage is worth £25,000 per week, then it would only cost him one and a half weeks wages to buy all 29,000 Boro fans a pie at a home game. So I suggest

that until he makes this gesture (or scores in excess of 20 goals this season), that the rather dull '*Robbo Robbo give us a wave*' should be replaced with '*Ravanelli buy us a pie...*'

There's nothing like a great rock anthem, and I am suprised that my fifteen years of gently muttering my own words to Ian Dury's *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll* has not telepathically found it's way into terrace singing folklore:

'Sex and drugs and Middlesbro'

Is all my brain and body need

Sex and drugs and Middlesbro' - is very good indeed!!

Finally, why not set a couple of our Brazilians at each others throats to the tune *Everything Is Beautiful*:

Emerson is beautiful, Branco's overweight.

Well, it was just a thought.

Keeping up appearances

SPURS may have given Boro a good hiding at the Riverside this year, but I was able to hold my head high amongst all of the Spurs fans who were keen to deride Boro in the pub on the night of the game.

The Boro programme for the Spurs match listed the entire Arsenal squad as Spurs players under the ;appearances & previous clubs; section. It is clear that the artwork for this section had not been changed from the previous home match (which was against Arsenal.) I spotted it immediately, but was suprised that none of the half dozen or so Spurs fans to whom I set the challenge '*find the deliberate mistake*' actually noticed it.

All right, it was towards the end of the evening, so we had all imbibed varying quantities of intoxicating liquor, but I'm pretty sure that if the Sunderland squad was listed on the Boro page of an away programme, I'd notice it if I was in a coma.

Keogh's Korker

The answer to the question posed in this column in mss 112, is Bill Gates; although you've probably all looked it up by now. It might be better if I can get Andy to remember to publish the answers to my questions in advance, and in the following issue I'll give you the question! Anyway, one last try at the old system:

Name the four players who made appearances in Stan Anderson's 1966-67 promotion winning side, and also played in Jack Charlton's promotion side of 1973-74.

(Answer on page 31)



Exclusive: Here's a secret photo taken at Sunderlands' new stadium. An improvement on Roker, I'm sure you'll agree...

Careless hands

When it comes to the goalkeeping situation I have always found it interesting that both Alan Miller and Gary Walsh have been the targets of abuse from sections of the Boro crowd—neither of them seems to be the fans' absolute first choice.

As with outfield players, it can be just one error in an otherwise faultless game, or even run of games, that sees the crowds' (and possibly the players) confidence in a player sink out of sight. Gary Walsh was my first choice over Miller until his two seconds loss of concentration at Upton Park last season. It's totally unreasonable of me, but I can't help it; he could play a blinder and save a penalty in every game thereafter, but psychologically, the damage has been done.

Without question, the safest pair of hands we have seen in modern times is Stephen Pears—I cannot recall him ever being baracked. Ironically, in his first season for Boro, we were relegated to the old Division Three. You have to be some good goalie to retain credibility with the crowd in those circumstances; it just shows you how poor the Boro were that season—even with Mowbray, Pallister and

Bernie on board.

I admit to a soft spot for Willie Whigham. He was the Boro goalie when I went to my first game, and, was instant first choice 'keeper for the following two seasons.

Yet Stan Anderson bought him more out of desperation than inspiration. Talking recently about Boro's goalkeeping crisis in the 66-67 promotion year, Anderson said: "I had dropped Bob Appleby and brought in Des McPartland, but he was only 19—he didn't have enough experience. So I went up to Scotland in such a panic to buy a goalkeeper; I saw Whigham and decided to sign him on the strength of just one game. For the money we paid (£10,000) he was the best buy I ever made."

Gordon Jones has also been quoted as saying that without Willie, Boro would not have won promotion that year.

Personally, I think Andersons' best signing was John Hickton, or possibly Graeme Souness, but there were so many good players to choose from. What do you think? Write to me, and I will try to arrange an interview with the most popular names.

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