

So good to see old boys going up

HOT SPUR

ON November 30th last year, I got married to Susie, a Spurs fan. She impressed me on a number of levels, and one of them was when, last season, she travelled to the Spurs v Boro match (only 25 miles from our house) with her mate, while Vince and I went down separately. Naturally, she sat in the Spurs end, and we sat in the Boro end. We then all met up back in the pub for an enjoyable evening.

But, you know, brain-washing is a terrible thing, and something pretty bizarre happened a few weeks ago. We were with some friends in our club when Susie said that she hears and watches so much Boro now, she could probably name half the team. We loved that: "go on then!" we goaded.

She proceeded to rattle off 12 current Boro names. I was stunned, but incredibly impressed. It needed to be put to the ultimate test, so I said, right, now name 12 Spurs players.

She got four - and one of them was Alfie Conn!

My feelings are mixed. On the one hand, the cost of seeing Boro will double if she wants to come to matches, but on the other hand it will be great to have someone to get the pies at half time, share the driving and sit between Vince and me at the match so that I don't have to put up with his whinging throughout the game.

GOOD luck to the many ex-Boro people involved in the various promotion and relegation battles going on as we approach the last week of the season.

Warmest regards to Wilko and Hendrie on getting promoted with Barnsley after beating Bradford 2-0, the first goal scored by Wilko. Hendrie, who has scored 16 goals since his move (not bad for a 34 year old eh?) was also named Barnsley's player of the year.

Correspondingly, this win for Barnsley leaves Bradford, managed by Chris Kamara, needing to win their last two games to avoid the drop.

Lennie's Luton are in the play offs, and could have qualified automatically but for Stockport (remember them) winning at Chesterfield (who?). Stockport wouldn't have been keen on the play-offs; incredibly, their last game will be their 70th of the season, with a squad of only 24.

Brighton's captain, Ian Baird was sent off after 19 minutes of the Seagulls last game at the Goldstone. If Brighton get beat by Hereford in their last game, then Baird will be swapping leagues with Peter Davenport next season. Davenport is now with Macclesfield, and they need to win one of their last two to be promoted to the Third Division.

THE 6-1 win against Derby had me trawling through the record books, because it was the fourth time this season that Boro have scored five or more goals.

The last time that happened was in 1961-62 under the recently deceased Bob Dennison.

In the league that year, Boro beat Rotherham 5-1, and Bristol Rovers 5-0. In the FA Cup Shrewsbury were stuffed 5-1 in a 4th round replay and in the League Cup Tranmere were overhauled 6-3 at

Prenton Park.

If Boro score 5 or more again between now and the end of the season they will equal the 1958-59 season record, which got off to a promising start with the record 9-0 defeat of Brighton. The other high scoring games that season (all in the League) were: 6-1 v Scunthorpe, 5-0 v Derby (uncanny eh?) 6-4 away at Brighton, and 6-2 v Swansea.

And another thing! The Derby match must be the first time ever in any league anywhere in the world that the bottom club has scored six goals! If you know different, e-mail me at: delear@aol.com

The first leg of the Coca Cola Cup Semi final against Stockport marked the debut of Mark Schwartzter and thereby also set a club record of Boro fielding four goalkeepers in one season.

Right, now that I've got that off my chest, excuse me while I hang up my anorak...

'KELLY'S HEROES'

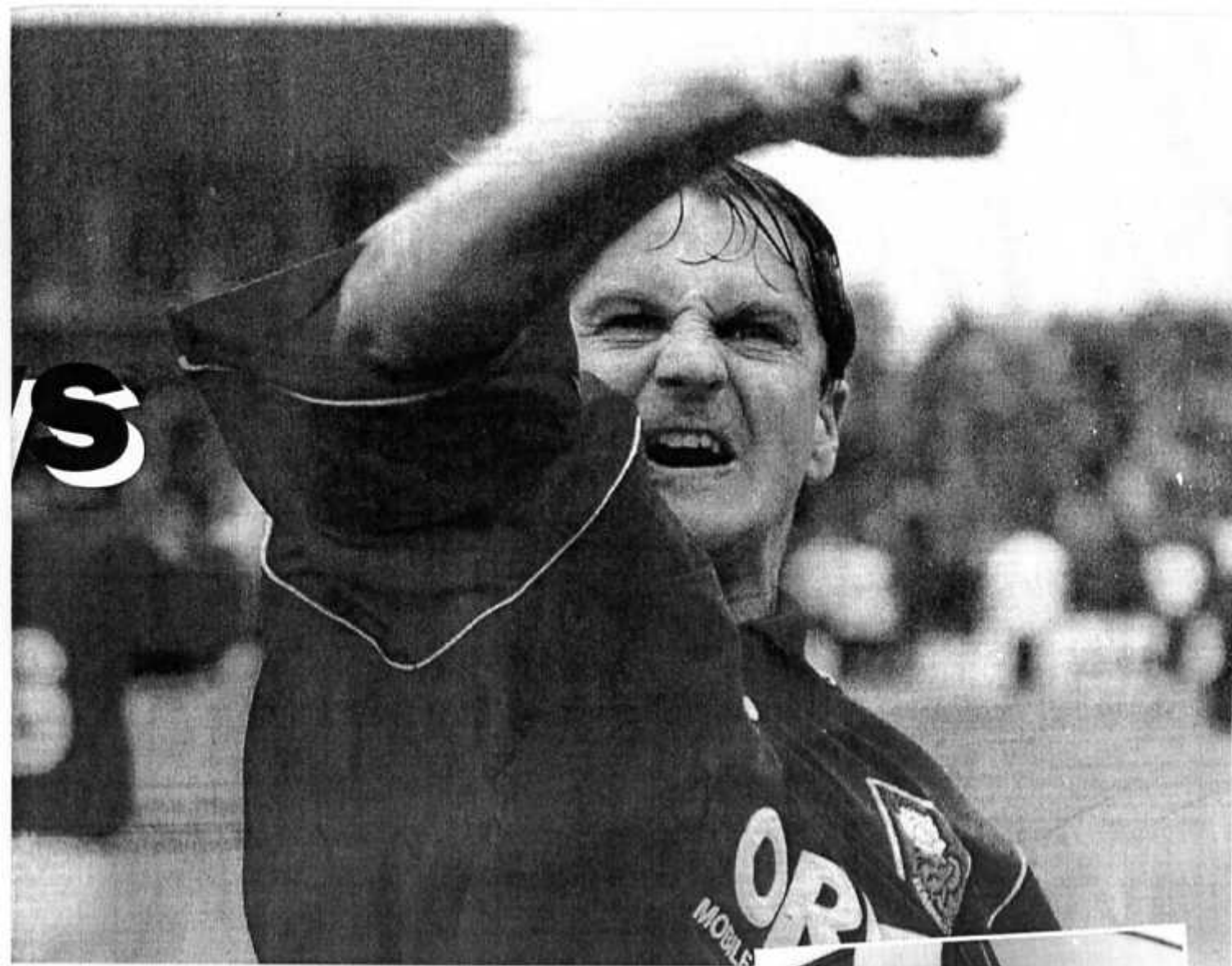
I don't want to ponder too long on the FA Board Of Appeals' decision. However, I do not understand why, after stating in their press release that it was accepted that the Boro 'acted in good faith' the Board then upheld the three points deduction.

The actual wording of the FA rule broken by Boro states that a club

must show 'just cause' if a fixture is cancelled. If they accept that Boro acted in good faith, then surely they must therefore accept that they had just cause?

It's a contradiction in terms more than anything else - if they accept the match was cancelled in good faith, then why the harsh penalty?

Pass the sick bag, Alice.



(Above) John Hendrie celebrates promotion to the premier league with Barnsley. Nigel Pringle adds: "At Old Trafford against Chesterfield, John Hendrie was sat just in front of us. I caught him jumping up and down with delight when our third went in". Congrats to Paul Wilkinson (right) as well. We hope these lads at yet another 'unfashionable' club prove the doubters wrong and do well next season.

Do the players really care?

FOLLOWING the performance of some of the Boro players in the Spurs match, (Emerson's passing was particularly awful) there are now grounds to put forward the possibility of a conspiracy.

After such a disappointing season (whether we win the FA Cup or not), I imagine that the cream of the squad will want to move on, but they will be aware of the tough line taken by Boro with players who

simply go AWOL or stamp their feet.

However, all of the major players (if their agents are worth their salt) must have a clause in their contracts which allows them to move on to a Premier League or overseas club if Boro are relegated. Therefore it is in the interests of their careers for Boro to be relegated. If we stay up, then they must stay put.

It's wild, it's controversial, but remember: you read it here first.

