



Wyne tears

THERE HAS been outrage in the *Gazette* recently, because it seems that a couple of hundred season ticket holders at Riverside are Geordie fans. They cannot get into St. James Park, so they bought Boro season tickets so that they can get to see some live Premier football.

These facts came to light at the recent Boro v Newcastle match, when according to the *Gazette*, 'dozens, possibly hundreds' of people were in season ticket holders seats, but decked out in black and white.

I find this most strange. If the situation was reversed, I wouldn't contemplate buying a Geordie or Mackem season ticket, because I'd be there in the home season ticket holders stand, shouting for a different team every week - whoever they were up against in fact. The people around me would end up, in exasperation, muttering to one another about how *Care In The Community* is an abject failure.

As it happens, they would be right, but don't get me onto politics...

Rather this...

So whats all this talk about a bad run then? I'm not sure that we were as good as we thought we were in the first part of the season. I think, on reflection, that Boro were fortunate to be playing quite well, but against teams that had not yet clicked into place. If Boro fielded the same teams that beat Chelsea, Liverpool and Blackburn at Riverside early in the season against those same teams now, we would be fortunate to scrape a draw.

Anyway, it's subjective, this bad run business. I readily acknowledge that two points out of a possible 36 (up to & including the Nottingham Forest match) is not conducive to cheery banter at the club with all the bloody Spurs, Chelsea and West

Ham fans that gloat while I grimace. But I can put up with all of this disappointment far easier than for instance the memory of defeat at Gay Meadow in 1985 that consigned us to the Third Division. In fact, I'd rather go two points out of 36 every season rather than relive even one of the games from that dreadful season, including the few that we won.

Now that is what I call a bad run - it lasted the entire season.

It occurred to me recently that had Robson left at the beginning of the year when all the talk was tipping him for The Worst Job In Football (bar that of Gary Walsh's dancing teacher) and the current poor form continued under the new manager, there would be crisis talk and, by now, media and supporters alike would be

calling for the sacking of our totally useless new manager.

In the past, Boro managers have been sacked for producing mediocre teams on a shoestring, when all the best players were sold to keep the Ayresome dinosaur going. This policy meant that there was no hope of promotion to the old First Division, but it didn't stop the board from sacking managers for under achieving.

Now I don't want to be contentious, but the situation as I see it is that we have a superb squad, including some Very Expensive Players, but, just like the international side, there are some great individual players, but as a team, it simply hasn't been working in too many games. Hopefully Robbo can put things right through the summer months.

Sections of the press have blamed Juninho for the current poor form, being as it started almost the day he made his debut.

However I blame Robbie Mustoe. In the match that Juninho made his debut, (against Leeds on 4th November) Robbie started his enforced lay off through injury, and that's when the rot set in. Mustoe came back into the team when we won our first point in nine games, at Coventry. He also scored our goal against Forest.

Welcome back, mate.

(Anyone else spot this headline from Campaign magazine?)



Nowt better to do?

Anbody who was at the Southampton match in January will remember how the away supporters enclosure is close to the home fans, who are at a right angle to the away enclosure making eye contact difficult to avoid.

However, I was staggered by the behaviour of some Boro fans, who rose

to the bait of the taunts from the home fans and spent a good part of the match hurling insults and making gestures, and missing the very thing that they were there to watch.

Alright, I know I'm an old git, but I had driven 80 miles to Southampton, and I was going to catch every second of the match, because 80 miles each way is not exactly a picnic.

The thing that got me was that these lads had come down from Middlesbrough, which is about 580 miles as a round trip, and they spent most of the afternoon being boorish, and missing the event that they had paid to watch. Why do they bother?

Vince, my brother-in-law and I had a little contretemps with similar lads at the West Ham game. They were in front of us

and kept forgetting to sit down when goal-mouth action had subsided. It didn't bother me much, but Vince cheerfully and cajolingly said "haway lads, sit down". It's not for me to criticise people of limited vocabulary or being what I understand doctors refer to as 'cerebrally challenged'.

But I do think the spotty little oik could have done better than "oh f*** off".

Korked!

It was heartening to see Stephen Armstrong's letter in the last MSS, pointing out my deliberate and obvious omission of Robson's *News at Ten* appearance. I was pleased because it shows that I do have at least one reader, and 'errors' like this are a good way of getting feedback.

As a further example, I hope that Andy was deluged with mail pointing out the glaring 'error' in the last Keogh's *Korker*, where I deliberately omitted Stephen Pears from the 300 appearances club.

Anyway, there's no mistakes - whoops - deliberate errors in this issue's question, which is: *Which player made his debut under Bob Dennison and played for every Boro manager up to and including Jack Charlton?*

Answer on page 22