

Something different about Macclesfield Town Football Club

In the first round of the FA Cup in 1886 Macclesfield were drawn away to Goldenhill who for a time had been challenging Stoke for the role of premier potteries team. Macclesfield arrived late only to find that the hosts had already kicked off and scored claiming victory but Macclesfield protested with the home side agreeing to play a match. This was a rough game which was stopped following a violent tackle five minutes from time with the home side in the lead 4-2 and claiming victor again. The Macclesfield secretary, Alfred Sadler, sent a written protest to the Football Association requesting that the match be replayed; one of the issues was that the pitch was too small for a cup tie. The FA upheld the appeal and the replay took place at Leek. Goldenhill won the tie but not before the final half an hour had been played in virtual darkness!

On March 23 1889 Howarth and Hindley were unable to make the match at Leek, with their unavailability only known as the team were about to leave Macclesfield. Accredited umpires for Macclesfield, A Bancroft and G Robinson were seeing the players off and were recruited to play in this match. Leek won 5-1.

For the final match of the 1896-97 season on April 17 away at Buxton, Macclesfield found it difficult to raise a team and had to play with only 10 men. At half time Buxton were winning 10-0 and with Macclesfield refusing to play the second half, the match was abandoned with Buxton awarded the tie.

The most decorated person to feature in a match for Macclesfield was Sir William Bromley-Davenport KCB, CMG, CBE, DSO, TD, JP, DL who played for Old Eatonians and Oxford University. He featured in one competitive match, the second round home tie of the Cheshire Senior Cup against Chester St John's on 12 January 1884, when he scored a hat-trick in the 4-0 win. He went on to make two appearances for England. Served in the Second Boer War and in the First World War was a Brigadier-General commanding the 22nd Mounted Brigade of the Egyptian Expedition Force. Also Member of Parliament for Macclesfield from 1886 to 1905 holding the office of Financial Secretary to the War Office from 1903-05, and was Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire from 1920 to 1949.

On 28 March 1921 Macclesfield had a home Cheshire League match against Witton Albion. Seats were regularly reserved for the press, but on this occasion the reporters for both Macclesfield and Witton Albion arrived at the ground to find their seats had been sold to supporters with no alternative seating arranged for them. They both went on strike and refused to write a report of the match for publication in their respective newspapers.

The first round of the Cheshire Senior Cup played on 5 January 1935 saw Macclesfield drawn against mid-Cheshire side Moulton Verdin who refused to move the tie to the Moss Rose where the attendance would have been in the region of 3000. The teams had to change in the billiard room of the village institute (the bar was closed!). The players then walked 300 yards down the main street to the ground where a crowd of 700 were waiting for kick-off. However, the pitch had to be prepared first; the groundsman chased off a flock of sheep and then shovelled up their droppings with Macclesfield captain, Harry Bruce, booting the ball onto the pitch scattering a number of hens which had congregated round one of the goalmouths. On a bumpy pitch the Silkmen ran out easy winners 5-1.

Goalkeeper GS Foxcroft was travelling to a match at Buxton on 11 September 1946 boarding a train at Manchester. He must have had quite a shock when the train steamed through Buxton without stopping such that he had to alight at Matlock with insufficient time to reach Buxton for the kick-off. Defender Burke had to act as goalkeeper with the Silkmen losing 5-1.

Only four players have scored a double hat trick in a match:

*Albert Valentine (record season goalscorer for the club) scored his in the 7-2 home victory against arch rivals Altrincham on 24 February 1934 in a Cheshire League match.

*Within a tally of 47 goals in 45 appearances, Syd Carter scored a double hat-trick in a Cheshire League match against Hurst on 2 October 1937 which the Silkmen won 8-4.

*The highlight of Johnnie Millington's career at Macclesfield came when he scored all eight goals in the home match against Witton Albion on 15 May 1963, a club record which still stands today.

*Andy Scott's double hat-trick was scored in a Floodlit League match on 6 November 1974 at home against Droylsden, Macclesfield winning 6-2.

There have been occasions when play has been stopped:

*The home match on 25 April 1998 against Chester, who were fighting a relegation battle, was proving to be rather a dull affair. Proceedings were livened up just after the start of the second half when a male Chester fan streaked onto the pitch and after a moment or two belly flopped twice into standing water near the away end before being escorted off the pitch by a policeman whose helmet had been strategically placed.

*In the home FA Cup first round match against Oxford United on 18 November 2000, with Oxford in the lead 1-0, their fans pulled the netting from the crossbar on two occasions in the second half with striker Richie Barker lifting the groundsman onto his shoulders so that the netting could be re-attached. The second occasion came when Macclesfield had been awarded a penalty in the 89th minute resulting in a five minute delay; unfortunately Lee Glover missed the penalty shot, Oxford United progressing to the second round.

*The first round of the FA Cup at the Moss Rose on 13 November 2006 was transmitted live by SKY TV when about 10 minutes into the second half 36 footballs were catapulted over the Star Lane End stand onto the pitch. The pranksters later owned up saying that they wanted to give Macclesfield supporters something to smile about in view of the team's recent poor league form.

*In the first home league match of the 2018-19 season against Grimsby Town, again in the second half, a Canada goose landed on the pitch holding up play for two minutes whilst the ground staff captured the bird.

On the formation of the company Macclesfield Town Football Club Limited in 1946 supporters were encouraged to purchase single £1 pound shares. Even today the Shareholders Register indicates that there are still almost 700 shareholdings of £1.

