

AN ORAL HISTORY OF BRENTFORD FOOTBALL CLUB

INTERVIEWEE	Alan Hawley
DATE OF BIRTH	1946, Woking
PARENTS OCCUPATIONS	Father: Tiler Mother, mainly housewife with several part time jobs
INTERVIEW LOCATION	Griffin Park
DATE OF INTERVIEW	9 th March 2020
INTERVIEWER	Brian Godfrey

Alan is an ex Brentford Player who played 317 times for the club during the period of 1962-1974. He was inducted into the Brentford Hall of fame in 2013.

This is a fascinating interview that not only charts Alan's rise from schoolboy to a mainstay of the Brentford side but also gives an insight into what life was like as a professional footballer in the sixties and early seventies.

Alan describes in detail how he was spotted by his PE teacher at having potential which led to him making his debut for Brentford aged 16. He talks about the challenge of being incorporated into the team at such a young age and the support he received from fellow players and others away from the playing staff.

He talks about the atmosphere at matches the facilities (or lack of them) that were available to the players. He describes his special relationship with the fans and the importance of Brentford as a family club and how this rubbed off on the fans relationship with the players.

Alan talks about his favourite time with the club, this being the 1971-2 season when Brentford were promoted and his elevation to captain. Alan talks about the role of the captain in those days and how it differs to the current day.

He also reminisces about times at the club that were extremely perilous, none more so than in 1966 when there was considerable turmoil at the club and not for the first time its very future as in doubt. Alan gives an insight on what it is like to be a player at such an uncertain time and also the lengths that the players went to in order to keep the club afloat including the Brighton to London cycle ride.

Alan's love for playing football shines throughout the interview which is interspersed with anecdotes from his time as a player. There are also interesting insights as to the nature of training and what happened on an occasion that he was accidentally given another player's pay packet!

The interview is a great reminder of an age when it was more common for players to spend the majority of their careers at one club and that monetary reward was a secondary consideration.