

AN ORAL HISTORY OF BRENTFORD FOOTBALL CLUB

INTERVIEWEE: Edward Cohen
DATE OF BIRTH: 1938
PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS: Tailor and a Tailor Assistant
Interview location: Brentford Football Club Braemar Rd, Brentford TW8 ONT
Interviewer: Brian Godfrey Summariser: Daniel Mann

Born in East London in 1938, his father was a tailor and his mother was his father's assistant. The family was evacuated out of London during World War 2.

The family moved back to London in 1946, but not back to East London. They moved to West London and to Ealing.

His mother's sister also lived in Ealing, her son started to go to Brentford when he was 8 (A year older than Edward).

Initially Edward's parents would not let him go, in February 1949 he was allowed to go.

His first match was against Bury when Brentford won 8-2, Peter McKennan scored 5 goals. Second game was Leicester City in the 6th round of the FA Cup and Brentford lost 2-0. He got to ground at 1.30pm for 3pm kick off. The gate man told him that he was too small and would not see anything. He replied and said that he would crawl through legs, and made his way to the back of the Brook Road Stand. When he got to the back of the stand a man turned around to him and said 'you're a shrimp you won't see anything, Harry help me lift him over'.

The two men picked him up and then passed him down to the people in front of them. The crowd then passed him down to the front of the stand.

At that time the whole ground was standing, the attendance in those days was around 20,000-25,000.

When he first started to go to Brentford he would walk down Boston Manor Road to the ground, he would sometimes go with his cousin.

In 1963 he got married, his wife has only been to one game a 0-0 game against Plymouth Argyle. She turned round to him and said 'If this is football you can keep it'.

With his wife they moved to Hanwell and then he would get the old 655 trolley bus or drive to the ground.

When he moved back to Ealing he would drive to the ground. In more recent times his wife drives him to Ealing Broadway where he gets the 65 bus. At the ground he meets his friend Ian Westbrook who helps him up the stairs to his seat in Block B.

Ian Westbrook drives him home on his way to back to Finchley.

One of his lasting memories is seeing Chic Brodie being tripped up by a dog that ran onto the pitch. At the time it was funny, but Chic broke his leg and had to retire from football due to the incident.

The worst refereeing decisions he can recall is a game on Easter Monday against Notts County. Brentford were 2-1 up and there were 3 minutes of extra time added. The three minutes came and went and the ref did not blow up. Notts County scored in the extra time and the game was drawn. Brentford went down that season by one point. Had the Ref not added the extra extra time, Brentford would have stayed up.

One of his favourite characters to play for Brentford was a gentleman called Terry Hurlock. He was known for his bushy hair and tough tackling, was affectionately known as the 'Animal'. He remembers seeing George Francis and Jim Towers the 'Terrible Twins'.

When it comes to rivalries QPR are the main one. He remembers a game when Brentford beat QPR 5-1 [sic - 6-1] on the first game of the season as a thunderstorm was taking place. Although Brentford won that game, at the end of the season Brentford were relegated and QPR finished 3rd in the old 3rd division.

He remembers a game when a Millwall fan threw a fake hand grenade at a match. Chic Brodie flagged down the ref. The ref then got all the players together and they moved down to the other end of the pitch. A police officer then came over with a bucket of sand and picked up the grenade and dealt with it.

His last away match was Fulham on Good Friday when Brentford won 4-1. He had to leave at half time due to the whole away stand standing up. Due to his back he can't stand for very long. He remembers a game when the Brentford goalkeeper punched a Fulham player and instantly got sent off.

The only time he experienced trouble at a Brentford game, was when Brentford beat Cardiff 1-0. After the game Cardiff fans walked up Braemar Road throwing bricks.

Also, he been told that two Crystal Palace fans tried to break into the club offices while Brentford were playing Crystal Palace and steal the club's takings.

He was at the first floodlit game at Griffin Park around 1952 or 53, it was an international game. The team were from overseas, he can't remember the team, but Brentford won 8-0.

One of his favourite away games was when Brentford beat Bolton at Bolton 2-1. Bolton took the lead, then Bolton missed a penalty. Brentford then went on to win the game 2-1.

He was at the Peterborough United May 92 away game, when Brentford won the league after beating Peterborough 1-0 at Peterborough. Peterborough fans ran onto the pitch after the game and gave the Brentford fans a round of applause.

In May 99 he was at the Cambridge United game when Brentford beat Cambridge United at Cambridge 1-0 to win the league.

On the way back to London from Cardiff after Brentford has lost in the playoff final, him and his son in law and young grandson were waiting for the train back home. When the train pulled in, they pushed the young grandson into the crowd so he could get on the train first and get four seats.

When he was 14 he got involved helping out the commentary for the blind supporters. He would meet them at the gates of Griffin Park, help them to their seats and help giving out tea and biscuits. He did that for two years.

He was not happy about the proposed QPR takeover, he did sign the petition to oppose it. Was very happy when the deal fell through. He feels the deal would have been bad for both clubs.

There are a lot less cloth caps thrown up in the air when Brentford score. Has been sitting with the same group of people for the last 30 years, never any trouble. Only once has he seen someone been thrown out of Griffin Park for bad language.

Feel sad about moving to the new stadium, has been coming to Griffin Park for 71 years. He understands why the club has to move due to issues like facilities.

His proudest moment supporting Brentford was the Peterborough away game in May 92. Other proudest moments are beating Man City 3-1 in the 4th round of FA Cup January 89, beating Sunderland 2-1 in the FA Cup January 06. Then losing DJ Campbell in the aftermath of the game and dashing any hopes of getting promotion. Beating Blackburn Rovers for a sixth round FA Cup clash against Liverpool, he also went up to Liverpool for the game.

Being a Brentford supporter has been most difficult when Brentford were playing old third division south, in those days only one team were promoted. Brentford beat Brighton 1-0, but Brighton had a game in hand and won the game in hand. This meant they got promoted instead of Brentford.

He feels the football that is being playing in the 19/20 season is some of the best football ever at Brentford.