



Welcome to the special thisisthebarmyarmy.co.uk feature ***The 1969/1970 season***

Published on the website in 2006 as a five-part series in "Those Were The Days" from our feature writer David A Wood, this exclusive look back at the promotion season will stir a plethora of memories for all Town fans!

Enjoy the read as thisisthebarmyarmy.co.uk takes you down a glorious memory lane known as "The 1969/1970 Season".

The second season with the managerial duo of Ian Greaves and Henry Cockburn in charge, or rather Greavsie in charge with Mr Cockburn his more than able First Lieutenant.

Just as lack of goals and away victories had been the major area for improvement following the first campaign under the former Red Devil teammates, the Boss quickly set about addressing this problem during the close season.

Upon commencement of pre-season training one of the initial tasks Mr Greaves embarked upon was to 'talk' to the players. He quietly and convincingly set out to explain that playing away from Huddersfield was little different from Leeds Road.

All matches were played on grass; with similar sized pitches, goals at each end and the rules of the game just the same. Indeed other than distance involved and in some cases the 'roar of the crowd' there was little change between home and away!

Therefore there was absolutely no reason not to do as well on opponent's territory as at home.

His second task was to address the goal-scoring problem, which he did by writing out a cheque for £5,000.00 payable to Aston Villa Football Club for the services of one Brian Greenhalgh.

Oh that it would be so simple for Mr Greaves and his young side. Though Town's new number nine was a more than accomplished leader of the line and well

capable of hitting the net it wasn't to work out for him at Leeds Road. He played few games and scored even fewer so who was to score the goals that hopefully would lead us into the First Division?

A couple of years previous an eighteen year old had made his league debut for Town at Selhurst Park. During the following season 1967-68, he made more of an impression scoring his first senior goal in the Football League Cup run that took us to the Semi-finals, when notching the first in the 4th round home tie against West Ham. Not long after he got his first league goal in a 1-0 win also on home soil, London opponents again, QPR. Good enough progress for Tom Johnston to hand him his first full professional contract just weeks into the season.

When the Scot left and the former Busby Babe took over it became a time for the Shelf born youngster to continue learning his trade back in the Reserves, working on his skills, technique and above all building himself up.

It certainly did the trick for despite the signing of Brian Greenhalgh, the now 20year old went up to Manager Ian Greaves and said 'Boss, give me a chance and I'll score you 20 goals'!! Never short of confidence in his own ability or that he would go to the very top of his profession Frank Worthington was to be as good as his word.

In a team dominated by youth, the average age being 22, making it the youngest in the division, and with seven players who were to play in every game Mr Greaves and his staff had little motivating to do as the big kick-off approached.

The fact was the entire club could hardly wait for that journey down to Oxford and the start of the 1969-1970 season.

The first day of a new football season is always greeted with delight by the genuine football supporter who follows their team whatever the results might bring. Win, lose or draw, next week they will be there again either hoping for better or a continuation of the good form.

Saturday 9th August 1969 brought Huddersfield Town's young squad down to Oxford for the seasons opener. As the players gathered in the away dressing room at The Manor Ground their minds would be firmly on the big kick-off which was but minutes away and what this match and the rest of the season would bring. There was no doubt we had a keen, lean squad raring to go but over the past few seasons surely this had always been likewise and we had fallen short, what could take us that vital step further this time?

That we had a keen as mustard young boss just into his second full season in charge was not in doubt, but hadn't he been with the club these past couple of seasons under then Manager Johnston when we had just missed out previously?

The entire squad was fit and ready for battle; indeed the whole ethics of the club was unquestioned. The difference this season, though the fans on this momentous opening fixture day may not have realised it, was Ian Greaves.

Here was a man not only confident in his own ability to make things happen and take Town up, but with a steely belief in himself and his methods being the key to success. There was no room for doubt, no time for second best, do it my way or else, then given hard work and our - or should that read his - ability we are ready for any challenge.

Ten days later - Town, 3 matches into the season, had gone 2nd in the table with 3 wins, 7 goals scored, three conceded and of course a maximum six points haul (in those days just 2pts for a win). That Town dropped a place following their next game caused little worry for it came following a heart stopping, full bloodied, Yorkshire derby at Bramall Lane with neither side able to pierce the other's defence. Man of the match was Town's No1 Terry Poole. The point the home side gained enabling them to leapfrog us in the table.

Despite Mr Greaves - he who demands and most certainly usually gets, the driving force, this is our Town who have always been able to produce misery out of majesty, and so it was the following Tuesday evening down Leeds Road way.

That Town hit the front pages of the Examiner as well as the back says much for what went on that evening when Blackburn Rovers crossed the Pennines.

Football hooliganism hit Huddersfield big style both before and particularly after the game, with running fights breaking out all over and more so in the Town centre with the police hard pressed to keep order.

Equally so for a Town side nilled for the second successive match and the visitors up to third spot courtesy of the one goal they scored. Town slipped to 5th on top were QPR with 9pts, two more than Town.

As the first month of the season came to an end the Greaves factor kicked in as Town responded to their first reversal with a resounding 3 nil success over West Country visitors Bristol City. A victory that lifted us up to third spot with next opponents, QPR, slipping down to fifth. The Londoners, though, had a 100% home record and this would test Town to the full as we were the next visitors to Loftus Road.

As this third away game of the campaign loomed, Town were on their mid-week travels to Cumbria for a Tuesday evening FL Cup tie at Brunton Park. A 2-0 defeat saw us exiting the competition at the first hurdle.

When Town went down 4-2 in West London in their seventh match of the season surely alarm bells were starting to chime if not exactly ring!

Nothing of the sort.

Indeed this match and the performance was one of the best adverts for football you could ever hope to see. OK the result went against the visitors but anyone who was there that day will tell you the game had everything. It ebbed and flowed with the result always in doubt showing how evenly matched the two sides were. This victory lifted the Londoners to 4th boasting a most impressive 100% home record including scoring on no fewer than sixteen occasions.

A seasons low point as regards the table was reached that September evening and it was to remain the same the following Saturday of 6th though Town got back to winning ways with a 2-0 home win over 15th placed Blackpool.

Two successive 1-1 draws on the road saw us move up to 4th then drop one place following holding Watford at Vicarage Road then Peter Shilton's Leicester. Town fans even in those days could be pessimistic and I well remember when going one down at Filbert Street fellow fans around saying that's it we've lost now we won't beat their 'keeper!

We returned to Leeds Road for the final game in September where the visit of Bolton brought two more valuable points in a very poor game which other than the one nil win was celebrated by the launch of a new Town mascot.

Skippy, a Yorkshire terrier was paraded on the famous turf prior to kick off by her owner Mrs Fisher, this lady sadly passed away last year (2005).

Thus The Town now had an official mascot and nick-name 'the Town Terriers'. To this day the Terrier proudly sits on top of the official club badge and can be seen on most other official Town merchandise and was the brainchild of Promotions Officer Lawrence O'Toole and Bill Brook the Commercial Manager.

That the game was scrappy could be judged by Sunday newspaper reports exclaiming if the dog wasn't to go hungry there would have to be more meat on the bones in future Town victories!

When Town avenged their League Cup defeat with a 2-0 victory back up the North West in Carlisle the scene was set fair for even more upward movement from the current 4th spot for the next game saw us at bottom of the table Aston Villa who had but one win to their name.

At the end of the night make that two! This is our Town, our team we are talking about when in front of a massive Midlands crowd of over 28000 we were tonked 4-1.

That we dropped but one place to fifth was not the only consolation from the result for this Town team under the stewardship of Ian D. Greaves would ensure lessons were learned from even the heaviest of defeats and used as stepping stones for future advancement.

Loose and learn could well have been the Manager's message for those Town Terriers of his. When the Boss spoke they certainly listened with losing to become something of a rarity.

Speak to Jimmy Nicholson about that team he skippered in 69-70 and he will tell you they were a young team, growing all the time in confidence with such belief in each other both individually and as a team and physically by far the fittest side in the Division.

But there was more, yes the Gaffer Ian Greaves - but whilst instrumental to him not something he alone could do, the players had to do it themselves. It was the power of positive thinking.

Constantly this thinking was hammered into the players and it was working. Turning a 1-4 defeat to bottom side Villa into a positive takes some doing but Greaves and Cockburn certainly did this to our Town Terriers.

It was yet another brick in the immense wall being built down Leeds Road way, with a 7 game unbeaten run following. That two of these produced 0-0 draws at home shows how confidence on their travels was mounting bringing along with them 8 goals from three fixtures. The other 2 home games produced similar 4-0 trouncing of visitors from the Valley and Pompey.

On November 1st Town lit up the sky for their fans as we topped the Division for the very first time following the second of the home 0-0 scorelines after a visit from the Lions of London; the previous goalless fixture was with fellow

Yorkshiremen from Ayresome Park. Later in the season another draw with the men up in Middlesborough would be written into the history books.

A 1-2 defeat at Swindon and the mid-point of the campaign brought the run to an end and talking with the lads after the game they agreed when I mentioned it will be all doom and gloom again back home!

We are a bit like that we Town fans a slight sniffle and it's flu. A second successive away defeat did not help matters especially as it was at the seaside in December. A 0-2 reversal against Blackpool who with the two points they gained moved up to 7th in the table, and dropped us down to 3rd. Sandwiched in between we had lost our coveted top spot, which we had held for five matches, when picking up the one point in a 2-2 draw in the Midlands at St. Andrews.

Christmas in 1969 certainly brought good cheer for the Town fans with a scintillating game and display on Boxing Day before a large Leeds Road crowd, in what was a first home fixture for nearly six weeks, and a 2-1 victory over Sheffield United.

The League table on that 26th day saw us in third spot, though level on points with the Blades in second and one point behind Blackburn Rovers who had top spot with 33 points, we did though have games in hand over both the clubs above.

When the final fixture of 1969 got our away form back on track with a 2-1 win at Bristol City it couldn't get much better for Town fans?

But it could - for we moved up two places and ended the year Top of the Table. From 25 games played we had 34 points one more than second placed Sheffield United who had played 27. Blackburn Rovers were third also with 33pts but had played one more than us. Only Cardiff City in 6th spot had played fewer games, 24, but they were 4 points adrift of the top.

The table made for interesting reading as it provided an accurate assessment of the season so far and backed up my claims then and to this day that we were just where we deserved to be.

We were top because we had been the best side in the division, no question. We had 14 victories under our belt, no other side had more, and we had lost fewer games than any other team in the division, just 5.

With 6 victories on our travels unmatched by any other side the philosophy according to I. D. Greaves regarding performing on away soil was proving the Managerial talent we possessed. Perhaps six draws were a wee bit more than the Boss would have liked but with 4 coming from our travels and three of them before September was out even he I am sure was more than a little pleased with how quickly his young Terriers had listened and learned.

Other interesting facets from the year end saw Swindon with the only unbeaten record, of sorts, with their colours, as Town had found in November impossible to do, still to be lowered at the County Ground.

Yorkshire neighbours the Blades had scored 52 goals with just 22 conceded, us 43/26.

Blackburn, remember in third place had scored but 4 goals away from Ewood Park, though one had come early season producing our only home defeat. That we found in that defeat it impossible to breach their defence shows in their goals against column numbering but 13.

The good ship Huddersfield Town was set fare for 1970 with Ian Greaves at the wheel and skipper Jimmy Nick his able Lieutenant on the park, would we to enter even more glorious seas or would the deep water of Division Two still hold dangers for us?

With their team sitting proudly at the top of Division 2, Town fans entered the new year of 1970 in buoyant mood. A point clear of the chasing pack, games in hand and a couple of weeks break from league action for the first Saturday of the new year brought with it the 3rd Round of the FA Cup and a home tie with lowly Aldershot of the 4th Division.

When Sports Report chimed out that most nostalgic of signature tunes Town were in the hat for the draw, but only just and progress was not guaranteed either as the long journey north was much shorter on their return south for our guests who had a 1-1 draw to savour.

We had to wait a further nine days for the replay when a Jimmy Melia inspired Shots produced one of the shocks of the round turfing us out of the Cup 3-1. This was before squad rotation, not that that has reached Town even now, and a fully merited victory it was.

One notable inclusion in the Town ranks, making only his second appearance of the season, and indeed what was to be the last, was Welsh International Centre Half Ray Mielczarek. His only other game was also in the Cup up at Carlisle when Town had also gone out at the first hurdle of the League Cup.

As much as the Cup reversal hurt, any loss does but to opposition two divisions below it goes a bit deeper but I remember at the time saying this early exit will be a god send. Others thought I was only making excuses for the defeat but I really believed the Saturday's freed up could well give us the opportunity to strike a march on those around us. That positive thinking although unaware of it at the time was working on us all!

The first league game of the New Year finished one each at Burnden Park, the dropping of a point magnified by the loss of top spot as Sheffield United leap frogged us on goal average but having played three games more.

Evening games under the Leeds Road floodlights were always something a bit special, one extraordinarily so came on Tuesday 20 January 1970.

The visitors from London may have been down in 5th place but Queens Park Rangers were just a point behind us with a similar number of victories, 14, in the season to us and were looked upon by the southern press especially, as the team of the division studded with star names such as Rodney Marsh.

This was the big game and would show who really were the top dogs of Division Two. The game was a classic but really there was ever only one team in it. From the first to the last minute a Frank Worthington inspired wonder show, and the other ten were not that far behind, leaving the visitors gasping in our wake and fortunate to be on the wrong end of only a 2-0 defeat.

Fair dues the press went mad over the Town the next day with superlative after superlative. Town fan and Chief Soccer writer of the Daily Express Alan Thompson led the way with his headline 'I want to be in that number when my Town go marching in'.

Column inches and headlines were all glowing in their praise of a quite superb Town performance. I can see them now and still feel the pride I felt in these words about my team, my club. Huddersfield Town as a Club were truly on the march, the whole Town and district, the Spensborough area all suddenly had a massive injection of pride and commitment and the supporters at last started to think, to believe it really could happen this time.

This is it! We really are on the verge of success? Oh yes we were, we really were for this extra special night had seen us re-claim top spot and no way would we release it again.

The 3rd Round cup defeat was a blessing in disguise for Town reeled off three successive Saturday victories, four goals scored just one conceded and six points clear at the top. Thank you Aldershot

A point was dropped in a 1-1 home draw with Norwich, which saw us just 5 points clear and Blackpool move into 4th spot. Five became 7 clear following a single goal home win over Oxford and then as February closed, unheard of, a solitary goal defeat at Millwall. The Lions who had been the visitors to Leeds Road when we first reached the summit of the Division back in November were the only team to stop Town scoring in both games.

March saw us open up with another Tuesday nighter and though Leicester City returned home with a point following a 1-1 draw they were still 10 points adrift of us though a game less played but effectively their title challenge was ended at Leeds Road that night. Six points separated us from Sheffield United - how dogged were they in their pursuit of us, and seven from 3rd placed Cardiff City each having a game in hand over us. But down in 5th and 6th place were Blackpool and Swindon both with 2 games in hand and 7 and 8 points separating us.

Our next game was down in Wales and re-arranged for a Saturday as both sides were out of 'the Cup'. A home win and they would be just four points behind us still with a game advantage. A Terriers triumph and a nine point advantage would surely see Cardiff left out of sight with only 14 points to play for.

A great day in the Principality was crowned when a screamer by Jimmy Nicholson from 25yds put the Terriers into the lead and whilst we were unable to add to that goal victory was never in doubt. Another superb performance on their travels and the train journey home was rather enjoyable. Six points clear of those tenacious Blades but the pack kept chasing as Blackpool moved into third but with games running out if we carried on winning no one could catch us.

Birmingham City returned home beaten 2-0 on a glue pot of a home pitch and the following Tuesday Swindon came to Town and took home a point following a 1-1 encounter. Blackpool had moved into a promotion spot and like Swindon still with a two game advantage, but eight points behind, Sheffield had slipped from the second spot they seemed to have made their own and our visitors from Wiltshire had 43 points like the Blades.

Still tight at the top and though others had more games to play we had got on with ours after the Cup and gained maximum points and you can not better that,

unless you count adding quality to your squad which is just what Mr Greaves had gone and done.

The new man at Leeds Road was Welsh international winger Dick Kryzwicki who joined us from WBA for £55,000 and very early in his Town career was paying back the Managers faith in him with a high powered goal scoring performance at Fratton Park. To silence the Pompey chimes is one thing to get their appreciation shows the quality shown in a brilliant 3-1 success for the Yorkshiremen. This great win set up the Easter Monday derby with Hull City. The crowds rolled in and were treated to another good performance but a third draw, 2-2, from the last four home games left the table looking like this.

Town at the top 39/55, Blackpool second 37/48, followed by Cardiff 38/45 and Swindon 37/45 the latter had finally been beaten for the first time since late November.

Easter Tuesday 31st March 1970 Middlesbrough v Huddersfield Town. What I had waited for all my life.

If Town took a point we were promoted.

How good does that look and sound. We took supporters by the thousands and trying to get on the train, which I swear was full to bursting having started out at Huddersfield; from a platform full to bursting at Mirfield the atmosphere was electric. As we journeyed to the northeast the sense of occasion was all around you everybody seemed to know one another a time in history to say 'I was there'.

To Town fans everywhere but especially those who followed their club up to Middlesbrough that Easter Tuesday night, the 31st March 1970 will forever be a magical and historic night.

For Huddersfield Town Football Club reclaimed their rightful place back in the hierarchy of English Football, the First Division (top flight). Not since 1955-56 had the club been in such elevated company.

It was a triumph for a quite brilliant young squad, highly talented with a sprinkling of talent that would rightly gain International recognition. It was possibly one of the 'journeymen' of the side who claimed top billing, a local lad born just up the hill from the Town ground that scored the goal to get Town the one precious point needed for promotion.

Steve Smith has since gone on to do it all for Town but never has a deed been more historic than his goal that night. That the game finished 1-1 each seemed not quite to matter for we had got what we came for and the travelling fans turned the North East into a second Leeds Road. That we sang and danced and cheered and went totally and utterly bonkers is well chronicled, Huddersfield partied like never before.

Certainly not in mine or many others time.

The rail journey home was one long party of celebration, noise and absolute elation. That everybody who got off the train seemed to cadge a lift home in my car kindly brought to Mirfield Railway Station those early hours of Wednesday 1st April by my father may lead my memory to believe it was just a joke.

I kid you not; my Ford Anglia resembled a mini coach as we travelled Gomersal bound. Although I wasn't to realise it at the time among my fellow rail passengers were my future in-laws!

Promotion secured with 56 points (2 points for a victory) only second placed Blackpool could pip us for the title as they could still reach 57 points having two games in hand. One point would probably see us crowned given our goal average of 1.75 to Blackpool's 1.35 but this was the Ian Greaves era of positive thinking and nothing but a win was ever considered when Town were playing.

The penultimate game of the season took us over the Pennines to Blackburn Rovers, the only team to triumph at Leeds Road yet revenge was never ever a factor. The Championship of the Second Division of the Football League was at stake.

Again the blue and white stripes made visiting territory seem like a home game and two Frank Worthington goals with no reply from the home side who really only made up the numbers in what was yet another excellent display on opposition soil and a 10th victory at that!

Town were Champions.

I'll say that again Huddersfield Town were the Champions.

Blackpool by way of a win, two draws, one against Swindon being so vital to their promotion hopes, and a final match defeat at Oxford – where it had all started for us - in their last four games clinched the runner-up spot to Town just 2 points clear of Leicester City.

Town back in the elite as Champions and still more to come, what heady days for us Town fans. The final game of the season on Tuesday 14th March would bring a Watford side still fighting for their 2nd Division status (they did stay up, but only just. PNE & Villa were relegated) to Leeds Road.

What a night, over 27,000 came to party, (there were a few from Vicarage Road) and hail their conquering heroes and the team yet again rose to the occasion.

There may have been a carnival atmosphere before the game as I went onto the Leeds Road park with Jimmy Nicholson, Town Chairman Frank Drabble and Longfellow/Alan Driscoll of the Examiner along with Mrs Fisher and Skippy the Town Terrier (Town had just adopted "The Terriers" as a nickname at the start of this season).

We were there to crown the Town Captain Player of the Year. The Skipper and his team then gave us evidence of their prowess for next season with a scintillating 3-1 victory.

Then it was on to the after match party, that I have no idea how or when I returned home those eight miles to Gomersal. Is not down to any over indulgence on my part, perhaps that wonderful father of mine, Kenneth - like with the 'Boro trip - came and again played taxi for me?

The top of Division 2 looked like this in March 1970, and still does, incidentally:-

Huddersfield Town P42 W24 D12 L6 Gls F 68 A37 Pts 60 G Avg 1.8378
Home record W14 D6 L1 F 36 A10 34
Away record W10 D6 L5 F 32 A27 26

Remember the pre-season talk given to his squad by the Manager, "playing away is little different than Leeds Road", those ten wins show how they listened, believed and responded.

Mr Greaves wanted more goals and a young striker promised him 20 if he gave him a chance. Frank Worthington played in all 42 games and scored 18 League goals with 20 in all matches. The Boss and player as one.

Seven (7) players were ever-present. Goal-keeper Terry Poole, Full backs Denis Clarke and Geoff Hutt (that favourite of my Mum), No 4; right half, Northern Ireland International, skipper of the side and Town player of the Year Jimmy Nicholson,

Centre half Roy 'kipper feet' Ellam, Centre Forward Frankie Worthington and finally No 10 Scotsman Jimmy 'Chopper' McGill. Other regulars were Trevor Cherry, Jimmy Lawson, Colin Dobson, Bobby Hoy and that goal man Steve Smith.

Some stats:

- We lost fewer games than any other side in the division, and 2 fewer than any side on their travels.
- We scored more goals in away matches than any visiting side.
- Other than Cardiff, who equalled our figure no one conceded fewer on their travels.
- Only runners-up Blackpool equalled our away win tally.
- Our goal average was only beaten by Sheffield United's 1.9210 who eventually finished in 6th place.
- The average attendance at Leeds Road was 17,524 over 7,000 up on the previous season and % wise was the biggest increase, by far, of any other club in the Division.

So there we have it Town fans the end of a glorious season one I and many others will never, ever forget. We were fortunate to be there when our club regained their First Division status, with style, panache and sheer quality both on and off the field.

Hopefully history provides the credit due to Manager Ian Greaves that at the time was not truly recognised, certainly by me, for just what did go into the mental side of his preparation, the positive thinking, the problems of the away form and scoring goals. He came up with the goods along with Henry Cockburn and his staff.

An even greater challenge was now awaiting the Boss and his team but that's for another time lets just enjoy the moment, the coronation of Huddersfield Town AFC

Champions of the Football League Division Two, 1969-1970.

Also promoted were Blackpool with Aston Villa and Preston North End relegated.

Could it be that it was this season when Town fans adopted Welsh singer Mary Hopkins "Those Were The Days" song as a popular anthem still sang today? The words rang true for the 1969/1970 season:

"Those were the days my friend we thought they never end, we won the league three times in a row, we won the FA Cup and now we're going up... we are the Town oh yes we are the Town" ... certainly would have rung long and loud through the backs of the Popular Side (East Terrace) into the Cowshed and beyond!

The Final League Table - Division Two 1969/1970

DIVISION TWO								
Pos	Name	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
1	Huddersfield Town	42	24	12	6	68	37	60
2	Blackpool	42	20	13	9	56	45	53
3	Leicester City	42	19	13	10	64	50	51
4	Middlesbrough	42	20	10	12	55	45	50
5	Swindon Town	42	17	16	9	57	47	50
6	Sheffield United	42	22	5	15	73	38	49
7	Cardiff City	42	18	13	11	61	41	49
8	Blackburn Rovers	42	20	7	15	54	50	47
9	Queens Park Rangers	42	17	11	14	66	57	45
10	Millwall	42	15	14	13	56	56	44
11	Norwich City	42	16	11	15	49	46	43
12	Carlisle United	42	14	13	15	58	56	41
13	Hull City	42	15	11	16	72	70	41
14	Bristol City	42	13	13	16	54	50	39
15	Oxford United	42	12	15	15	35	42	39
16	Bolton Wanderers	42	12	12	18	54	61	36
17	Portsmouth	42	13	9	20	66	80	35
18	Birmingham City	42	11	11	20	51	78	33
19	Watford	42	9	13	20	44	57	31
20	Charlton Athletic	42	7	17	18	35	76	31
21	Aston Villa	42	8	13	21	36	62	29
22	Preston North End	42	8	12	22	43	63	28

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