

half an hour before a game and have a chin wag, but once the game was finished you went off. There weren't clubs or places like that to go to.

The whole time I was at Middlesbrough my wife had to wait outside for me after the game. If it was tanking down, she still had to wait outside. All the directors would go past, say 'hello', but never think of letting her in. They were the businessmen - the players were just hired hands."

**It's probably the same now, there's a lot of people getting into football and making a lot of money.**

"They're not sports people. One of the Middlesbrough directors was on the board of England selectors, but when he went in to the dressing room he had to have the programme in his hand. Even if he was talking to you he wouldn't know your name until he'd had a look at the back of your shirt.

It was funny if late changes were made before a game. But he stopped me once on Linthorpe Road. There was a World Cup coming up, he asked if I wanted to go. Not to play, just to travel with the squad. Having just got married, I said no. But that was the kind of power they had."

**Did you enjoy playing North East derbies?**

"We always enjoyed playing Newcastle. Sunderland were vicious. [Laughs] I hated the sight of Sunderland. They were kicking each other before the game, that was the attitude. But we had some great games with Newcastle. It was Newcastle that drew the record attendance to Ayresome Park, fifty-three thousand."

**That must have been a great time to be watching football.**

"Arsenal had nine or ten internationals. Alex James was a magician, he would direct his winger, Cliff Bastin, where to go. That was a supreme side in England. They did what pros should do, they delivered every week. You see an awful lot of players now who don't seem to be giving ninety minutes. You can't always produce ninety minutes of quality, but you should always be running and creating a nuisance."

**Boro fans, in my time, have never tolerated lazy players. Was it the same when you played?**

"If you can't run for ninety minutes, you should pack it up. Maybe players now have so much money they don't really care. It must affect them."

**Motivation must be a problem if you're twenty-nine and already a multi-millionaire?**

"Then they start looking for a few transfers! Some players are taking their clubs to the cleaners."

**As Ravanelli did to us.**

"I was glad when he went, his Cup Final display was daylight robbery - he only went on the field for the medal."

**A lot of less gifted players contributed a lot more to the club.**

"I can't think of a reason why eleven men all playing their guts out in a team should be paid differently. I didn't like it when Jimmy Hill, who was the PFA leader, abolished the maximum wage and I don't like it now."

**If you had the power would you impose a wage ceiling?**

"I would have a standard contract. If the team is good all the players get paid according to what they win. There are a lot of clubs now in debt, they're not earning their keep. When my brother Alan was manager at Bristol City he took them into the old First Division.

The Directors told him to get all the best players tied down on contracts but Alan told them he wasn't comfortable with that. He did it, but before their contracts were up, City got relegated and nearly went bust. Clubs are still doing it today so they don't lose players due to Bosman."

**Was the maximum wage a fair wage?**

"I think so. When it was abolished the maximum wage was about £24, plus £4 for a win - but that doesn't sound very much today."

**It doesn't sound a lot if your career is over at thirty-five.**

"When Jimmy Hill fought his case for the maximum wage to be abolished, it was so that Johnny Haynes could get his £100 a week. The season following abolition, a third of all professional footballers were sacked just so that clubs could pay their stars more money. Before that, clubs would have about thirty-five pros but once clubs started paying the big boys, a lot of players weren't offered contracts."

**When they were getting 30 or 40,000 people into Ayresome Park it makes you wonder what happened to all the money?**

"I don't know where the money went, I suppose they might not have been taking that much?"

**After being in the top flight since 1929 Boro were relegated in 1954. How hard did it hit you?**

"I thought it was the end of the world, but you never think it's going to happen, you always think you'll get two points next week and everything will work out fine."