

## No.37 Harold Victor Shaw

In his prime Harold Shaw stood 5'10" weighing 12st.5lbs. In addition, was a wonderful defender who was able to play in either full-back position. Born in Hednesford, 22 May 1905, he first attracted Attention when playing for the old Hednesford Prims team as a 13 year old. He signed for Hednesford Town aged 15, in June 1920, making his debut that season against Coventry. A contemporary report on a game in October speaks of the '16 year old Shaw kicking cleanly on his debut'.

Often wearing a number 4 shirt but playing a mainly defensive role, Harold was in the same Hednesford Town defence as his close neighbours and school friends Teddy Bowen and Alec Talbot who were both soon to move to Aston Villa, but Wolves were the club who spotted Harold's precocious talent and snapped him up (on his birthday) in May 1923 along with that super winger, Jack Harrington.

The move from the Birmingham League to the Football League was no problem to Harold as he went straight into the first-team making his debut away at Chesterfield, 25 August, playing in front of former Hednesford goalkeeper Noel George, making 42 League and FA Cup starts in his first season.

A classy defender and baby of the side, Harold went on to make 249 appearances in just under seven years, captaining the side in the early years of the Major Buckley era. It was the Major in fact who caused a storm amongst the Wolves fans when he surprisingly transferred Harold to Sunderland in February 1930 for £7,500, a record for the club at that time.

Harold went on to settle just as readily into a First Division side as he had at Second Division Wolves on his debut away at Newcastle in a 3-0 defeat, 22 February 1930. He also played in an FA Cup tie against Derby County in March 1933 which attracted the biggest-ever crowd to Roker Park – 75,118.

Though he was to play for Sunderland until the outbreak of the Second World War, in 1939, he was rather unlucky to be injured and out of their side at the time of the 3-1 1936-37 FA Cup final victory over Preston. This was his second piece of bad luck, for whilst with Wolves he was selected and played in an international trial at Tottenham's White Hart Lane in March 1929, but missed out on a cap. Perhaps the fact that he did not play First Division football until reaching Roker Park weighed against him.

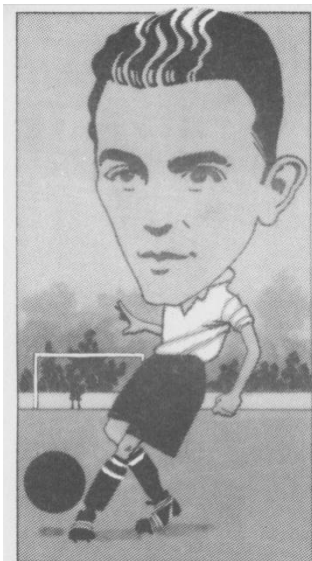
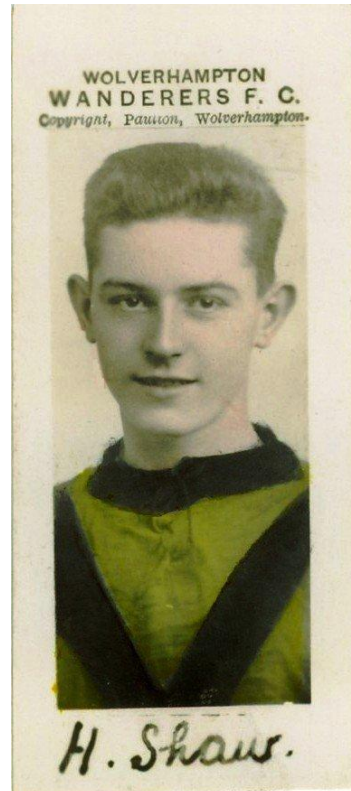
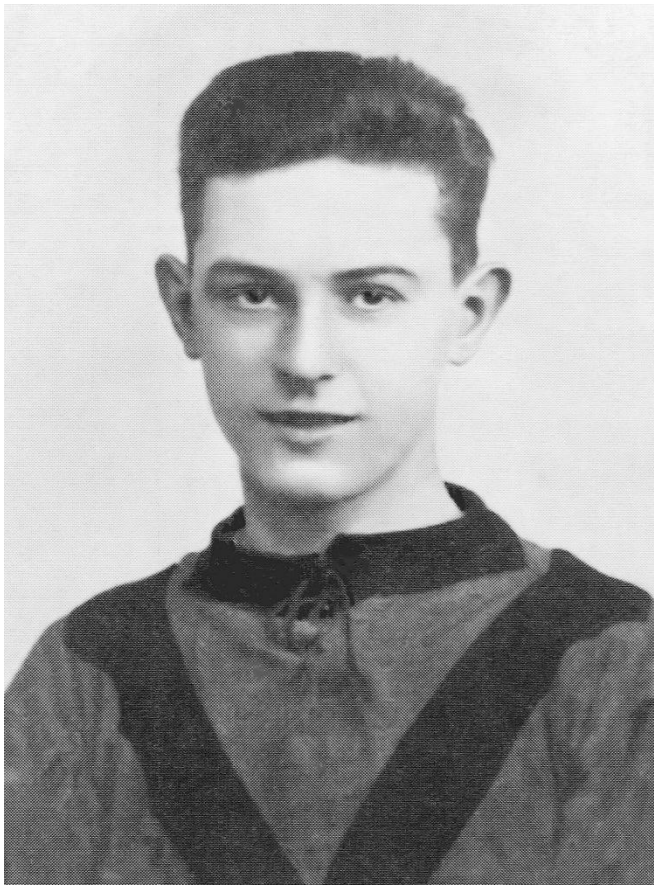
Harold continued to play wartime football until an injury finished him in 1945 at the age of forty. He returned to the Midlands with his wife Rita and family (back to Hednesford in fact) and was in business locally until his retirement. During his later years, he joined the South Staffs and Penn golf club.

Harold died, 7 June 1984, in Cannock. He had played a total of 466 Football League and FA Cup games and scored five goals (all for Sunderland). Cool, good in positional play, neat and sure in tackling, he had all the qualities!



Harold training at Wolves in 1926.

From the Dave Shaw archive.



From a set of 24 by Dave Shaw



Two pictures of Harold in Sunderland kit during the 1930s.