

No.73 Dennis Leonard Jackson

Like all Hednesford full-backs of this time, Dennis was a very competitive performer. He had been born in Birmingham, 8 March 1932, getting his football career underway by representing Birmingham District Schools.

In August 1949, at the age of seventeen, Dennis signed amateur forms for West Bromwich Albion where, as with all new signings, he began by performing for them in their second and third teams. Unfortunately, the chance to progress beyond those outfits did not come his way throughout his three-year stay at the Hawthorns and in 1952 he joined the British Army for his compulsory two-years National Service.

However, in 1953, midway through his term in the Army, Dennis was hospitalised with a cartilage problem. In those days, a problem like this could easily terminate the career of an athlete; in his case, the operation was successful and, following his demob, Dennis played in a trial at Aston Villa in June 1954, then signed for Hednesford in July 1954 for a three-month spell before finally signing professional forms for First Division Villa, 1 October 1954.

It was the 1956-57 season before Dennis hit the Villa first-team; with only two senior outings during a season that saw Villa beat Manchester United in the FACup final. In fact, he played only eight senior games in his five-year spell at Villa Park before Fourth Division Millwall signed him at the end of the 1958-59 season, 1 May 1959.

At Millwall, Dennis made the right-back position his own with 43 appearances in his first season, and 39 in 1960-61, before moving to non-league Rugby Town in August of that year. He retired in May 1966, with a career total of 91 first-class games under his belt, and became a bookmaker before working in a bakery in the 1970s.



