

## No.79 Brian 'Tex' Powell

Weighing just over eleven stone within his 5' 8" framework, Tex was not typical material for an English type of centre-forward, but his speed over the first five yards and spring-healed leaps made him a handful to any defence he opposed.

He obviously inherited his speed from his father who won many foot races at venues throughout The Chase. These events were very popular at the time, our old Cross Keys ground was one of the venues.

Born 12 December 1937, the first of eight children to Samuel and Lillian Powell, Tex spent his childhood in Old Fallow Road, Blackfords, Cannock, schooling initially at Walsall Road and Chadsmoor Junior Schools, progressing to the Chadsmoor Central boy's school in 1948 to represent both his school and the Cannock & District Schoolboys football teams.

As a youth, Tex scored over 100 goals in one season including eleven in one match, whilst at the same time beginning his working life in the printing trade for A.D.Taylor's of Hednesford who printed Hednesford's programmes for many years. Tex delivered them to the ground with the hope that one day his name will appear on the players' page.

National Service called and, stationed in Germany, he represented his 72<sup>nd</sup> Light Anti-Aircraft regiment football team. It was whilst on two weeks leave that he made his Hednesford Town debut, 3 April 1958 away at Moor Green. The game was drawn 2-2.

Tex ended his first full season with 30 goals in 41 appearances, attracting the attention of a clutch of League clubs. Amongst them was Bristol Rovers who wished to sign both Tex and centre-half John 'Agga' Hale in an on-off, on-off transfer situation, which eventually fell through.

He had no great wish to join a Football League outfit, preferring instead to stay with his home club. However, cash strapped Hednesford persuaded him otherwise and Tex signed for Birmingham City in August 1959 for a £300 fee with Tex pocketing £14 a game plus bonuses. He was now at the same club as Cannock youngster and former Schoolmate, Malcolm Beard, who had joined Birmingham a few months earlier following seven Youth International caps for England.

By the end of his first season, 1959-60, Tex was the club's top marksman. Nevertheless, he was not given a sniff of first-team football, even though injury had kept out the man above him; the position went to an unlikely inside-forward. Enough was enough and Tex walked out on Birmingham to join Southern league Hinkley in September 1960

At the end of the 1960-61 campaign, he moved to Stafford Rangers, coming home a year later when Hednesford Town signed him for a £100 fee. Tex would repay the club handsomely in the years to

come with eight hat-tricks, including five goals in one game, before retiring in 1966.

During his non-league days, since leaving The Blues, Tex worked his way to foreman at Joseph Lucas in Cannock, staying for 25 years before joining Walsall Education Department for the nine years prior to his retirement in 1997. He now lives contentedly, along with his wife Mary, in Great Wyrley.



The 1959-60 Birmingham City squad. Tex sits third row from the top, third from the left, Malcolm Beard stands behind him, third player from the left.