

Programme Notes v Macclesfield

Good evening and welcome to tonight's Carabao cup second round tie against Macclesfield. Special welcome to all the supporters who have made the 240 miles round trip from Macclesfield to follow their team. When the draw was made it is fair to say that neither team viewed this as good draw with both hoping for the sort of draw that Lincoln (v Everton) and Newport (v West Ham) have got with the benefit of the TV and the resulting revenue. Nevertheless, both teams will view it as a winnable game and the chance of a lucrative draw in the next round and with home advantage we will probably start as slight favourites, but Macclesfield have proved time and again that you underestimate them at your peril.

It is a long time since we have had a decent run in this cup but many of our older supporters will remember when we got to the quarter finals in both 1979/80 and 1984/85. In the latter we lost to Norwich at Blundell Park 1-0 on a very cold January evening. It was the 79/80 run that was probably more memorable with some amazing games in what was arguably the best post war season the club have had to date. The first round saw a two-legged victory over local rivals Scunthorpe, which is always nice, followed by wins against Huddersfield and Notts County which gave us a round 4 tie against the mighty Everton. This game produced one of the best games ever at Blundell Park and certainly one of the best atmospheres with a crowd of 22,043 packing into the park. Mike Brolly became a Town legend by scoring both goals in a 2-1 victory which put us into the quarter finals and a home tie against Wolves who were one of the best teams at that time. Another bumper crowd of 23,115 witnessed a very tight game which ended 0-0 but it could have been so different if a late header from Kev Moore had gone in instead of hitting the understand of the bar. The replay at Wolves saw thousands of Town fans cheer the team on to another draw and a second replay which was held at Derby County's Baseball Ground. Another huge following unfortunately couldn't drive the team to victory with Wolves winning 2-0 and going on to win the cup with a semi final win against Swindon and then a final win against Nottingham Forest. This was probably our best chance ever of getting to Wembley in a major cup competition, but it wasn't to be.

As mentioned, this was probably Town's best post war season to date with a good FA cup run ending in defeat at Anfield in front of a crowd of 49,706 with thousands of Town fans having to be housed in the Kop due to the away end being full by 2pm. The highlight of the season however was the final game of the season at home to Sheffield United in front of a crowd of 19,276 who witnessed a superb performance to clinch the Division 3 championship. Kevin Drinkell was the hero with a great hat-trick in a 4-0 victory with captain, Joe waters, getting the other goal.

The 1979/80 season in our view doesn't get the recognition it deserves and certainly the manager for that season, George Kerr, should have more credit for the most enjoyable season in living memory.

Thankfully we have a number of supporters who are very passionate about the club's history and th one of them, Rob MCilveen, has captured the memories for the 79/80 in a book which we hope to launch next year at the same time a celebration dinner to mark 40 years anniversary of this great season. More details to follow.

Enjoy the game.

Up the Mariners

Mariners Trust Board.