

THE WIND

The www.spiksley.com Newsletter

December 2014

Welcome

Welcome to our first newsletter, I hope that you find something that interests you. 'The Wind' is the nickname that Spiksley was given by Woolwich Arsenal supporters who were taken aback his blistering pace during a game at Plumbstead in 1890, declaring that he 'runs like the wind'.

The fantastic news is that the book is going very well. Mark has been doing a fantastic job over the last four months writing a complete draft, which is currently on track to be completed some time in February. The Gainsborough Trinity, England and most of the Sheffield Wednesday chapters are written and ready to be edited.

The brief has been to write a 100,000 word book, which will be illustrated throughout with images that are historically important and in many cases unpublished. This includes many photographs that belong to the Spiksley family, such this cropped 1894 photograph of the England team which drew 2-2 with Scotland at Celtic Park.

Teaming up with Mark Metcalf has meant that the many years of research in libraries and archives are finally coming to an end with the final publication in sight. We are all very excited about being able to retell Fred's story and bring it to a brand new audience.

Every month we plan to email you a brand new newsletter, filled with interesting facts, anecdotes and material that will probably not make the final book due to the volume of work that has been undertaken. I genuinely hope that you enjoy them and that you enjoy reading our book.

Please tell your friends, family and fellow supporters about our project and get them signed up to receive this newsletter.

Quote

"He exhibited supreme ball control, and could use either foot with equal facility. Whenever I saw him he always played well, but never better than at Richmond for he scored the last three goals inside ten minutes. I cannot recall any other Englishman scoring three goals in an international match against Scotland. He caused a gracious Lady, who was to become the Queen of England, to wave her Handkerchief as one of his three goals were scored."

Sir Frederick Wall - Secretary of the Football Association 1895-1934



Fred Spiksley 1894 - Cropped from the full England team pre-match photograph. Sat on the Chair is John Goodall a member of the Preston Invincible's side and leading scorer in the inaugural Football League season.

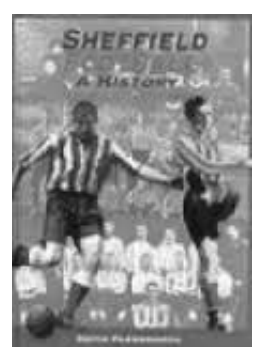
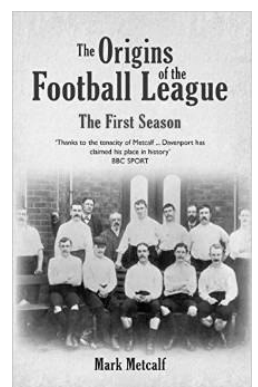
Reading List

Each month we will recommend some excellent football books, including some of Mark's books and ones which we have used in our research.

This month we start with Mark's recently republished *'The Origins of the Football League'* where Mark successfully establishes who was the scorer of the first ever goal in the Football League. A fact that was discovered deep inside the Colindale Newspaper Archives.

If you want to familiarise yourself with Mark's work then this is a great starting point.

The second book on our reading list is this 1995 release from Keith Farnsworth - *Sheffield Football a History Vol. 1*. Available second hand this is an excellent book and very easy to read. There is an entire chapter dedicated to Fred Spiksley in this book as well as the 1896 and 1902-03 successes for The Wednesday Club.



Andrew Wilson

"It was in 1900 that Andrew Wilson arrived at the Wednesday Football Club from Scotland, although it took a little while before he was able to secure his place in the first team. Andra, for it was as such that we called him, was just about the rawest recruit that I ever came across whilst I was with the Wednesday.



Had I been asked to guess at his profession when he first arrived in Sheffield, football was the last thing I should have thought of. At his first training session he was very slow and remarkably ponderous. He gave me the impression that he had never played football in his life before he came to join us in England. I remember very well his first league game for Wednesday on the opening day of the 1900 – 1901 league season when we were playing a First Division fixture away from home against Manchester City. We did not play very well as a team that day and Andra seemed to be out his depth but we scraped a 2 – 2

draw by courtesy of John Wright who baled us out of trouble with two good goals.

But a wonderful chap was 'Andra' and for anyone wanting to improve them self in anything at all, he was the perfect role model. He went in for assiduous training, and after enough hard work to kill off most men he would move on to skills training to improve and fine-tune his technique. Recognising his lack of pace and slow reactions he sought specialist sprint training and went to dancing classes to improve his movement and agility. One day he turned up at morning training and we could not believe what we saw. Almost overnight he had found some pace that opened our eyes and made our jaws drop. His light build was all against him, but the number of times that he would lap the playing field every morning to build up his stamina, and manage his weight was well worth the wages he was paid, without taking into account each Saturday when he ran out into the bear-pit.

Once he got underway with his sprinting, his stamina, his strength, and his agility, his development was startling, and indeed very soon it was admitted that he was going to be the best and most consistent centre forward Sheffield Wednesday ever possessed. And those of us who admitted it were right."

Take from Fred Spiksley's autobiography, written for Thomson's Weekly in 1920.



Jack Lyall - Sheffield Wednesday's goalkeeper for the 1902-03 season when Fred Spiksley was to win the League Championship with the club. Lyall played 295 times for Wednesday between 1901-1909.

When Spiksley got sent-off

From the Sheffield Independent 2nd Feb. 1898

THE SPIKESLEY CASE.
The case of F. Spiksley, the Sheffield Wednesday player who was ordered off the field by Mr. West, the referee in the League match with Stoke on Christmas Day at Olive Grove, has been dealt with by an emergency committee of the Football Association, and the official decision has been communicated to Mr. Dickinson, the hon. secretary of the Wednesday club. It is to the effect that, having regard to Spiksley's previous good conduct, no action be taken in the matter beyond the player being called upon to apologise to the referee.

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