Anstey Nomads FC

The Extraordinary Story of an English Village Football Club

The 1950s

British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, famously stated in a speech in 1957 that "most of our people have never had it so good". This was certainly true for Anstey Nomads. The 1950s saw them win the Leicestershire Senior League twice, the Coalville Charity Cup twice as well as attracting national press coverage for their exploits in the FA Amateur Cup, firmly establishing themselves as the county's leading amateur club.

~1950-51~

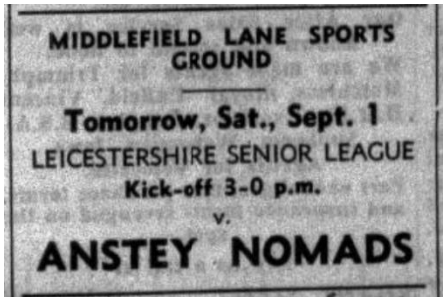
The opening season of the new decade was a mediocre one for the Nomads, finishing in the bottom half of the Senior League. Quorn Methodists won the title, finishing 8 points clear of Loughborough Colleges in second place. They were eliminated by Coalville Town (3-5) in Round 2 of the Senior Cup, progressed through to the quarter-final of the Coalville Charity Cup, losing to Rugby Town after a replay, and knocked out of the Sileby Serviceman's Cup by Oadby Town.

The annual social evening of the Nomads was held at the Working Men's Club in April. Entertainment was by Sid Smit, Derek Wakefield, Reg and Roy, the Bryan Sisters, Bert and il Bryan, Bert Smith and Ernest Wrighton-Brown. The names of players and officials were placed in a hat and drawn by Mrs. A Pettifor to allocate the five FA Cup Final tickets given to the club. The lucky winners were C Smart, E Jackson, K Ford, G Dunckley and D Fowkes.

Anstey Nomads visited Skegness on their annual end of season outing.

Former Nomads player, Robert Smith (30) tragically died in July 1950, a week after he was struck in the face by a ball as he fielded close in, while playing cricket for Newtown Linford.

~1951-52~



City's Welsh international stalwart for many years, Dai Jones, who was player-manager of Hinckley Athletic last season was appointed the trainer at Cropston Road. Along with Sam Raynor, who was also who was also on City's books, prepared the team. Cyril Ford resigned as club secretary and was replaced by Syd Knight.

Bill Spencer celebrated his return to Anstey from Whitwick

with a bag of six goals in an opening day emphatic 9-1 victory against Barwell Athletic at Cropston Road. This was as sign of things to come as the Nomads remained unbeaten in the League for the remainder of the calendar year on their way to becoming Champions of the Leicestershire Senior League. They did not suffer a loss until the first league game of 1952 away at Rugby. The only other sides to take two points off the Nomads were Ibstock Penistone Rovers, Barwell Athletic and Moira United.

The biggest defeats of the season was by Burgess Products (2-7) in the second round of the Coalville Cup. They were also knocked out of the Leicestershire Senior Cup in the second round by Coalville Town (3-5).

Anstey Nomads F. C. - Senior League Champions & Rollestone Cup winners 1951-2
Back row: S. Smith (trainer), J.Cave, R. Ford, R. Longland, D. Orme, K. Matts, W. Spencer
S. Knight (secretary), front row: F. Spencer, F. Woodford, D. Fowkes (captain), G. Wade, G. Payne

Courtesy of Anstey Nomads
Anstey Millennium Collection
No. *1390*

Leicestershire Senior League's annual championship match attracted over 1,000 spectators to the Wigston Lane Oadby ground on the last day of April, when the Second Division Champions Oadby Town and First Division champions Anstey Nomads played a no score draw. Although Oadby were slightly the better side, the final result was most fitting for the keenly fought game. Twice the Town hit the crossbar in the first period and early in the second period hit the post. The First Division side piled on the pressure and nearly snatched a late winner in the last five minutes when Oadby conceded four corners. At the end of the match Mr Tom Bradshaw presented the cups and awards to both teams.

Stalwarts of the 1951-52 squad were Ken Matts, Ron Ford, Jack Cave and Jeff Payne. The old man of the team, centre-half Ford had lost none of his powers of recovery and was still a very difficult man to bet. Matts, well known in cricketing circles for his exploits with Newton Linford, had been at the club since before the war, while right back Cabe graduated from Anstey Juniors and played

for County Youths. Payne was employed in several positions before settling in at outside left, where his brilliance played a great part in the Nomads championship success.

Although their appearances in the first team were not as frequent, Ron Dryden, the second team skipper, and Fred Spencer performed valuable work in the Reserve XI, where they used their vast wealth of experience to bring along promising junior talent.

In the previous three years Anstey provided two players to the professional ranks, Leicester City reserve defender, Reg Warner and Malcolm Bramley of Derby County.

A knockout darts competition was held to raise money for the club. Sam Raynor and his bother Ernest provided the runners-up cup for the competition. Their father, Mr J W Raynor was the donor of the winner's trophy.

Over two hundred players and supporters attended Anstey Nomads FC dinner and dance at the Anstey Working Men's Club, where the company included two former Leicester City players, George Ritchie, and Dai Jones, along with several Leicestershire Football Association officials.

After donations were given to the Les Dalby testimonial and Korea funds the Ansty Nomads supporters club reported a balance of £16 14s 4d. at the AGM the following officers were elected: President H Widdowson; secretary, A Crisp; treasurer, J H Hart; committee, A Botterill, T Rose, W Brotherhood, E Finney, D Geary, F Jordan, A Smith.

~1952-53~

Already an advisor to Anstey Nomads, Dai Jones agreed to become chief coach to the promoted champions of Senior League Division 2, Oadby Town.

Senior League success encouraged the Nomads to enter the FA Amateur Cup. The draw for the preliminary round, covering local clubs made in July 1952 resulted in the following ties- Syston St Peters v Cosby United; Enderby Town v Anstey Nomads; Birmingham City Transport v Shepshed Albion; Loughborough College v Sheldon own; Ibstock Penistone Rovers v Paet Rangers; Earl Shilton Institute v Morris Sports. Matches took place on 20 September.

After overcoming Enderby Town (2-1) at George Street, the Nomads were three up by half-time in their first qualifying round home clash with Coventry Rootes. Heath scored a hat-trick as Anstey trounced their West Midland opponents, 7-0. The four survivors of the first qualifying round in the Leicestershire-Warwickshire area were all from Leicestershire. In the second qualifying round, Anstey overcame Loughborough College and Syston St Peters beat Earl Shilton Institute to set up a third qualifying round tie between the two winners to decide who would go into the fourth qualifying round in mid-November. Anstey emerged triumphant in an eight goal thriller to become the first Leicestershire Senior League club since the end of WW2 to reach the first round of the FA Amateur Cup, with a 4-0 victory over Smethwick Town. What made the feat more praiseworthy is that this was their first attempt in the competition. Anstey went to the game in impressive form, with a Cup and League record of; played 14, won 14, goals for 54, against 15. The match attracted the biggest crowd of the season at Cropston Road. Ron Ford, the 'veteran' centre-half was inspirational, his dominance of the middle frustrated Smethwick's many determined attacks. The Nomads led by a G Ford goal at the interval and added three more from Heath the Leicester City amateur, and right-winger Smith, netted twice.

Had Anstey Nomads' shooting been as good as their approach work, the Leicestershire Senor League side and not Cambridge City would have been in the draw for the second round. The Nomad's very nearly upset the Athenian League Club at Cambridge, but after a goalless first half, during which they might have scored five goals, Cambridge recovered their composure to win 2-1. The goals all came in the last twenty minutes from Chapman and Turner for Cambridge and Heath for Anstey. All were from headers. A feature was the spirit in which the game was played; only once was a trainer called upon and there were only two minor infringements. The gate totalled 3,172, and receipts were £211.

Until the end of January, Anstey were still in the Senior League title race. Champions-elect Measham Imperials were top of the league having accumulated 31 points from 20 games. Anstey had 23 points but had 5 games in hand. Unfortunately, February began with a poor run of results, Anstey losing 6 and drawing 2 of the next eight League games, eventually finishing 7th. Senior League highlights included a six goal haul by Brian Heath, in his last match before joining the Army in a 9-2 home demolition against Earl Shilton. Two months later Shilton took their revenge, putting no less than ten goals past the Nomads. On Valentines Day, following a collision just before half-time Nomads goalkeeper, Longland was taken to hospital just before half-time in a 3-2 defeat against Hinckley played on a snow covered and icy pitch. With a suspected broken leg. In April Nomads tried to take on Holwell in the Rolleston Cup and Syston in the Senir League on the same day. They got a 9-goal beating in the cup competition and went down 4-3 in the Senior League match.

Knocked out of the Coalville Cup by Syston St Peter's, the Nomads beat Ibstock Pennistone Rovers (2-0), Coalville Town (4-1) and Symington (2-1) to reach the semi-finals of the Leicestershire Senior Cup, where they went down 2-1 at home to Quorn, who lost 4-0 to Moira United in the final.

Anstey's pavilion compared favorably with any club of a similar standing. Bought locally, it began life as an Army hut during the 1914-18 war but had been so well re-erected at the end of the 1951-52 season and decorated that few would have thought that the building was nearly 40 years old. All work on the pavilion was done voluntarily by the energetic and hard-working committee. Another players' bath was fitted, and plans were underway to construct a veranda.

The Amateur Cup adventure not only earned them a deserved place on the football map, but their performances also brough them financial reward. The total amount from the FA Amateur Cup competition pol, shared between 64 clubs reaching the first round proper was £6,279 15s 8d, and Anstey received £99 13s 8d. Anstey' s gates averaged around 300. In addition, the club reported at its AGM an additional balance of £64, putting the club in a sound financial position.

~1953-54~

Anstey won the championship of Leicestershire Senior Football League Division 1 for the second time in three years. They claimed the title with three games to spare on Wednesday 7 April after drawing 2-2 at home with Loughborough College. It was the most exciting game played on Cropston Road throughout the season, and it also attracted one of the best gates of the season. The Loughborough side included two internationals, Flanagan (England) and Owen (Wales). After 20 minutes, Flanagan scored for Loughborough but ten minutes later Whittle was brought down in the penalty area and Matts made no mistake with the spot kick to even up the score. With excitement high, Payne put Anstey in the lead. This was short-lived however, for within a matter of minutes the College were level, a shot from Howett was deflected into the goal by Ford.

Nomads led 2-0 after just 4 mins on their Senior League season opener against Hinckley Athletic at home. Seventeen year old Seal on his debut completed his hat-trick after just 20 minutes and then pulled a muscle in the 8-2 win. He was, however, outshone by centre-forward Malcolm Bramley, who netted five times. The following weekend they travelled to Enderby Town, winning 4-0, thus scoring 12 times in two games. Several teams were put to the sword by Anstey in the Senior League– Burgess Products (H) 6-2; Quorn Methodists (H) 5-0, (A) 6-1 (A); Moira United (H) 7-4, 6-1 (A); Syston St Peters (H) 8-1; Enderby Town (H) 9-0. They also suffered two heavy defeats themselves – losing at home 7-2 against Leicester City 'A' and away against Holwell Works 2-8. They avenged the Holwell defeat by giving them an 8-1 thumping at home. Remington, signed from Ibstock Penistone Rovers scored 6 against Syston St Peter's and Whittle 7 times in two games – Measham away and Holwell at home.

Within a few days in December, Nomads lost first-team goalkeeper, Roy Longland, who retired from the game and his deputy, Terry Stretton who left for National Service. Some quick moving by Nomads secretary, Sid Knight, solved the problem by signing replacements, John Weston from Cosby and B O'Field. The latter had just been released from the RAF in which he was a physical training instructor and had appeared for Leicester City 'A' before his call-up.

The experience of Anstey tipped the scales in the Senior League championship game against Division 2 champions, Shepshed Albion at the Dovecote at the end of the season, the Nomads winning a good match by 3-1. Shepshed, who won their title without losing a match, and gathered 54 out of a possible 56 points, did not display the certainty of Anstey in distribution on the hard ground and invariably found the Nomads beating them to the ball. Remington scored the first goal after 34 minutes, Shepshed's goalkeeper, Jim Baxter got his hands to the ball but was unable to prevent it from hitting the back of the net. Payne added a second, forcing the ball home in the 63rd minute after Shepshed defenders had failed three times to clear a loose ball in the penalty area. Shepshed down to ten men through a rib injury to outside right White reduced their arrears. The Nomad's third goal was a tragedy for Shepshed's centre-half and captain Oliver. Harassed by Clay, he hurriedly passed back at some distance to the advancing Baxter, who scrambled sideways but was powerless to stop the ball trickling over the line. Chairman of Leicester City, and President of the Senior league, Len Shipman presented the championship cups to the skippers Orme (Anstey) and Oliver (Shepshed) and replicas to the players.

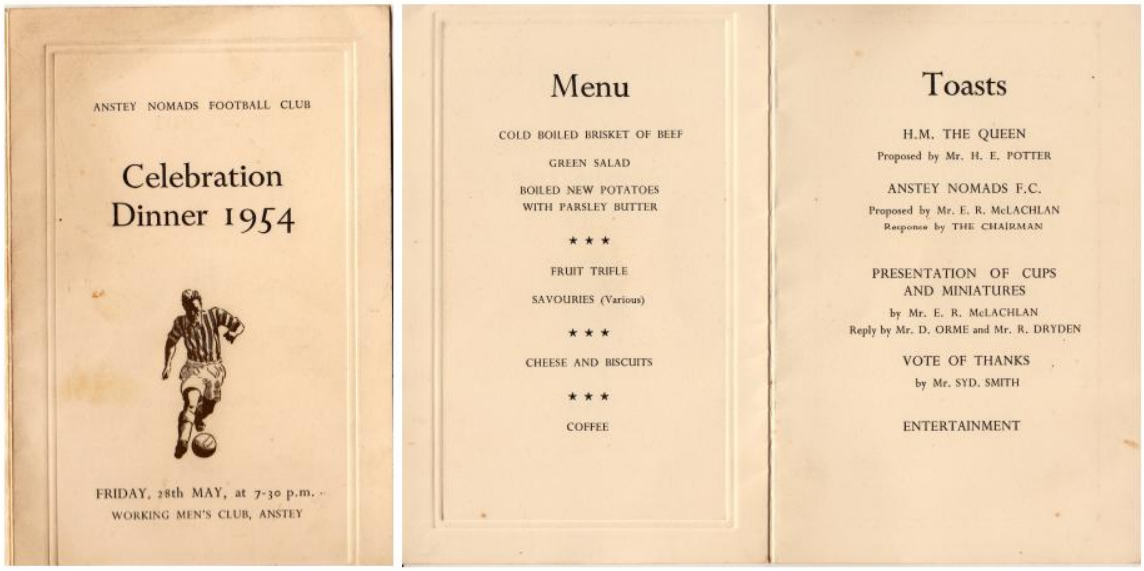
Leicester Amateurs knocked Anstey out of the Senior Cup, in the first round.

Leicester City 'A', essentially the club's reserve side, were the only side to beat the Nomads twice, which included eliminating them from Coalville Chairity Cup in Round 3 after a replay. Oadby Town, who had won the Sileby Cup on Friday night secured their second trophy in 24 hours on Saturday evening, 1 May 1954, when they beat the Nomads 2-0 in the Enderby Cup final, at Enderby. All the scoring took place in the second half, Cooley claiming both goals. On the same evening Ted Jackson, a member of the Anstey committee presented the Rolleston Cup and replicas to the winning team, Holwell Sports, after they had beaten Ibstock Penistone Rovers 4-0 in the final at Cropston Road. Ibstock, who had won the trophy eight times previously, were never as impressive as Holwell, who led 2-0 at half-time.

Goalkeeper John Weston set a local record by playing in six matches in eight days in April. Because of injuries to Ofield and Longland, the club's other goalkeepers, he was called into service for every game of the hectic closing spell of the season. He turned out against Easington United on Saturday 23 April at Anstey, two days later he appeared against Rugby Town at Rugby and the following day, Tuesday, he was still going strong in the Enderby Cup semi-final with Barlestone. Next on the Wednesday, came the "match of the champions" (First Division Senior League Champions v Second Division Senior League Champions) at Shepshed, and on the following day, helped Anstey to win the replayed Enderby Cup semi-final with Barlestone 2-1, and lastly in the final with Oadby on the Saturday, which Anstey lost 1-0.

After overcoming Paget Rovers in the preliminary qualifying round, and Coventry Amateurs both at home, Cave scored a double hat-trick as the Nomads took revenge on Leicester Amateurs for knocking them out of the County Cup. Anstey reached the fourth and final qualifying round for the second consecutive season after snatching a dramatic win in an amazing match at Oadby Town. The home team led 1-0 for most of the game, Brett scoring after 12 minutes., and it was not until the final 5 minutes that Anstey equalised, by an own goal from Collins, who deflected a

shot that was going wide, past his own surprised goalkeeper. There was a note of optimism in the chill air around The Nook on midday when the Nomads set off for Nottingham for the fourth qualifying round accompanied by three hundred supporters in six coaches. Skipper Danny Orme gave his team at least an even chance of winning, but club secretary Sid Knight, who went with Dany to study their opponents form the previous week told The Leicester Evening Mail: "What we saw at Gedling last week was by no mean up to Anstey's standard of play." Unfortunately, the record-breaking attendance (gate receipts £40) for the Plains Road ground Mapperley witnessed Gelding Colliery defeat Ansty Nomads 2-1. If Anstey forwards had made full use of the grand centres by Potter in the opening half, they might have built up a commanding lead by the interval. With the wind in their favour, the Nomads often threatened danger, but hesitancy in front of goal cost them numerous chances, both Remington and Payne missing easy opportunities. Clay put Anstey in from midway through the first half and it was not until 68 minutes had elapsed that O'Dowd equalised. Rile scored the winner four minutes from the end from close range.



ANSTEY NOMADS FOOTBALL CLUB

Celebration Dinner 1954

FRIDAY, 28th MAY, at 7-30 p.m.
WORKING MEN'S CLUB, ANSTEY

Menu

COLD BOILED BRISKET OF BEEF
GREEN SALAD
BOILED NEW POTATOES
WITH PARSLEY BUTTER
★ ★ ★
FRUIT TRIFLE
SAVOURIES (Various)
★ ★ ★
CHEESE AND BISCUITS
★ ★ ★
COFFEE

Toasts

H.M. THE QUEEN
Proposed by Mr. H. E. POTTER
ANSTEY NOMADS F.C.
Proposed by Mr. E. R. McLACHLAN
Response by THE CHAIRMAN
PRESENTATION OF CUPS AND MINIATURES
by Mr. E. R. McLACHLAN
Reply by Mr. D. ORME and Mr. R. DRYDEN
VOTE OF THANKS
by Mr. SYD. SMITH
ENTERTAINMENT

Anstey Nomads celebrating winning the Leicestershire Senior League for the second time in the 1953-54 season having won 22, drawn 4 and lost just 4 - previous winners of the league in the 1951-52 season.

Courtesy of Jim Taylor
Anstey Millennium Collection
No.1749

~1954-55~

After losing their opening home Senior League match against Holwell Sports, Anstey Nomads went on a long unbeaten run, which was ended by Holwell in February. Hopes of Anstey winning their second successive title did not disappear until they were beaten at Oadby in late April. Fixture congestion resulting from match postponements due to both Amateur Cup matches, and inclement weather meant that the Nomads played almost every other day towards the end of the season to complete their Senior League and Cup games. The Senior League title was won by Leicester City 'A' whose precision attack and rocklike defence was such a feature throughout the season. Nomads finished the season in third place, two points behind Holwell Sports.

Anstey's season, perhaps the most memorable in its history was dominated by its Amateur Cup adventure that ended with a thriller. Three missed penalties, one taken twice, two disallowed goals and Anstey Nomads beaten. That was the story of the thrill-packed FA Amateur Cup second

round match at Cropston Road on Saturday 29 January 1955 when Hayes Athletic, the Middlesex club, qualified for a home tie against Wimbledon in the next round by 2-1. The cup tie was due to take place the week before, but was postponed, the pitch being rock hard under a three inch covering of snow. Each evening during the week leading up to the match the Anstey players put in some hard training at Filbert Street under the supervision of City trainer, David Jones. Supporters began arriving in their droves from 1.00 pm as the rain began to fall. The club had spent £250 to improve standing room surrounding the pitch with sloping banking to ensure a good view for everyone. Due to a clash of colours Anstey played in white, in a kit borrowed from Leicester Amateurs.

The most important 'date' in the Nomad's history was a nerve-racking affair, with excitement reaching fever pitch in the last ten minutes. Anstey scored first through Clay midway through the first half. After the visitors had gone into the lead after 80 minutes, the Leicestershire Senior League Champions bombarded the Hayes goal seeking an equaliser. The record-breaking crowd of 5,000 fell silent as the Nomads were awarded a penalty. Up came Ken Matts to take the kick, but the right back flung his arms up in anguish as he slammed the ball a foot wide. The crowd groaned, but that was not the end of the thrills. Just four minutes from the close, after a mix up in the goalmouth, a Hayes defender was penalised for hands. Outside-right Lowther was entrusted with the spot kick, and again a fine chance of equalising was missed, the ball being sent at no great speed direct to goalkeeper Rive. Referee Whitehead provided the crowning drama in a hard if not pretty match by ordering the kick to be retaken. Lowther grateful for another opportunity, made his second attempt a replica of the first, Rive simply scooping up the ball which came straight to him. It would nevertheless have been an injustice had the Nomads won the game as Hayes had been the more impressive team throughout the ninety minutes. The quickness and covering of their defence was immaculate, Hudson and Gadsden holding the Nomads wingers Lowther and Payne tightly in check. Woodford, Anstey's star player, covered miles, darting back to help his defence whenever necessary. Clay, persistent and speedy seized his opportunity neatly in the 22 minute to put Anstey ahead. He deserved another goal shortly afterwards, a fierce angle shot beating Rive but hit the post and rebounded to safety. Wingers Neale and Watts took a prominent part in Hayes success, responding smartly to the dangerous probing of Rawlings and Champelovier. The latter scored both goals for Hayes, with a low hard shot in the 54th minute and from a powerful header ten minutes from the end. In between these two goals, Rawlings missed a penalty for Hayes, Weston in goal having little difficulty in saving a ground shot to his left. Hayes had the ball in the net on two further occasions, Neale and Willis forcing it home, but each time the referee ruled offside. Anstey's remarkable six match Football Association Amateur Cup campaign which brought the club to the attention of the nation's football fans came to an end.

Figure 1 Nomads supporters before boarding the "Anstey Special" to Grays

Figure 2 The Hayes goalkeeper makes a save at the Cropston Road end of the ground, just look at the crowd on the roof of the toilet building and all those villagers sitting on the roof of the changing rooms.

The Nomads Amateur Cup adventure began in September with a home tie against Barwell Athletic in the preliminary qualifying round. After recent displays it was expected that Barwell would prove stiff opposition for Anstey, but this was not the case, the Nomads cantered to an easy 6-0 victory. In the first qualifying round they crept past Cosby United away and then beat Stapenhill, the Burton-on-Trent club, 7-4 on a heavy and slippery pitch at Anstey. Two weeks later several hundred Anstey fans made the trip to Coventry quietly confident they could beat Rootes Athletic to reach the final qualifying round. Rootes had already eliminated two Leicestershire Senior League clubs, defeating Burgess Products 1-0 at home and Enderby Town 2-0 at Enderby. The Nomads scored twice within the opening 11 minutes. The first goal was scored by Remington after two minutes. After Watkins had narrowly missed for Rooters. Anstey scored again through Payne after 11 minutes. McCartney started a movement in which Watkins finished, and Harris scored a good goal for Rootes after 16 minutes. When McCartney snapped up a pass from Clare to equalise. 35 minutes Clay scored for Anstey from a breakaway. Shortly afterwards. Clare was injured and had to leave the field. From this point onwards Anstey took complete control of the game and just before half-time Lowther scored a good fourth goal. Shortly after half-time Watkins missed an open goal for Rootes and with both teams tiring play deteriorated. - Five minutes from the end, Lowther scored Anstey's fifth goal from 30 yards. Result: Rootes 2, Anstey Nomads 5.

There was some doubt whether the Cropston Road ground would be fit for the final qualifying round tie against Smethwick Town, as two days before the match parts of the pitch were underwater. While the Smethwick keeper was tested several times and during a hectic spell of Anstey pressure had to receive attention, Remington scored following a sustained attack. Malvin had a chance to equalise, but his shot was too high. Anstey doubled their advantage when from a corner the ball was defected into the net by one of the defenders. Anstey continued on top throughout the second period, Remington scored their third and Clay their fourth. From a corner, Payne made it a 'nap' hand.

CHURCH TEAM ANSTEY TOPPLE GRAYS

Amateur Cup-ties

By LAURIE BURILLS

CROOK TOWN, who won the F A Amateur Cup after a record 330 minutes final with Bishop Auckland last season, are out first time this season.

Victors were 1950 Cup winners Willington, their County Durham neighbours, by the only goal scored by Ralph Webb.

It was a near thing for Bishops, too. With only five minutes to go Stork, the Cheshire side, were 1-1 and still very lively. Two late goals just saved the favourites.

Cup specialists, Walthamstow, made heavy weather of their tie with Moor Green for an hour. Then reserve Peter Costen, partnering Reg Groves for his first senior match, helped Johnny Bee to make the pass for Groves to score.

Harry Pope, that game young old 'un at Hounslow, saved the Corinthian Leaguers from a surprise defeat at Redhill. Twice two-down, only a great tail-end rally saved the Town with tireless Harry finding the net in the closing minutes.

First time

Among the unlucky Isthmians were Leytonstone and Corinthian-Casuals. Biggest surprise of the Southern defeats, surely, was that of Grays Athletic by Anstey Nomads, the Leicestershire village team.

Anstey, a combination of two church teams, have played through from the extra-preliminary round—six ties—scored 27 goals, only seven against, and are in the second round for the first time.

"It is a great thing for us," said secretary Sid Knight. "It means we are exempt to the first round next year, too. I thought Grays were going to beat us when they had so many scoring chances in the first 20 minutes, but our lads stuck it out."

Anstey opened the scoring after 33 minutes when inside-right Dennis Reamington beat Grays' England trialist goalkeeper, Ray Kemp, with a quick shot.

Grays equalised (Lambert) just before half-time, but after that Anstey were always the more dangerous. County player Geoff Payne got the second (25 mins.) and centre-forward Digger Clay "walked" the third into the net (41).

STOP PRESS

Phone: TEMPLE BAR 1200

TEST CRICKET LATEST SCORE

(See Page One)

ENGLAND: 41 for 1 wkt.

Bailey c Langley b Ron Archer 6.

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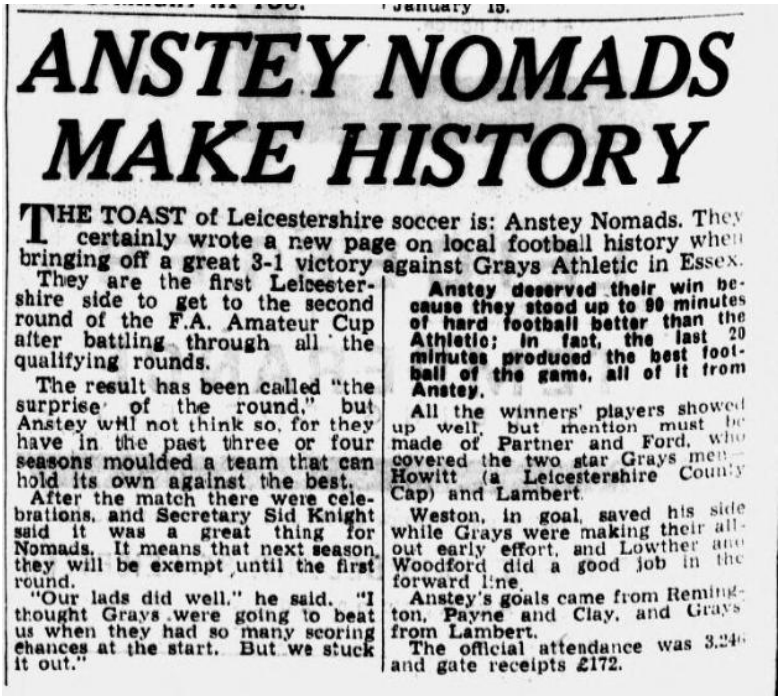
Anstey had molded together a strong side – a team without any individual stars, but an effective combination. The same team played in almost all of the cup matches. Johnnie Weston, a young and agile goalkeeper; right back Geoge Preston who had played several times for Leicestershire XI; Ken Palmer, left back, a strong vigorous player. At right back, Jack Cave a constructive player with a powerful shot. Centre half Ron Ford, the old man of the team, who used his head to save his legs; left-half Danny Orme, another County XI player and a rugged ninety minute

man. Of the forwards, right winger and baby of the team, Ralph Lowther, a 17 year old Leicester University student, and a fast winger who had an eye for an opening. Inside right Denis Remington was a live-wire goal scorer, and at centre forward 'digger' Clay was a real danger in front of goal. Inside left Freddy Woodford was the brains of the forward line, and left winger Jeff Payne was another County XI player with a shot like a rocket,

There was much excitement on hearing that the Nomads were drawn against Grays Athletic in the first round. Founded in 1906 Grays were four times winners of the Essex Senior Cup, twice winners of both the Corinthians League and Memorial Shield. Anstey Nomads Supporters Club arranged fr an Anstey Special from London Road train station at 0900 to take 300 supporters to Grays Athletic. Town coaches were also booked, and numerous cars made the journey down to Essex on the last Saturday before Christmas. As a thoughtful gesture the Supporters Club supplied train and stand tickets to old age pensioners for free. The exploits of the eleven men from the Leicestershire village attracted the attention of the national press. Anstey's giant killing exploits in Essex were due to the opportunism of their forwards and a defence which refused to panic, especially in the first quarter, when Grays Athletic had all the play. Preston and Partner defended splendidly, and Weston was sound in goal. The Nomads' three goals scored by Remington, Payne and Clay were all solo efforts. Lambert got Gray's only goal, a header from a corner. Anstey created a Leicestershire amateur football record by reaching the second round.



January 15.

ANSTEY NOMADS MAKE HISTORY

THE TOAST of Leicestershire soccer is: Anstey Nomads. They certainly wrote a new page on local football history when bringing off a great 3-1 victory against Grays Athletic in Essex.

They are the first Leicestershire side to get to the second round of the F.A. Amateur Cup after battling through all the qualifying rounds.

The result has been called "the surprise of the round," but Anstey will not think so, for they have in the past three or four seasons moulded a team that can hold its own against the best.

After the match there were celebrations, and Secretary Sid Knight said it was a great thing for Nomads. It means that next season, they will be exempt until the first round.

"Our lads did well," he said. "I thought Grays were going to beat us when they had so many scoring chances at the start. But we stuck it out."

Anstey deserved their win because they stood up to 90 minutes of hard football better than the Athletic; in fact, the last 20 minutes produced the best football of the game, all of it from Anstey.

All the winners' players showed up well, but mention must be made of Partner and Ford, who covered the two star Grays men—Howitt (a Leicestershire County Cap) and Lambert.

Weston, in goal, saved his side while Grays were making their all-out early effort, and Lowther and Woodford did a good job in the forward line.

Anstey's goals came from Remington, Payne and Clay, and Grays from Lambert.

The official attendance was 3,246 and gate receipts £172.

Former England Young International Reg Warner, who left the Nomads for Leicester City in 1949, joined Mansfield Town in March 1955.

Nomads reached the Coalville Charity Cup final for the first time in April 1955 where they were beaten 4-1 by Leicester City 'A', on Whitwick Colliery's ground. There was no score in the first half, when Anstey played skilful football, but missed chances. After half-time with centre forward Preston injured and a passenger on the right wing, Anstey were soon in trouble. Burbeck put the City ahead and Howard Riley increased their lead with two more goals after brilliant combined work by the forwards. Dunne crashed hoe a fourth from a long Burbeck cross. A breakaway enabled Lowther to score for Anstey towards the end. About 2,000 people watched the game, paying over £82 in gate receipts. Jack Froggatt, Leicester City's captain presented the trophy to Beeby, Leicester City 'A captain. Two weeks later, the Nomads, who held the distinction of being the only victors over Leicester City 'A' in the Senior League this season, faced the City youngsters in the semi-finals of the Senor Cup on 5 March on Cropston Road. Unfortunately, Anstey could not cope with City's fire power and lost 4-1.

When volunteers for the Anstey Nomads Supporters' Club committee were asked for at a special meeting attended by just twenty-two people at the end of June, only three were forthcoming. As a consequence, it was then proposed and seconded that the club be disbanded and the assets,

which included a stand and canteen on the ground, and the cash in the hand of over £190 be handed over to the mother club, Anstey Nomads. In the seven years of its existence, the Supporters Club raised sufficient money to build a stand and equip a first-class canteen as well as providing transport for away games.

Anstey Nomads and Stamford Town were elected to the Central Alliance League at the end of the 1954-55 season. The Central Alliance, founded in 1911, was re-established with in 1947 with fourteen clubs. By 1950 it had expanded to the extent that a second division was added. A third division was added in 1956, with Division One split into North and South sections, above Division Two. This system remained in place until 1961 when several clubs moved to the reformed Midland League, and the league reverted to two divisions, a Premier Division and Division One. The following season Division One was divided into A and B sections. However, the two were combined for the 1963–64 season. The league lost all but four of its Premier Division clubs to the new East Midlands Regional League in 1967. The two leagues subsequently merged to form the Midlands Regional Alliance in 1985.

~1955-56~

The Nomads won their opening Central Alliance fixture against British Ropes, and suffered just three defeats, against Langwith, Grantham Town Reserves and Ransome & Marles in the opening dozen League games. After a winless 6 weeks, they went on to win the next ten consecutive games in all competitions, before yet again losing a string of games, eventually finishing mid-table, a respectable position in their first season.

Ilkeston, champions of the Central Alliance for the previous four seasons visited Cropston Road in October. The visitors were 4-0 up after 30 mins. Jack Marsh registered his first hat-trick for Ilkeston and Ledger scored his 100th goal for the club. Anstey managed to claw a couple of goals back, eventually losing 4-2, to the team that would finish in second place. The Grange Park pitch was like a skating rink for the League game with Long Eaton Town. Three goals were scored in the opening 4 mins, the home team eventually winning 4-2. Ellis scored in his sixth consecutive game for Anstey. At the end of the match the Long Eaton officials frantically searched for their reserve ball, a fairly new one valued at about £5 for more than an hour. Then they gave up. A few days later they received a letter from the Nomads secretary who wrote, “One of our officials put it on our bus by mistake. We’ll keep it for you until we meet on 17 March. “Ellis had scored in each of his last six games for Anstey.

Anstey were drawn against Eastwood Town, of the Nottingham Alliance in the final qualifying round of the Amateur Cup. They were exempt until this round owing to their previous record in the competition. The tie at Cropston ended in a goal-less draw. During the first period the home team bombarded Eastwood’s goal and just before the interval no less than four Nomads forwards in turn had shots blocked before a clearance was made. During the fading minutes of the replay Remington equalised for the Nomads amidst great excitement, taking the tie into extra time. Geoff Lawson in the opening 5 minutes of extra time scored the decisive goal which sent Eastwood through to the first round where they were drawn against Durham-based Shildon. Quorn beat Anstey in the first round of the Leicestershire Senior Cup after a replay and also suffered an early elimination from the Coalville Charty Cu by Midland Woodworkers.

~1956-57~

A flood of new applications to the Central Alliance resulted in the first division being divided into north and south sections with sixteen in each. Anstey Nomads and Brush Sports were both

placed in the southern section. Newcomers included Rothwell Town, who were at one time in the Leicestershire Senior League.

After winning their opening fixture, Nomads made four signings– Les Matts, left back or inside left; Pete Wool, inside left, 'Digger' Clay, centre forward; and Dennis Remington return to the club after missing a large part of last season. Clay had recovered from a cartilage operation, and Remington was fit after chest trouble.

Weston, Nomads goalkeeper broke a finger of his right hand during a goal mouth tussle in the home match with Notts County in September. Anstey played majority of the game as a result with 10 men, managing to earn a point. In the next game, they suffered their first loss against Kettering at home, despite scoring direct from the kick-off.

Anstey were the only amateur team in the league, in stark contrast to Skegness Town who were almost full-time professionals. The Skegness team that faced Anstey at Cropston Road in early December included Moody – ex-Arsenal and Peterborough full-back, MacFarlane, former Dumbarton wing half; inside forward Ralph Boulton, from Goole; Freddie Martin who had previously played for Forest, Willie Wardle once with Birmingham, Barnsley and Blackpool, and Jackie Boden who scored nearly 80 goals last season. Given the difference in experience its perhaps not surprising that the amateur team were well beaten, 1-7.

Anstey's first away win of the season was not until the week before Christmas at Wellingborough. The result was more notable given that Payne injured his shoulder early on, and they played one man down for most of the match. A fine second half hat-trick, scored in just 10 mins, by Peter Hankin gave Potton United a deserved win over Anstey in March and lifted them from the bottom of the table.

"Ninety minutes squelching for just one point" was the match report headline following the 5-5 draw against Long Eaton at home. Played in an 'absolute quagmire,' Anstey who led 2-0 after 10 mins, equalised with 2 minutes remaining. United disputed the goal stating that the ball did not cross the goal line after hitting the crossbar. The referee who was not up with the play gave the goal.

More than four hundred inhabitants of Anstey watched the FA Cup Final in Skegness. They had travelled to the bracing Lincolnshire coast to watch the Nomads play their final game of the season with Skegness Town, Central Alliance champions, on Cup final evening. The game ended 3-1 in favour of the home team. Club secretary Sid Knight had arranged for them to watch the game on TVs in local hotels. The Nomads finished an unmemorable league campaign in 10th place.

For the third time in the FA Amateur Cup, Anstey were drawn against Smethwick Town at Cropston Road in September. Unfortunately, Anstey could not get an equaliser. Smethwick took the lead with a left wing move finishing with Blackwell centering for Jessop to score from three yards. The game opened with fast end to end football, with neither side having an advantage. Time after time a goal looked certain only for a defender to put out a foot to divert the ball.

Yet again the Nomads suffered an early exit from the Senior Cup, losing 5-3 to Burgess Products in the second round.

The club paid for a roadside seat on Bradgate Road for the benefit of old age pensioners attending the village post office.

In November the *Leicester Chronicle* published "**Operation Tea Up – A Welcome Cuppa For the Nomads"**

Figure 3 Tea is being prepared for Anstey Nomads team and supporters – by the supporters. Left to right are Mrs. Knight (at tea urn), Mrs. Smart, Mrs. Kenney and Mrs. Ford.

It's Saturday afternoon. The half time whistle sounds and on Cropston Road, focal point for many supporters of Anstey Nomads Football Club, is the canteen, enticing with its promise of a steaming cup of tea.

Who is responsible for the welcome cuppa? How is operation "Tea-up" carried out?
Setting a lofty standard are half a dozen voluntary helpers, all keen supporters of the club. These ladies run the canteen inherited from the former supporters club under the kindly eye of Mr. Cliff Smart, who also gives his services in the interest of the club. He it is who sees that water heaters are in order, that stocks of minerals, biscuits, and crisps are adequate. And he it is who runs backwards and forwards, keeping the ladies posted with the score.

Profits from the teas and on a busy afternoon they may be close to £6 – all go to swell club funds.

Talking to these helpers, the "backroom girls" of the club, I soon discovered how much they enjoy the work and how they look forward to Saturday afternoons.

There's cheerful Mrs. R Knight, honorary secretary's wife, who presides over the sizeable urn that provides the comforting brew- eight gallons in ten minutes.

There's Mrs. K Ford, honorary treasurer's wife, an ardent helper who often ends up by lending a hand with the cleaning out of the pavilion. There's Mrs. C Smart, chairman's wife, who joined the group because she wanted to help her husband. Busy at the deep sink into which gushed boiling water, she told me that her daughter, 12 year old Diane, is a keen supporter of the club and follows the first team on away matches.

Mrs. Kenney too is a regular helper; she likes to be around because her husband and son are ardent ‘fans’. Watching her deftly piling cups and saucers I asked about breakages, “very few indeed” she told me.

Interesting to hear that the cup of tea has taken the place of the customary slice of lemon as a half-time refresher for players. The boys prefer it, they say.

Sometimes a team ask for snacks, then the canteen ladies roll up their sleeves and cut piles of inviting sandwiches and bring along homemade cakes. In fact, they’re ready for anything and ready to sell other things to make a profit for club funds.

Players like to look spic and span before their “fans” and in Mrs. Knight they had a good friend. Into her electric washing machine go the three teams’ sets of cotton shirts each week. She copes with the mending too. Players get through dozens of wool and nylon stockings in a season. Holes? Big ones only when stockings get kicked with boots, she reports.

And in the summer, what do the ladies of the canteen do without their weekly date? “We rest to get our strength up for next season,” they say smiling.

~1957-58~

A challenging season for the Nomads, the county’s most travelled amateur team. Their first home victory did not come until November when they beat Kettering Town 3-1. All the goals were scored in the last 20 mins. Kettering scored first and held the lead for just 5 mins.

Defending champions Skegness Town, who had an income from the Supporters Club and other sources of more than £6,000 slaughtered the Nomads twice. Anstey lost 6-2 at home on the last day of August. The visitors team studded with ex-Football League players was too much for all-amateur Nomads. Sharp-shooter Jack Bowden scored four times for Skegness. But the outstanding player of the match was former Grimsby Town half-back Paddy Johnstone, who played a cool, tactical, and effortless game at centre-half. The Cropston Road pitch was in an extremely poor state, with the grass not having been cut. Much worse was to come. Five weeks later at Burgh Road, Skegness took the lead after just 2 minutes, leading 3-0 at the interval and then netted four times in a blistering 10 min spell in the second half on their way to inflicting a humiliating 10-0 defeat of the Leicestershire side. To make matters worse one of the ten was down to Nomads centre-half Freer, put through his own goal. Amazingly Anstey were lucky the score was not much higher, as Skegness missed ‘dozens of chances.” Two weeks earlier the Nomads were on the winning side of shock result, beating Brush Engineering 4-3 at home. Prior to this match, Brush were top of the league, with a 100% league and cup record.

Anstey lost by the odd goal in nine in an exciting end to end encounter against Kings Lynn Reserves at Cropston Road a few days before Christmas. With 10 mins remaining Lynn were leading 3-1 on a ‘glue pot’ of a pitch. Then a misunderstanding between two defenders brought Anstey their second goal. Shortly afterwards the ball was kicked against Heagren, and the referee awarded a penalty for hands which was converted to bring the scores level at 3-3. Lynn scored the winning goal in the last minute.

On a more lighthearted note, the Nomads bus driver took several wrong turnings on the way to Potton United in Bedfordshire, delaying kick-off by 30 minutes. Payne scored twice in a rare away win.

A 2-1 home win against Grantham Reserves ensured at Anstey would not finish in the bottom two positions.

ANSTEY NOMADS FOOTBALL CLUB

MEMBERS' FOOTBALL COMPETITION

COMPETITION COMMITTEE

Chairman: C. SMART, 12 Highfield St., Anstey
Hon. Organising Sec.: E. JACKSON, 78 Cropston Rd., Anstey
Hon Treasurer: K. FORD, 43 Gladstone St., Anstey
Hon. Auditor: H. WIDDOWSON, 36 Groby Rd., Anstey
S. CRISP, 251 Link Rd., Anstey
W. BOYES, 2 Leicester Rd., Anstey

Week No. 15 — **List of Teams for Saturday, December 14th, 1957**

01	Aston Villa	11	Leicester City	21	Bolton W.
02	West Ham Utd.	12	Ipswich Town	22	Exeter
03	Everton	13	Manchester Utd.	23	Blackburn R.
04	Notts. County	14	Aldershot	24	Derby County
05	Plymouth A.	15	Newport Co.	25	Luton Town
06	Arsenal	16	Fulham	26	Millwall
07	Sheffield Utd.	17	Blackpool	27	Gillingham
08	Port Vale	18	Brighton	28	Bristol Rovers
09	Sunderland	19	Wolverhampton	29	Lincoln City
10	Barnsley	20	Swansea Town	30	Leeds Utd.

Results for Saturday, December 7th, 1957 — **Members Coding 3964**

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Gross Dividend	198 4 0	
Less Expenses Fund (Printing Only)	6 11 3	191 12 9
Anstey Nomads F.C. 25% Nett Proceeds		47 18 3
Nett Dividend		143 14 6

1st Dividend (18 Goals) 50% Nett Dividend £71/17/2
(2 Winners each receive £35 18 7)

CODE		AGENT
11 13 17	Mr. Beech, 9 Glendale Avenue, Glenfield	12
11 17 30	A. Gamble, South Walk, Ratby	40

2nd Dividend (14 Goals Against) 30% Nett Dividend £43/2/2
(1 Winner receives £43 2 2)

02 19 23	A. Rushin 47 Forest Gate, Anstey	37

3rd Dividend (Lowest Aggregate 3 Goals) 20% Nett Dividend £28/15/2
(7 Winners each receive £4 2 2)

04 12 24	F. Stevenson, 185 Syston Street, Leicester	25
06 12 24	H. Withers, 3 Crystal Street, Leicester	11
07 12 24	Mrs. J. Brewin, 104 Roydene Crescent, Leicester	6
10 12 24	J. Woodbine, 81 Forest Gate, Anstey	28
12 16 24	G. Ballard, 36 Rosebery Road, Anstey	34
12 24 25	T. Gulson, Station Road, Cropston	15
12 24 28	B. Arnison, 2. Grasmere Street, Leicester	9

Audited and certified correct December 7th, 1957 — H. Widdowson, 36 Groby Road, Anstey, Leicester

PROGRESS REPORT

Anstey Nomads F.C., November 30th, 1957	£574 15 10
Proceeds December 7th, 1957	£47 18 3—622 14 1

Cropston Road Ground — **Saturday, December 14th, 1957**

Kick-off 2-15 p.m. — **CENTRAL ALLIANCE**

Nomads v Derby County 'A'

NOTICE TO MEMBERS—In order to give all voluntary workers a break during the Christmas holidays it has been decided to suspend the Football Competition for one week, namely on Saturday, 28th December, 1957. E. Jackson, Hon. Org. Secretary

Published by the Anstey Nomads Football Club
Printed by The Suburban Press Ltd., Anstey, Leicester

Nomads received a walk over in the extra preliminary round of the FA Amateur Cup when the Market Harborough side, Dainite Sport, withdrew, and arranged a Central Alliance League Cup match instead with Nottingham Forest 'A' as opponents. They travelled to Sutton Coldfield to meet Paget Rangers in the first qualifying round, where they were outclassed, losing 4-1.

Centre half Dennis Freer was the hero of Anstey Nomads victory over Whitwick that took them to the final of the Leicestershire Challenge Cup. They were invited to take part in the competition for the first time and more than justified the honour by knocking out Whitwick and, in an earlier round, another Birmingham league club, semi-professional Hinckley Athletic. Whitwick dominated most of the first half and took a deserved lead in the 12 minutes through Brian Middleton. The Nomads steadied themselves however, and Freer equalised midway through the second half. Both teams felt the effects of a grueling game on mud-covered pitch in extra time, and it was not until the end that the winning goal came, Freer scoring again this time from the penalty spot. Making an impressive debut in the Anstey attack was inside left Tony Power, captain of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment football team, and a former Syston St Peter's player. Nomads win enhanced the Alliance Leage's prestige in the county. Members of the League provided the winners of the Northants Senior Cup in '57 and had won the Derbyshire Senior Cup ever since the competition reorganised five years in '52 and had won the Notts Senior Cup on several occasions since the end of WWII. Anstey's opponents in the final at Filbert Street were Leicester City Reserves, holders of the Leicestershire FA Challenge Cup since the competition began in 1950-51. The following side represented the Nomads: Newball; Preston, Spencer, Black, Freer, Ball; Draper, Seale, Willett, Fothergill, Payne. Leicester, who humiliated the Nomads 9-0 to claim their seventh successive win, scored in the first minute from a cunning shot by Moran, and Anstey were four down at half-time. Just two minutes into the second period, Anstey were down to ten men after inside right Seale retired after being injured in a tackle.

In the first round of the Central Alliance Cup, the South Section teams were drawn against North Section. This was decided on a home and away basis, with aggregate goals on the two legs deciding the tie. In subsequent rounds was decided on the ordinary principle with matches played on the ground of the club first drawn. Nomads who broke new ground with a visit to Wilmorton, winning 7-3 on aggregate, were knocked out in the second round by Sutton United, who remained unbeaten all season.

Three goals without reply gave the Nomads their first Coalville Charity Cup. The final against Oadby Town which kicked off at 10.30 on the Hastings Arms ground, Ibstock on Easter Tuesday, was a game of missed chances. Anstey, who held the upper hand throughout the game were the biggest offenders with both Smart and Ball shooting wide of an open goal in the first period. Half-time arrived with no score. Shortly after the restart Ball gave Anstey the lead. Four minutes later, Ball headed home from a corner kick, and inside left Wood netted the third.

Figure 4 Anstey Nomads (!957-58) Back row (i-r) Sid Smith (trainer), John Willamson, Ken Partner, Roy Newbold, John Ball, George Preston, John Siddon .Front row - Pete Wood, Dennis Freer, W 'Skip' Spencer, Wally Capell

The Reserve team were among the major contenders for promotion from Senior League Division 2 but dropped valuable points with several indifferent displays and slipped out of the race. In one of the last home games of the season against Lutterworth Town they swept to a lead of 5-1 after 20 minutes and won 10-4.

Club President J G Walker at the AGM reported a balance of £1,081, to be used for ground improvements. The three teams all had satisfactory seasons and would again play in the Central Alliance, Senior League and City League. After six years as secretary, Mr. Sid Knight resigned, with Ken Ford, the treasurer elected to fill the dual offices.

~1958-59~

The season started poorly for the Nomads, going three down within the first 32 minutes of the new season away at Langwith Miners Welfare, eventually losing the game 5-2. The highlight of the opening few weeks were two draws – the first against Nuneaton Borough Reserves marked the debut of 18-year-old goalkeeper Desmond Bates, who kept a clean sheet, saving at least five shots that could have resulted in goals and the second a few days later against Creswell Colliery. Nomads had to wait until mid-November to claim their first two points. The Cropston Road pitch was waterlogged for most of December, “passes “intended to travel 15 yards were stopping after only two.” “Referee W Jones-Roberts of Tamworth declared the pitch playable after a pre-match

inspection for the game against Heanor Town two days after Christmas, but as the game progressed it became more of a battle for the survival of the fittest in the mud rather than a test of football skill. Heanor nevertheless coped better with the playing conditions, winning 3-0.
The League campaign ended as it started with a heavy defeat, away at Belper. The League Champions Belper's 9-0 destruction of the Nomads was their eighth consecutive victory: scoring twenty-one goals in four matches in 8 days. Anstey, who conceded 110 goals finishing five points more than bottom placed Langwith Miners Welfare, were only able to field four of their regular players. "The game was even more one-sided than the score suggests."

The Nomads retained the Coalville Charity Cup. Their 14-0 semi-final win over Leicestershire Senior League Desford Colliery wrote them into the Coalville Chairity Cup records with the third highest recorded score in the history of the competition. Coalville and District amateur League side Nailstone Miners Welfare did themselves proud as they held Anstey Nomads at bay for three quarters of the final played at the Hastings Arms ground, Ibstock on Tuesday 31 March. The football was fast and Nailstone looked capable of upsetting the form book. Two minutes before the interval Anstey took the lead against the run of play through Beesley. Nailstone got an equaliser through J Smith who netted from a goalmouth scramble and then took the lead through Hawkes. A minute later Anstey equalised through Fairweather and Beesley secured a 3-2 lead, who headed in a lovely cross from Capell. Anstey took advantage of the rapidly tiring Nailstone, scoring their fourth goal when Siddons, tried a lob from way outside the penalty area. Lewis advanced too far from his goal and missed the ball and was unable to recover and prevent it hitting the back of the net. Nomads made it safe with their fifth and final goal from Beesley.

After overcoming Lutterworth Town away and St Peter's after extra time, the Nomads Reserves were beaten by Holwell Works 3-2 in the third round of the Senior Cup.

Chief guest at Anstey Nomads annual dinner at the Bell Hotel, Humberstone Gate, Leicester in June was Mr. B S Shaw, secretary of the Centra Alliance. Proposing "Anstey Nomads," Mr. Shaw said they symbolised amateur football, which he thought was more competitive than professional football. "The Central Alliance are grateful to Anstey for their move from the northern to southern section. It was also announced that the club's centre-half Dennis Freer, who had represented Leicestershire in the Amateur championship, would be playing in the third team to help the younger players.

Harry Brown, the local sports correspondent wrote, "WITH THEM [ANSTEY] THE GAME REALLY IS THE THING … AS EVIDENCED BY THOSE"OUT OF THE VILLAGE" BOYS IN THE SIDE WHO PAY THEIR OWN BUS FARES EVERY WEEK, AND REFUSE PAYMENT FROM THEM FOR THE CLUB."

It was decided at the end of the season to launch a Premier Division of the Central Alliance in 1960-61. Membership would be on a voluntary basis. A proposal that the top eight of each senior division at the end of 1950-60 should automatically form it was ejected. Division 1 North and Division 1 South would also continue with promotion and relegation to and from the premier division.

~1959-60~

Anstey Nomads were transferred from Division 1 North to Division 1 South together with Nuneaton Borough Reserves. Grantham, who resigned from the Midland League, became members of Division 1 South. Leicestershire's other club, Brush Sports Reserves, resigned.

Another disappointing season, Anstey finished one off the bottom for the second consecutive season, scoring just 21 times in 34 games. There were few highlights, one being Nomad's first away win against Corby Town, that lifted them to fifth from the bottom. Anstey were leading 4-0 after 73 minutes but nearly dropped a point as the home team scored three times in the last 15 minutes. The best performance was saved to the final League game of the season, a 4-3 victory at home against St Neots, "' brilliant display of all-action football.... both teams receiving an ovation at the end of ninety minutes football..."

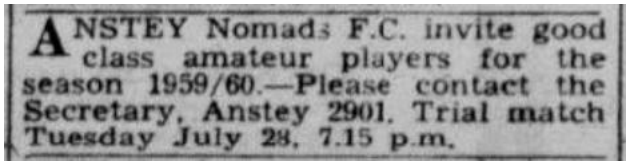

ANSTEY Nomads F.C. invite good class amateur players for the season 1959/60.—Please contact the Secretary, Anstey 2901. Trial match Tuesday July 28, 7.15 p.m.

Figure 5 Leicester Daily Mercury - Friday 17 July 1959

After beating Enderby Town at George Street in the quarter finals they failed in their attempt to win the Coalville Charity Cup for a third consecutive season when they were beaten 2-0 by Whitwick Colliery in the semi-final.

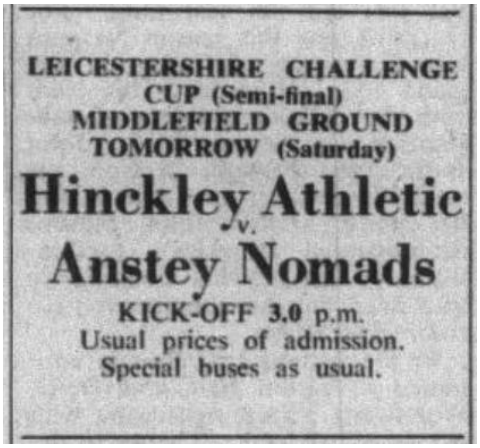

LEICESTERSHIRE CHALLENGE CUP (Semi-final)
MIDDLEFIELD GROUND
TOMORROW (Saturday)
Hinckley Athletic
v.
Anstey Nomads
KICK-OFF 3.0 p.m.
Usual prices of admission.
Special buses as usual.

Figure 6 Hinckley Times – 1 April 1960

Anstey were outclassed in every department as Hinckley put seven goals past Anstey in the semi-final of the invitation only Leicestershire Challenge Cup and might easily have scores several more.

Cropston Road staged the LFA Youth Cup final between Blaby and RD Boys' Club and Midland Woodworkers Juniors.

A clause was inserted into the deeds of their Cropston Road ground which debarred anything but amateur sports to be played on it.

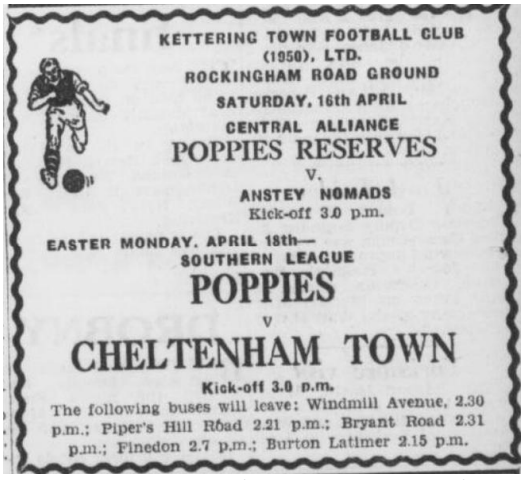

KETTERING TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB (1950), LTD.
ROCKINGHAM ROAD GROUND
SATURDAY, 16th APRIL
CENTRAL ALLIANCE
POPPIES RESERVES
v.
ANSTEY NOMADS
Kick-off 3.0 p.m.
EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 18th—
SOUTHERN LEAGUE
POPPIES
v
CHELTENHAM TOWN
Kick-off 3.0 p.m.
The following buses will leave: Windmill Avenue, 2.30 p.m.; Piper's Hill Road 2.21 p.m.; Bryant Road 2.31 p.m.; Finedon 2.7 p.m.; Burton Latimer 2.15 p.m.

Figure 7 Peterborough Evening Telegraph - 14 April 1960

NO SHAMATEURISM AT ANSTEY NOMADS CLUB

IN this hard-headed world anyone who does something for nothing is too often looked on as a crank. Too many of us put the hard currency of L.S.D. before principle.

IT'S MY OPINION —HARRY BROWN

And, let's face it, this is especially true in sport. Where clubs big and small in all shades of sporting activity, have brought to a fine art the technique of dropping extra cash into the pocket of a performer they want.

Extra cash that is paid illegally.

WHICH IS WHY, LAST NIGHT, I WAS SO DELIGHTED TO BE AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF ANSTEY NOMADS F.C.—A REAL TRUE-BLUE SOCCER CLUB OF LEICESTERSHIRE WHERE AMATEURISM IS NOT A SUSPECT WORD.

There are many amateur clubs in this county. None, I suspect, where the word means more.

Let me let you into the secret given me after the speeches by club president J. G. Walker.

Amateur Only

Into the deeds of their Cropston Road ground the Anstey club have inserted a clause which debars anything but amateur sport to be played on it.

"We have ensured that neither our club nor any other will ever play professionally there," he told me.

That's the way of it at Anstey—and all the officials make no bones about it that their strict attitude towards under-the-counter cash shots so often means losing young stars and players of real ability who, though not wishing to sign professionally, still believe that the extra £ note or two should find its way into their boots.

"Of course we are struggling," Mr. Walker told me. "But as the small professional clubs struggle to keep their heads above water it's obvious the red light is shining brightly.

'Time Is Coming'

"The time is coming when shoals of them will have to turn amateur. There is no money in the game today except that which comes from competitions—and this just can't go on for ever."

Meanwhile Anstey find the youngsters. And what happens?

The President told the dinner: "Let us hope we can keep them from the League clubs who flock to our matches."

I was told of one 18-year-old who has had trials in the past few weeks with Spurs and with Sheffield Wednesday among others. More than one youngster has left in the past few months

"THAT'S PROGRESS", MR. WALKER SIGHED, "BUT WHEN I SEE SO MANY OF THEM THROWN ON THE SCRAP HEAP I WONDER JUST HOW MUCH HEART THERE IS IN THE PROFESSIONAL SPHERE."

An Inspiration

The spirit of Anstey is typified by this eager man who is, perhaps, the most active soccer club president in the county.

And by men like skipper George Preston, centre half and captain of the county team, whom L.F.A. secretary Jack Evans described as "an inspiration wherever he goes."

George is nearing veteran stage now, but listen to the example he gives to the rising generations.

President Walker told the assembly: "The way George trains for each game amazes us. And there's the way he looks after himself. His boots are polished not only on the uppers, but underneath too: he always looks immaculate.

"If a man is tidy in these little things then he is tidy on the field of play too."

I think this tribute to one of the county's leading amateur players typifies the county's leading amateur club too.

Long may they play the game .... for the game.

WIGSTON CRICKET CUP DRAW

Fifteen teams, including last year's finalists, Leicester Globetrotters and Leicester Town, have accepted invitations to compete for the Wigston Challenge Cricket Cup. The draw is as follows:—

First round: A—Blaby v. Fleckney. B—Leicester Town v. South Wigston Mutual. C—Leicester Globetrotters v. Park Vale. D—Bentleys Engineering v. Wigston C.C. E—Western Mutual v. St. Peter's Highfields. F—Old Wyggestonians v. Wigston Congs. G—Electricity Sports v. County Offices. H—Oadby (bye).

Quarter-finals: J—Winners of G

Figure 8 Leicester Daily Mercury - Saturday 14 May 1960

Mrs. F. Is No Football Widow

WHAT'S IT LIKE being the wife of a footballer? Mrs. T. Freer, 2, Cartwright Drive, Oadby, knows the answer. Her husband is captain of Anstey Nomads' reserve team, and football plays a big part in her life.

But there's nothing of the "football widow" about cheerful Mrs. Freer, who is really interested in the game. Watching this sport is real enjoyment to her. She has never done it from a sense of duty. She follows the fortunes of the club with zest and enthusiasm.

Regular Spectator Both At Home And Away

She follows them literally. For with the children Averil (13), Elaine, who is seven and two-year-old Robert, she is a regular spectator at home and away matches. Even when the team travel to Skegness or near by the Freer family go too. Indeed such is their keenness that Robert became a supporter at three weeks old. He was taken to Hinckley in his portable cot, well wrapped up and supported with a flask—his first away match, and since then he's never looked back. He wears his football boots with a purposeful air and owns his own special football.

It's just the same in the summer when Mr. Freer is training. The family follow in his wake to watch practice matches.

Some footballers' wives have problems of diet to cope with. Not so Mrs. Freer, whose husband makes only one concession in this line and that is to dispense with a cooked meal before a match and substitute sandwiches.

Then there's the social side of the game which has its appeal. There's camaraderie among footballers' wives the same as among the members of a team. And as for conversation, there's never any shortage of topics in the Freer household. "At week ends it's all football," says Mrs. Freer. Husband and wife leave not a stone unturned as they discuss the finer points of the game and enjoy it.

Two-year-old Robert—a soccer 'supporter' at three weeks!

Anthony Smith, Pete

Figure 9 Leicester Chronicle – 5 December 1959

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Slide 4: 1947-48: Establishing the Nomads Identity

- Headline: 1947-48: Solidifying the Club & Player Movement
- Body:
  - New Name, New Structure: The club officially became Anstey Nomads, running three teams: Seniors, Reserves, and Colts.
  - Financials: Paid £8 4s 0d in subscriptions and entrance fees to various leagues and cups (LFA, Senior League, City League, Senior Cup, Coalville Cup, etc.).
  - Player Transfers:
    - Signed Bob Yates, a 22-year-old inside left from the Falkland Isles, who turned down Leicester City!
    - Goalkeeper Rawlings left for Ibstock.
    - Stanley Weston (21), who played two seasons for Nomads, signed amateur forms for West Bromwich Albion!
    - Goalkeeper Len Bright transferred to South End.
  - League Performance: Finished a strong fourth place.
  - Goal-Fest: Started the season with a 9-2 demolition of Holwell Sports, with Bill Spencer netting 6 goals (including two in the first three minutes!).
  - Record Scorer: Albert Mee scored 8 goals in a 12-1 thrashing of Coalville Town in January 1948.
  - Local Record: Anstey Nomads 'A' clinched the City League (Division 5) championship, with 15-year-old Alan Gunby scoring four goals direct from corner kicks – a local record!
  - Community Support: A large crowd watched Anstey British Legion win the British Legion Charity Cup at Cropston Road, proceeds aiding a former player who lost a hand in an accident.
  - Financial Report: A positive £174 7s 7d balance reported at the AGM.
  - Ground Improvements: The Cropston Road pitch was leveled, re-turfed, and over 100 tons of soil laid. Plans for a new pavilion and dressing rooms were passed.
- Visual: A photo of the old Cropston Road ground, or a newspaper clipping from the period.

Slide 5: 1948-49: Growth, Injuries, and Ambition

- Headline: 1948-49: Talent, Tribulations, and Big Ambitions
- Body:
  - Player Retention & New Signings: Most players re-signed, joined by newcomers like goalkeeper Jeff Wilkinson (guest player for York City during the war), C Pawley (ex-Reading), and local talents.
  - Notable Newcomers: Fred Woodford (ex-City youth), Reg Turner (six-feet left winger).
  - Captaincy: Longest-serving player Les Dalby captained the Senior League XI.

o Pro Offers: Three players received offers from professional clubs; Jeff Wilkinson signed for Nuneaton Borough. Goalkeeper Roy Newball and winger Ted Farmer remained at Anstey.
o Bob Brown's Prowess: Prolific goal scorer Bob Brown netted 14 goals in just 5 matches for the Reserves!
o Injury Toll:
 Trainer Reg Wootten needed hospital treatment after being struck by the ball.
 Goalkeeper Roy Newball (trial with Wolves) suffered a broken ankle.
o Ex-City Coach: Sam Raynor, the ex-Leicester City player, was appointed official club coach.
o Senior Cup Thriller: A dramatic 5-4 loss to Symington's in a Senior Cup replay, after being 3 goals down and conceding a winning penalty late on.
o Bizarre Abandonment: A City League match at Narborough was abandoned after a spectator ran on and saved Anstey's penalty! (Score was 6-6 after 91 minutes).
o Financial Health: Strong financial position with a £105 4s 5d surplus and £347 1s 7d in the bank.
o Supporters Club Progress: Reported an £86 balance and planned to erect a small stand.
• Visual: A vintage image of a crowd at a local football match, or a photo of an early football stand.

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Slide 6: 1949-50: A New Era, A New Stand
• Headline: 1949-50: The Stand is Built!
• Body:
o Milestone: After many hours of volunteer work, the Supporters Club stand on the Sheepwash Lane side of the ground was completed – providing shelter for spectators for the first time! (See Figure 1).
o Improved Facilities: New hot water system, electric lighting, and even a ray lamp in the pavilion.
o Player Drain: The club lost 16 players from the previous season, including Les Matts, George Preston, and Roy Newball (who turned professional for Corby Town).
o Poaching Problem: The LFA even formed a committee to investigate the problem of larger clubs "poaching" star amateur players.
o Replacements & Team Spirit: Two centre forwards (Albert Mee, Den Burditt) returned, and nearly 60 players signed up. Ken Matts was appointed captain.
o Rocky Start: The senior team began with a shocking 10-1 defeat away at Coalville, having conceded 17 goals in the first three games.
o Revenge & Recovery: Bizarrely, just seven days later, they beat Coalville 5-3 at home!
o Injuries Mount: Ron Ford sustained yet another injury, a broken leg, adding to a long list of previous injuries (broken collar bone, ankle, wrist, cartilage operation, concussion!).
o Rising Star: Malcolm Bramley (16), on debut for the reserves, scored 5 goals, then a hat-trick on his senior debut. He signed professional forms for Derby County after just 4 appearances and 10 goals in December 1949!
o Coalville Charity Cup: Reached the semi-finals, losing to Nuneaton Borough.
o Youth Focus: Hon. Secretary Cyril Ford deliberately relegated the 'A' team to Division 8 to ensure they played against teenagers, signing 14 players under 18.
o Thoughtful Gesture: The Supporters Club paid for old age pensioners' admission to a Senior Cup tie when free entry wasn't possible.
o Financial Dip: The club's balance dipped to £56 14s 6d due to decreased gate receipts, despite the Supporters Club contributing £98 7s 8d towards the stand.