Leicester City Landlords

Throughout the history of the professional game, players have faced the problem of what to do when they hang up their boots. Many Leicester Fosse and Leicester City players took over pubs, several of which have now disappeared. This season we will be rediscovering and revisiting these 'Players' Pubs' and uncovering the stories about them and about the landlords who ran them.

The Player: Ally Brown

Ally Brown a young Scottish Striker came to Filbert Street as 15 year old in 1966. He signed professional forms on his 17th birthday. Just over a year later he made his league debut in dramatic and pressured circumstances.

Following their defeat in the 1969 FA Cup Final Leicester City had to play a backlog of five games in the space of three weeks in a desperate, and ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to avoid relegation.

Ally's debut was in the third of these games. On a Monday evening, in front of a 32000 Filbert Street crowd, he scored twice in a vital 2-1 win. Two days later, with 41000 packed into Filbert Street, he was in the side which drew 1-1 with Everton.

Playing alongside the likes of Andy Lochhead and Rodney Fern, Ally was a vital part of the team which narrowly missed promotion the following season. When he opened the 1970/71 season with a goal at Huddersfield after only 45 seconds, he created an all-time league record for the fastest goal at the start

of a season. He went on to be the Club's top scorer that year. His goal at Bristol City, in the penultimate game of the season, not only secured a 1-0 victory, but also the old Second Division title.

Ally was in the side which beat Liverpool to win the Charity (Community) Shield in August 1971 and was an ever-present for the first 27 games back in the top flight, but then Bloomfield sold him to West Bromwich Albion in an attempt to recoup some of the money spent on bringing Jon Sammels, Keith Weller and Alan Birchenall to Filbert Street.

The Pub: The Cedar Tree, Aldridge

After leaving Leicester City, Ally gravitated towards the West Midlands. He spent nine years at West Bromwich Albion, between 1972 and 1981. He also spent the 1983/84 season at Walsall. Consequently, when he finished his career of nearly 500 games, it was no real surprise that he became a pub landlord in the area. Following his final season (1984/85) at Port Vale he took over the Cedar Tree in Aldridge, near Walsall. By becoming a pub landlord, he was following the same path as his Leicester City teammates Rodney Fern, Lenny Glover, Alan Birchenall, Mike Stringfellow and Andy Lochhead. The Cedar Tree was a functionally designed red brick pub built in the 1960s. Ally then went on to run the Throstles Club at West Brom, before working in a Walsall iron foundry as a warehousman.