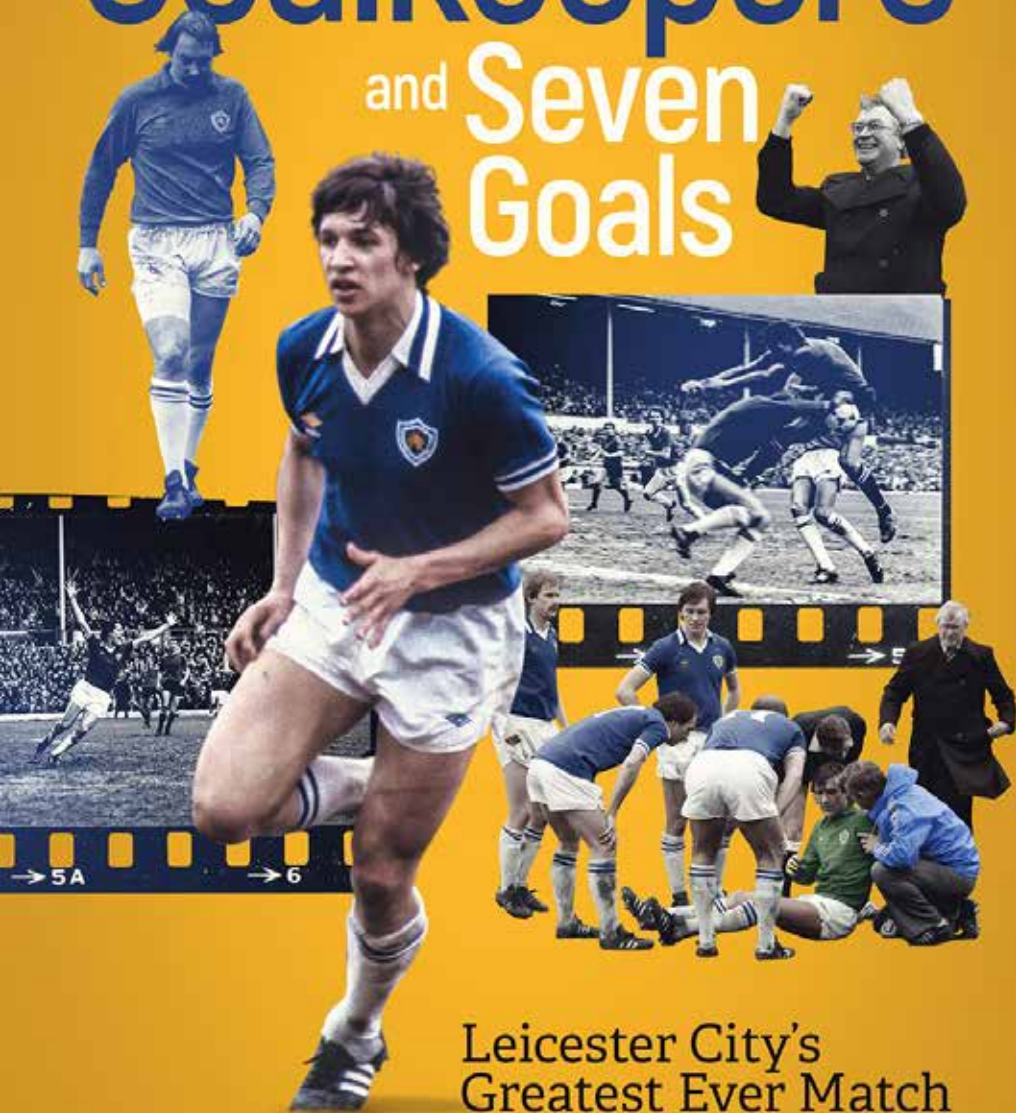


Mark Bishop

# Three Goalkeepers and Seven Goals



Leicester City's  
Greatest Ever Match

Foreword by Jim Melrose

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## FOREWORD BY JIM MELROSE

BORN IN Glasgow, Jim won eight Scotland Under-21 caps and also represented the Scottish League. With Leicester City's Jock Wallace at the managerial helm, Jim Melrose was signed from Partick Thistle after an impressive five seasons and joined a young, exciting Leicester side that had just earned promotion as Second Division champions back to the top flight.

Playing alongside fellow Scot Alan Young up front, Jim's winning goal at Anfield, which ended Liverpool's record of 85 home games undefeated, plus a hat-trick at Norwich had set him on course for a popular stay at Filbert Street, and despite the club's relegation at the end of that first season, Jim had become a popular player with the Leicester fans. At times, he had the role of 'super sub' with the emergence of a young Gary Lineker. And 'super sub' could not have been more applicable on that day on 6 March 1982 when City took on fellow Second Division side Shrewsbury Town in their FA Cup quarter-final in front of a capacity crowd of nearly 30,000 at a packed Filbert Street. Jim memorably

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came off the bench to famously score twice in what has become known as Leicester City's greatest-ever match.

City changed goalkeepers three times and there was a total of seven goals plus 13 minutes of stoppage time. Jim had spells at Coventry, Celtic (where he made appearances in the Scottish FA Cup Final and Scottish League Cup Final), Wolves (on loan), Manchester City, Charlton, Leeds and Shrewsbury. He retired in 1990, having scored a total of 99 league goals in his successful career. For Jim Melrose, Leicester City has, and always will have, a special place in his heart. Not least for what happened on that amazing day, 6 March 1982.

When I was asked to write the foreword for the book I was delighted.

Firstly, and most importantly, because I know how much meant to the Leicester fans on that day. I had been told that the FA Cup atmospheres at Filbert Street were special; I just didn't realise how special until that day. 30,000 packed into the ground dreaming of going through to the semi-finals. Little did anyone realise it would be an afternoon of such high drama, a day to live on in the memory of all who witnessed this astonishing FA Cup tie.

Secondly, because I was lucky enough to contribute to the excitement on the pitch and play a small part in securing a famous victory. However, I think the star of the day was Alan Young. His acting should have secured him an Oscar for the dramatic portrayal of an injured goalkeeper (only joking, Youngie!). It is without doubt the most dramatic game I ever played in. From the moment Mark Wallington was on the receiving end of a horrendous mid-air tackle, the game changed. Shrewsbury scored two goals, which under normal

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circumstances Mark would have saved. *At this point*, Filbert Street exploded and the drama unfolded on the pitch. Big Jock, Ian MacFarlane and Eddie May were in their element, especially when we equalised with an own goal just before half-time.

The gaffer was all ‘fixed bayonets’, and ‘Big Ian’ and Eddie were ‘stabbing’ the Shrewsbury players going down the tunnel! The dressing room was electric. Little did we know that there was still drama to unfold. Youngie got clattered, Steve went in goal, Youngie miraculously recovered and Steve Lynex came out of goal to immediately cross for me to score the third goal. Eddie Kelly, myself and Gary Lineker combined together and ‘Links’ then put us 4-2 up. Then, near the end, Gary repaid me by sending in a fine cross that I was able to head home for number five. Just brilliant!

When I was a boy growing up in Glasgow, I dreamt of playing in games like this and now, 40 years later, I am recalling the most dramatic game I ever played in. For me, and for every Leicester player that afternoon, it was a game like no other. I had ‘turned pro’ in 1975. I was 16 by the time I left and joined City. I had played and lost in two Scottish Cup semi-finals. So I had a hunger to get through this tie and hopefully experience an FA Cup semi-final.

The football gods smiled on us as a team that day. I come from a big Rangers family and as a child it was my ambition to play for the ‘Teddy Bears’ (Glasgow Rangers). Jock had tried several times to sign me when he was the Glasgow Rangers manager, but for one reason or another ‘Thistle’ wouldn’t let me join.

So when he came knocking as manager of Leicester City, it was a dream move. I struggled to adapt to full-time training and it took me a while to get up to speed. During

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this period, the City fans got behind me and supported me as I was adjusting to life in Leicester. This is something I have never forgotten. We had a really good young team, but with all young teams comes inconsistency. We achieved many great results, but the greatest was without doubt this FA Cup tie.

Three goalkeepers and seven goals. Unbelievable!

All the best,

Jim Melrose

# 1

A WET, dark night in Leicester.

It was Monday. Nothing special.

It had been a typical weekend. Actually, it hadn't.

It had just started out the usual way. And ended in the most dramatic, incredible and tragic of circumstances.

Bob Johnson was 6ft 2in. Not particularly tall but tall enough. He'd been the local football reporter in Leicester for 30 years. Thirty years. It would be 31 years on 16 November 1982.

Bob was a big heavy man.

He had worked in the cuttings library of the evening newspaper in Manchester when he left school at 16. Then after working in the basement with Old Ted, the newspaper librarian, for nearly six months helping to sort out all the different stories in the big metal filing cabinets, Bob had pleaded with the news editor to be given the chance to go and report on a story.

Bob was told to go to the local magistrates' court the next day and come back with a decent story.



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Something about a hairdresser who used the wrong bleach on a customer's hair. The woman, in her 40s, wanted compensation. She claimed she had suffered some hair loss. And that her hair had been 'ruined' and she had also suffered minor scalp burns. She was a local actress. Not that well known. But well known enough. Her hair had been dyed several times before. But not at this particular hair salon. This was the first time she had come to 'this awful place'.

She lived in a big posh house near Stockport. Her husband sold fancy, luxury used cars – a Jaguar V12 E-Type, a mint-condition Jensen Interceptor. Even a Ferrari had recently graced the showroom. That sort of thing.

The hairdressing salon was fined £2,000 – an absolute fortune at the time – and the salon owner said she couldn't pay the fine and would close the salon in any case because a lot of customers were being too demanding. And anyway, how was she supposed to know that one of the colour bottles was being used for bleach? And anyway, how would 'Miss Fancy Pants' have known if it had been bleach because it could have been something she had put on her hair before she came into the salon.

However, the magistrates weren't having any of it.

It was a load of nonsense really. But the news editor liked the story. Human interest. Page four. With a photo of the shop and the owner and the local actress.

Bob never looked back. The proudest moment of his life. Apart from marrying his school sweetheart Julie a year later, that is.