

Looking Back in Amber 1976-77



For this “Looking Back In Amber” we go back to the 1976-77 season. It was Cray’s fourth season at Oxford Road.

Twelve months earlier manager Jimmy Wakeling had inherited a difficult situation. Johnny Biddle’s side had just won the Met. London League and Cup double in spectacular fashion. Biddle then accepted the chance to become Bromley’s manager and took almost the entire Wands’ squad with him to Hayes Lane.

In the circumstances, Wakeling had done well to put a side together that finished sixth in the newly formed London Spartan League and also won the end-of-season Harry Sunderland Memorial Trophy. Cray had been helped by the return of several of the players who followed Biddle to Bromley including the combative Scott brothers, John and Bob, and the sublimely-talented Davy Waight, the Wands’ top scorer of the last 30 years.

This time around, Wakeling was able to put together an impressive squad. Key new signings included the experienced Bobby Sustins from Bromley, ex-Maidstone midfielder Brian Fitzpatrick, along with defender Graham Taylor and nippy striker Steve Greenway who both came from Penhill Standard and were favourites with the Oxford Road crowd for several years.

It proved to be an interesting blend of the players Biddle had brought to the club and Wakeling’s new men, although many of the team played together at the Sunday club 2-7-9, also managed by Wakeling.

After warming up with a 4-3 win against Crockenhill at Wested in a friendly, the Wanderers entertained Hatfield Town for the first London Spartan League game of the season. The afternoon went perfectly. It was one-way traffic with the visitors’ defence at full-stretch throughout. Bobby Scott headed the opening goal before half-time and three more followed without reply in the second period. The scorers were Colin McGannon (who had last played for the Wands under Jack Payne at Grassmeade five years earlier), John Duncombe, another new signing, and popular winger Patsy Carey.

Three days later arch-rivals Alma Swanley arrived at Oxford Road. Third the previous season and holders of the Kent Senior Trophy, the Alma were again amongst the title favourites, with a 3-0 win at Banstead already under their belts.

In a hard-fought game, Alma soon went 2-0, thanks to a Tony Clary strike and an own goal from Cray ‘keeper, Steve Pateman. McGannon got one back before the break and midway through the second-half defender Roy Pettet rose high to nod home a Waight corner. A remarkable victory for the Wands was sealed 8 minutes from time when Carey danced his way round two defenders and ‘keeper Martin Dillnutt to slip home the winner.

Just to rub salt into the wounds, Cray’s newly-formed reserve team beat Alma’s reserves 2-0 at Oxford Road 48 hours later, with goals from Jimmy Crombie (last year’s first-team leading scorer) and Danny White, who went on to have a long career with Cray and Crockenhill.

Hoddesdon Town were the third visitors to Oxford Road in the first week of the season. They had been the first-ever F.A.Vase winners at Wembley a year or so earlier and their stout

defence resisted all the Wands could throw at them, to ensure a goalless draw. It was disappointing for Cray but two wins and a draw was a good start to the season.

After starting well in their opening three home games of the season, Cray made their first trip of the new term, to Highfield.

Highfield played on an undeveloped ground at Turkey Street in Enfield. They had narrowly missed being placed in the London Spartan League's top division on its formation in 1875, and had gained promotion at the first attempt. They had beaten the Wands once before at Turkey Street (3-2 in 1973) and they repeated the feat with a 2-0 victory this time. Both goals came in the last ten minutes, after Cray had done everything but score.

This was a real let-down for Cray and worse was to follow at Bracknell Town a week later. The 'Newtowners' had a strong side. They had only lost the league title on goal difference to Farnborough the previous year. But the Wands had fond memories of their visit to Bracknell in 1975-76. The game had taken place in January, with Bracknell still unbeaten in the league, and Cray had won 5-0! No such luck this time as the home side won comfortably 4-1, with Dave Waight's first goal of the season all the Wands had to show for their efforts.

So it was a deflated Cray squad who prepared for the local derby with Athenian League Erith & Belvedere in the F A Cup. With just one goal in the previous three games, manager Jimmy Wakeling was in no doubt where the problem lay, and he made wholesale changes to the Wands' strikeforce. Out went John Duncombe and Colin McGannon and in came Brian Fitzpatrick, Jimmy Crombie and John Canavan.

Canavan, known to everyone as 'Harpo', had scored a hat-trick for the reserves the previous week, though admittedly only against the might of Policrom Reserves. But he wasted no time in making his mark for the first team, scoring the opening goal for the Wands. Later, Pat Carey made it 2-1 but a last-minute Ken Edwards free-kick brought the Deres level, in what was a very entertaining game for a good crowd of 338. Ironically, on the same day, Duncombe scored a hat-trick for the reserves in their 5-1 win over Ryan United.

Six minutes into the midweek replay, Cray were a goal behind, but they played superbly well. Graham Taylor equalised just before half-time and Canavan and Carey added brilliant second-half goals before Erith pulled back a late consolation. It was an excellent result for the Wands against higher-ranked opponents. Wakeling's gamble had paid off handsomely. The club treasurer must have been happy, too, as Cray's opponents in the next round of the cup were Southern League Maidstone United, who were guaranteed to draw a big crowd to Oxford Road.

After the excitement of the F A Cup, it was back to the league the following Saturday, and the visit of another promoted club, Frimley Green. Second-half goals from Jimmy Crombie and substitute Dave Fiander earned Cray a 2-0 victory. A settled side was beginning to take shape. John Cox had claimed the No. 1 shirt; the defence was built around the Scott brothers and Graham Taylor, with John Russell, Bobby Sustins and Gerry Collier sharing full-back duties. Fitzpatrick and Waight operated in central midfield, with Carey and Steve Greenway either on the wings or as out and out strikers, along with Canavan and Crombie.

The win put the Wands into seventh place in the league, just two points behind unbeaten leaders Bracknell and East Ham United.

All thoughts of the London Spartan League were put firmly to the back of the mind during October, as Cray played five matches, all of them cup-ties. It proved to be one of the most memorable months in the club's history.

Crockenhill of the Kent League provided the opposition in the first round of the F.A. Vase at Oxford Road. In a very lively game, the Wands finally came out on top after extra-time, winning

4-2, although they made it hard for themselves by missing a penalty in normal time. Jimmy Crombie, who did manage to score from the spot, got two of the goals.

That was a good warm-up for the eagerly-awaited F.A. Cup clash with Maidstone United the following week. The Stones were a Southern League Premier Division side, one of the best non-league teams in the country (there was no Conference in those days). They brought a big following to Sidcup and some expensive signings, including Alan Welsh from Millwall.

Throughout the first-half, Maidstone ran the show, but their finishing was woeful and Cray held on until half-time. Three minutes after the break, the 719 crowd was stunned when Welsh was sent off for arguing with the referee. Playing up the slope, the Wands now came more into the game, and Oxford Road erupted when Davy Waight's mazy run took him to the bye-line, before pulling it back for Pat Carey to open the scoring.

Maidstone pushed forward but found the Cray defence, superbly marshalled by Bobby Sustins, in fine form. And it was Sustins' quick throw which set up Brian Fitzpatrick for the Wands' second four minutes from time. Woon scored an injury-time consolation for the Stones, but there was no denying Cray what Radio Medway called, "this sensational upset."

It was one of the greatest results Cray Wanderers have ever achieved. After the game, manager Jimmy Wakeling commented, "In my dreams last week I played the game 100 times, and this is the first time we have won!"

The euphoria in the Cray camp was maintained the following Saturday when they visited Walton & Hersham in the London Senior Cup. Walton were playing several leagues above the Wands and were famous cup fighters themselves, having beaten Brian Clough's Brighton a few years earlier. But goals from Carey and Waight gave Cray another stunning victory.

Five wins in a row and in such a rich vein of form, Cray could hardly be in better shape for "the big one", the third qualifying round of the F.A. Cup, at home to Bromley. This was to be the sharpest of "needle" matches. Bromley were managed by ex-Cray boss Johnny Biddle, and in Phil Emblen, John Duffy and Paul McCarthy, their team included three former Wands' stars, who had all played with most of the Cray side on Sundays for 2-7-9, managed by Wakeling!

698 supporters ringed Oxford Road for the game. Cray took the initiative from the start and were well in control, before the game's defining moment. Carey burst through the Bromley defence, shrugging off a bit of shirt-pulling, rounded the 'keeper and put the ball into the net. But the celebrations were short-lived as the referee had blown his whistle for a Cray free-kick. His failure to play advantage undoubtedly cost the Wands a goal and probably changed the course of the game.

Cray continued to press forward, but were undone by the sucker punch, as Bromley scored two goals on the break in the second-half. The scorers, almost inevitably, were Duffy and McCarthy.

The defeat was made even harder to bear when the news came through that Bromley had been drawn at home to Walton in the final qualifying round, a game Cray would have expected to win.

The Wands were left to take out their frustrations on little Plum Lane in the Kent Senior Trophy. They were a big change from the standard of recent opposition and duly copped it 7-1, with six different scorers for Cray.

Having not played a league game at all in October, Cray were falling behind with their London Spartan League fixtures. Fortunately, no club was setting a particularly strong pace at the top and wins against Berkhamsted Town and Virginia Water would keep the Wands in touch, with games in hand.

Cray had fond memories of their only previous visit to the Sports Ground, right next to Berkhamsted railway station. The previous season they had won there 5-0, albeit against a Berko side who had only avoided relegation because three clubs had been accepted in to the Athenian League.

This time around Berkhamsted were in the top six, and so it was an excellent result for the Wands to come away with a 2-0 victory. The scorers were Steve Greenway and Bob Scott.

The following week, Virginia Water, who were one of the promoted sides, were due to visit Oxford Road. They were finding the step up in class a bit too much, as was shown by their record of played eight, lost eight. But, perhaps fortunately for them, the game had to be postponed.

This was very frustrating for Cray. Their next four games were all scheduled to be cup-ties, taking them into the middle of December. By that time, they would still only have played seven league games. In the days before floodlights, there was no prospect of catching up with fixtures, so the Wands (who had only lost two of those league games) faced an end-of-season fixture backlog that could ruin any title challenge they might mount.

At least, for a few weeks, they could concentrate on the cups! The second round of the Vase took Cray into unknown territory, with a visit to the north of Essex to take on Tiptree Town of the Essex Senior League. As we travelled there on the supporters' coach, some of us were thinking of what might have been. For Bromley, having thrashed Walton & Hersham 9-3, were visiting Swindon Town in the first round proper of the F.A. Cup. It could have been us!

Tiptree proved to be a nice little town, with a nice little football ground. But it wasn't a very nice feeling when the Wands went 1-0 down – McDonald scoring with a cracking long-range shot. As the minutes ticked by in the second-half, Cray pushed forward relentlessly, but to no avail, and it seemed as though "The Jam-makers" would be taking their place in the last 64.

Then, with just 12 minutes remaining, John Scott powered home a far post header. And, in the 90th minute, the Wands were dramatically awarded a penalty, which Pat Carey converted. It was an end to the game that must have left the home supporters feeling very deflated. To make our day complete, we heard on the way home that Bromley had lost 7-0 at the County Ground.

The draw for the third round of the Vase was disappointing, giving Cray an away trip to Alma Swanley. In the meantime, the Wands returned to Oxford Road for the first time in a month to take on Heathside Sports in the Kent Senior Trophy. Both sides were in the bottom half of the league table with 9 points, although Heathside had played five more games.

It turned out to be an easy passage to the quarter-finals for the Wands. Davy Waight opened the scoring before half-time, Carey netted another spot-kick early in the second period, and two goals in a minute from the former Penhill Standard pair of Steve Greenway and Graham Taylor completed the 4-0 scoreline.

Cray entered December 1976 still with an interest in four different cup competitions. Only two of their last eleven games had been London Spartan League fixtures, and the month opened with two more cup-ties, against the strong Swanley clubs, who had finished third and fourth in the league the previous season.

Alma Swanley were the first opponents, visiting Oxford Road for a London Senior Cup tie. A prestigious home game with Enfield, then one of the top non-league clubs in the country, awaited the winners.

There was some doubt as to whether the game would go ahead, as the pitch was frozen, but the decision was made to play. How the Wands must have regretted that! Kicking up the slope,

they slithered and slid all over the place, whilst Alma were sure-footed and glided past the home defence with ease.

Suffice to say, it was one of the most embarrassing 45 minutes of football that Cray had experienced for many a year and they reached the interval 5-0 down. Paul Edwards notched two, Don Butterfill, who was later to play for the Wands, also found the net, along with Tony Clary, who always scored when he played against Cray. A Graham Taylor own goal added to the Wands' misery.

To their credit, the Wanderers started the second-half in positive fashion, and quickly pulled a goal back through Brian Fitzpatrick, but any hopes that they could stage a remarkable recovery soon faded and there was no further scoring.

If this scoreline burst Cray's bubble, they were well and truly deflated a week later when the other Swanley side, Town, dumped them out of the London Spartan League Cup. The Swans were never an easy proposition on their own ground, and it was another lack-lustre performance from the Wands. 1-0 down at half-time, they eventually succumbed 3-0 with barely a whimper. John Kane, another who was later to wear the Amber and Black, scored twice, with Phil Roxburgh adding a third.

Things were now beginning to look a little pear-shaped for Cray, especially with an F.A. Vase tie at Alma Swanley looming early in the New Year. It was essential, therefore, to kick-start their league campaign, which had stalled badly, after just one game in the last three months.

A trip to Hoddesdon Town, who had been in the top three, certainly provided a big challenge in the final game before Christmas. Fortunately, the "Swanley effect" was dispelled as the Wands put in an excellent performance. Pat Carey and Dave Waight scored in a 2-1 victory, which greatly raised spirits.

And there was further festive cheer on Boxing Day when Cray visited Horton Road, the home of Heathside Sports. With a 4-0 win against the same opponents under their belts, this was a game the Wands would have expected to win, and they did not disappoint. Pat Carey took his tally into double figures with two goals, one of which was from the spot, after Steve Greenway had given Cray the lead.

This comfortable 3-0 win was the Wands' fourth league victory in a row. Although they had only played nine games by the turn of the year, they had only dropped five league points, and were still, theoretically at least, in touch with the leaders.

After the defeats against the two Swanley clubs, which had put them out of two cup competitions in December, the last thing that Cray could have wished for to open the New Year was ... a home game with Swanley Town and a trip to Alma Swanley!

The Swans came to Oxford Road for a London Spartan League game and, although their minds were probably on the following week's Vase encounter with Alma, the Wands could not afford to take this match lightly. To have any chance of catching Alma, who were well ahead with their league fixtures, Cray had to keep winning their games in hand.

There was also the small matter of avenging the 3-0 drubbing they had suffered at Swanley three weeks earlier! This was duly achieved with a fairly comfortable 2-0 victory, the goals coming from Bob Scott and leading scorer Pat Carey. And there was good news after the match, when it was heard that Alma had dropped a point in a 2-2 home draw with Heathside Sports. As Cray had already beaten Heathside 4-0 and 3-0, the omens looked good for the Wands.

The following week's Vase game generated a lot of interest. The competition was still in its infancy (this was only its third year) and it was the furthest stage that Cray had reached. Whilst they had beaten Crockenhill and Tiptree, Alma had victories over Old Aloysian (who?) and Brightlingsea under their belts.

It was a good year for London Spartan League teams. East Ham United were also in the third round. In fact, they went on to reach the quarter-finals before losing to Sheffield F.C. (the oldest club in the world) who, in turn, lost in the final at Wembley to Billericay Town.

No doubt remembering that they had shipped five first-half goals the last time they played Alma, Cray started cautiously, but played themselves steadily into the game as the interval approached. Alma v Cray games generally produced plenty of goals, but this was a much tighter affair, which could have gone either way. Sadly for the Wands, it didn't go their way, as Paul Edwards netted for the home side from close range. It was the only goal of the game.

The Cray camp were gutted to have lost their third cup-tie of the season to a Swanley side. Then the weather turned against them, and the next two games were postponed – not good news for a team who had only played ten league games and who possessed no floodlights. To rub salt into their wounds, whilst the Wands were on the sidelines, Alma produced one of the greatest shocks in local football history, when they beat the mighty Enfield 1-0 in a London Senior Cup-tie.

Cray finally returned to action at the end of January, with a quarter-final match in the Kent Senior Trophy – their last hope of cup success. The draw appeared to have been kind, as the Wands had to travel to Fisher Athletic, who were in the division below them. But at Fisher's old ground at Mitcham, Cray simply failed to perform. The home side thoroughly deserved their comfortable 3-0 win.

This was technically an act of giant-killing, but Fisher were certainly a side "on the up." Ten years later, at their new ground at the Surrey Docks, they were in the Conference. After beating Cray, they went on to reach the Kent Senior Trophy final, losing 1-0 to Faversham.

Manager Jimmy Wakeling must have had a hard job motivating his Cray team for the visit of Chingford at the beginning of February. The Wands had lost four of their last seven games, all cup-ties, and as a result their only chance of silverware was the London Spartan League championship. Realistically, this was a very long shot, as Cray were well behind in their fixtures and Alma Swanley were forging well ahead at the top – and they had the psychological advantage of two cup victories over the Wanderers.

Chingford proved a strong side, but Cray managed a morale-boosting victory, with goals from Steve Greenway and Dave Waight. This was the Wands' sixth league win in a row, but it had taken nearly five months to play those games!

It was good to see Waight on the scoresheet as he had been struggling to re-capture his goalscoring form since rejoining the club from Bromley the previous spring. Two years ago, he had notched 39 in the Met. London League championship side and Cray desperately needed him to be on top form if they were to challenge this time round. Dave was the focal point of the Cray team. When Dave ticked, the Wands ticked.

So it was a further boost for the Wands when Waight scored twice (once from the spot) the following week at lowly Hatfield Town. John Russell, a steady performer at right back, got the third in a solid 3-1 win. It was his first goal for the club.

Heathside Sports were the next visitors to Oxford Road in a mercifully mild February that didn't bring any further postponements. This would have been disastrous for Cray as it would have meant a fixture pile up when the light evenings returned at the end of March.

This game looked like a “home banker”. The Wands already had two wins over Heathside under their belts, scoring seven goals without reply in the process. But it proved to be a frustrating afternoon for the loyal Cray supporters as the game ended in a disappointing 1-1 draw. Russell, having whetted his appetite the previous week, again found the net. Two goals in two games – the only ones he scored all season.

This was the first in a series of rather lack-lustre home performances by the Wands, but their form away from Oxford Road remained good. The trip to Banstead Athletic brought another two points. Dave Waight opened the scoring after sixteen minutes, with Jimmy Crombie sealing victory four minutes from full-time.

The last nine league games had now brought eight wins and a draw. Almost unnoticed, Cray had fought their way through a very congested mid-table up to fourth place in the league. Surprise package Frimley Green were top, but had played too many games. Alma were a point behind with six games in hand, with Berkhamsted Town third on the same number of points, but having played four games more. Whilst Cray had been beating Banstead, Alma, who had been pegged back by several cup-ties, had won 7-1 at Berkhamsted!

Cray were just one point behind Alma, with a game in hand. What had seemed a long shot at the beginning of the month now looked a real possibility!

Now with their sights firmly set on winning the London Spartan League title, Cray, in fourth place, welcomed third placed Berkhamsted Town to Oxford Road. No doubt the Wands fully expected to complete the double over “Berko”, who were smarting from their seven goal hiding at the hands of Alma Swanley. But the visitors proved far more resilient than anticipated and it took a second-half Pat Carey strike to rescue a point, and maintain Cray’s unbeaten home league record.

The following week, at BROB Barnet, Cray found matters more straightforward, as they cruised to a 2-0 win against a side in the bottom three. The goals came from Steve Greenway and Dave Waight. This result put the Wands into second place in the league, as both Berkhamsted and Frimley Green fell by the wayside. It was now a straight two-horse title race, with Cray a couple of points behind Alma, with a game in hand.

Bracknell Town were expected to offer a strong challenge in the next match, as they had inflicted a heavy defeat on the Wands at Larges Lane earlier in the season. So it proved, as Cray ground out a 1-0 win, thanks to a Dave Waight goal, midway through the first half.

If that game was hard work, the following week’s visit to deepest Surrey was no more than a gentle training exercise. Virginia Water were cast hopelessly adrift at the bottom of the league with just three points. This was their only season in the Premier Division and they found the step up from the lower echelons far too much.

Cray boss Jimmy Wakeling took the opportunity to blood two new signings. John Maloney was a useful capture from Victoria Surdoc. He added some “steel” in a back four or defensive midfield role. The other “new boy” was well-known to Wands’ fans. Terry Smart had left for Bromley with Cray’s previous manager Johnny Biddle at the end of the 1974-75 season. Unable to guarantee a regular first-team spot at Hayes Lane, he returned to add extra firepower to Cray’s title challenge.

And Smart made an immediate impact, with a goal at Virginia Water, although this was not exactly decisive as the Wands hardly broke sweat in winning 7-0. The other scorers were Waight (2), Jimmy Crombie (2), Brian Fitzpatrick and Greenway.

With Alma only managing a draw, Cray moved to the top of the table, a point ahead having played the same number of games. Three days later came the big showdown at St Mary's Road, Swanley.

This was the first evening game of the year, with a kick-off time of 5:45 p.m. Despite losing their last two encounters with their arch-rivals, the Wands were in good heart, having an unbeaten league run of 14 matches stretching back over six months.

The game proved to be the defining moment of the season. Cray romped to a 4-1 victory, benefiting from two penalties (converted by Carey and Waight) and further goals from Graham Taylor and Waight again – the fifth successive game in which he had scored.

Eleven games to go, with clear daylight between them and the rest of the league – the title was there for the taking!

With a three point lead over Alma Swanley, Cray just had to keep their nerve in order to claim the London Spartan League Championship. For the fourth home game running, the Wands only managed one goal, but what a goal it was! Steve Greenway cut in from the left and unleashed a glorious shot into the top right hand corner. The defence kept a clean sheet so Banstead Athletic left Oxford Road empty handed.

Alma dropped a point at third placed Frimley Green but beat their neighbours Swanley Town in midweek, so Cray entertained BROB Barnet seven days later with a two point lead. A Pat Carey penalty gave the Wands an interval lead whilst the in-form Greenway weighed in with two more after the break, the second a carbon copy of his brilliant effort against Banstead.

Easter Monday brought a difficult trip to Frimley Green. A Dave Waight strike ensured that Cray earned maximum points and the title seemed more or less sewn up. It was quite a shock then when the next game, away to fourth placed Chingford, was lost. For the first time in eighteen games, the Wands gained nothing from a league game, succumbing 2-1 to the Essex club. Waight was again the scorer in what was Cray's first league defeat since the trip to Bracknell over seven months earlier.

A midweek trip to East Ham United completed a trio of tough away games. Although the Hammers were languishing next to bottom of the table, their position was misleading. They had played 22 cup ties, including a run to the quarter finals of the F.A. Vase, when they lost to eventual finalists Sheffield F.C.

With fifteen league games to play in six weeks, only Alma and Cray had actually dropped fewer points than East Ham. In fact, Alma had beaten East Ham 2-1 at St. Mary's Road three days earlier, closing the gap to just one point, and this was the Wands' game in hand. In a tough match, second-half goals from Waight and Brian Fitzpatrick secured another precious three points.

Having negotiated the difficult away matches relatively unscathed, it now really did seem plain sailing for Cray; especially as Virginia Water were the next visitors to Oxford Road. But the bottom side were in no mood to suffer a repeat of their 7-0 home defeat four weeks earlier. It was an immensely frustrating afternoon for the Wands. As the clock ticked past 90 minutes, it looked as though an embarrassing and damaging goalless draw would result, until Waight popped up with a very late winner, saving Cray's blushes and breaking Virginia Water's hearts.

A week later at Farnham Town, the Wands finally found their shooting boots, with a 5-1 victory. There was an early scare when the home side were awarded a penalty, but John Cox saved it and was then able to watch Pat Carey, Terry Smart, Fitzpatrick (2) and Waight score at the other end.

With Alma winning at Highfield, the lead was still three points, and Cray stretched this to five on the first Saturday in May. Alma went down at home to Bracknell whilst the Wands grabbed another five goal haul against Highfield at Oxford Road. Carey (2), Waight, Greenway and Bobby Sustins found the net. It was the sixth game running that Waight had scored. The game was preceded by a minute's silence in memory of Mr A.C. Nichols, a stalwart of the club, who had died.

So, at last, Cray's task was simple. Two points from the last three games (all at Oxford Road) and the title was theirs. Farnham Town's visit provided the ideal opportunity to wrap things up. It was a nervy performance but the Wands just made it, with Neil Keohane netting his first for the club and Fitzpatrick adding the all-important second in a 2-1 victory. Cray were the champions!

There were two more games to round off the season. East Ham, who had won nearly all their games in hand and would finish third, were beaten 2-1. John Maloney scored a spectacular first goal with a 30 yard shot and Waight added the second after one of his famous jinking runs. This win ensured Cray were unbeaten in home league matches all season.

Finally, on the morning of the F.A. Cup final, Swanley Town played their home game at Oxford Road as their own ground was being used for cricket. The Wands were in party mood and went down 1-3. Their scorer, inevitably, was Waight. Although Bobby Sustins was voted Player of the Season, Dave's 24 goals were the key to the championship run in. He scored in 15 of the last 20 matches. Pat Carey (19) and Steve Greenway (13) also made major goalscoring contributions.

A wonderful season, then, with the Wands well deserving their reputation for playing attractive football, backed up with a solid defence that conceded only 6 league goals at home. A good year's work for the Wanderers!

PETE GORINGE