



Welcoming Old Friends...

By Tony Onslow

Today's game at Goodison Park is the only top-flight fixture this weekend that features two founder members of the Football League.

Burnley began life playing under the rules of Rugby School but switched to the FA code following an invitation from the local cricket club to join them at their established home of Turf Moor.

The Burnley footballers first played here in 1883, which means only Preston North End have occupied their home ground for a longer length of time in English football.

Burnley were soon given a shock introduction into the realities of the association game when, in October 1883, they were beaten 9-1 by a neighbouring Padiham side that included several Scottish imports. The Turf Moor outfit quickly did the same, surpassed their neighbours and, in September 1888, became a founder member of the Football League.

They first met Everton on alternative weekends in November 1888. The first was on a section of Turf Moor that had been fenced off from the cricket field, a game in which we came back from two-down to secure a 2-2 draw. Seven days later, before

a crowd of 6,000 at Anfield, we won the return game by the odd goal in five, with Edgar Chadwick among the goals, as he had been in East Lancashire. Burnley then wore a blue and white-striped jersey but adopted their present-day claret and blue – having also played in green shirts – ahead of the 1910/11 season, colours inspired by Aston Villa.

War clouds were gathering over Europe when the Clarets first reached the FA Cup final in 1914 when they beat Liverpool, with the only goal scored by former Everton centre-forward, Bert Freeman. It was the first time the final had been watched by a ruling Monarch and King George V presented the trophy to the Burnley skipper, Tommy Boyle.

Peace had been restored to the land when the same player led the Clarets to their first Football League championship in 1920/21. It was during this era that goalkeeper Jeremiah Dawson made a record 522 appearances for the club. Local folklore has it that when he once took a goal-kick, the wind coming down off Brunshaw Hill was so strong that it blew the ball back and out for corner!

The years leading up WW2, and those that immediately followed, were unremarkable for Burnley

until the signing of such outstanding players as Jimmy Adamson and Jimmy McIlroy guided them to their second First Division title in 1959/60.

During the following Christmas period the visit of Burnley attracted a crowd of 74,867 to Goodison, the sixth largest crowd in our history – a figure we have not surpassed since.

The Clarets then went into a steady decline which saw them escape relegation from the Football League on the final day of the 1986/87 season courtesy of a 2-1 win over Leyton Orient. Burnley first regained their top-flight status in 2009, returning again in 2014 and this season, which is their 54th at this level.

