



ANDY RANKIN – KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY!

By Paul McParlan

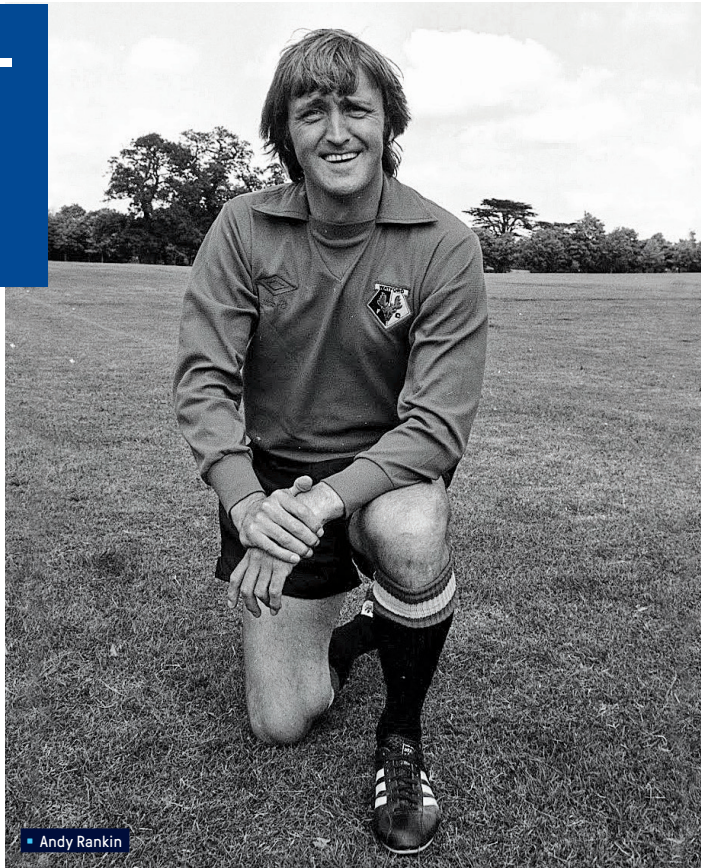
No less than eight members of the Rankin family have represented Everton at various levels. Almost 51 years ago the name of Andy Rankin became firmly embedded into the DNA of the club when he made an indelible mark on European football history.

On 4 November 1970, the Blues faced Borussia Moenchengladbach at Goodison Park in the second round, second leg of the European Cup. With the aggregate score tied at 2-2, the first ever penalty shoot-out in the competition unfolded and Andy was the hero, diving to his right to save Ludwig Muller's crucial last kick for the visitors.

Everton were through 4-3 and Andy had the distinction of making the first ever European Cup penalty shoot-out save! (Herbert Laumen had earlier put his kick wide of the target).

Unfortunately, Everton lost to Panathinaikos on away goals in the next round; perhaps the fact that Andy was required to wear a red top in the second leg in Greece was a bad omen?

Born in Bootle on 11 May 1944, Andy joined Everton as an apprentice when he left school but, frustrated by his lack of progress, he planned to join the police force until Harry Catterick spotted him in training and, impressed by the young custodian's agility, persuaded him to stay.



Andy was always competing for the number one slot with Gordon West and even Catterick sometimes seemed unsure who was the better. Nevertheless, Andy stayed with Everton for 10 years, making 106 appearances across several spells in the first team, but never really established himself as the first choice. During this time, he could often be seen boarding the number 56 bus to travel to Goodison alongside supporters!

Andy played his last game for Everton in a 3-0 victory over Liverpool reserves at Anfield on 15 November 1971 and two days later he joined Second Division Watford for £20,000. His signing meant that regular keeper Mike Walker, the

future Everton boss, lost his place. When Andy left, Gordon West said, "Despite our battle for a First-Team place, we were good friends."

Watford fans took to Andy, voting him Player of the Season in 1972/73 and 1974/75. He made 329 appearances for the Hornets before leaving for Huddersfield Town in 1979, a club he had almost joined 10 years earlier.

Andy Rankin, now 77, is a keeper whose place in the history of Everton and Watford will never be forgotten.

• **Further reading:** *Sporting Genes: 100 years of Sporting Achievement* by Gordon Fraser