



EVERTON

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KEEPING UP THE CONNECTION

Words // Paul Owens

In the first 50 years of Everton's existence, Billy Scott and Tom Fern led the way for competitive appearances made by the Club's goalkeepers, playing 289 and 231 games respectively. These two Everton greats both had links with Leeds City, the forerunner to tonight's opponents.

Fern's transfer to Everton in late 1913 came about after he'd caught the eye playing for Lincoln City in a game against Leeds City at Elland Road. Just 18 months later, the Measham-born stopper won the First Division title with the Toffees. He made 231 appearances for the Blues – a figure that would have been much higher were it not for the cessation of League football due to the First World War.

On the home team's books on the day Fern impressed in West Yorkshire, though not on the pitch, was the legendary Billy Scott, an FA Cup winner with Everton in 1906. Scott's transfer to Leeds in 1912 had courted controversy as the Irishman reportedly received a full year's salary for just 10 months' work, meaning he ended up receiving more than the maximum wage permitted.

Rumours surrounding far more serious financial misdemeanours by the West Yorkshire club soon followed, and after refusing to cooperate with an FA inquiry into the payment of players during the Great War period, Leeds City were dissolved in 1919. In the wake of their demise, Leeds United was formed.



Everton great:
Tom Fern



Nigel Martyn:
Calming presence

The major goalkeeping connection between Everton and Leeds United is undoubtedly Nigel Martyn – whose calming presence proved invaluable to the Blues at both ends of the Premier League table. Having become Britain's first million-pound goalkeeper in 1989 when Crystal Palace bought him from Bristol Rovers, Martyn moved to Leeds United for more than £2million in 1996, having looked a certainty to sign for Everton that summer.

At Elland Road, he established himself as one of the Premier League's most consistent performers but after losing his first-team place, Martyn finally signed for Everton in 2003. His first Premier League clean sheet for the Toffees came in a 4-0 thrashing of his old club at Goodison Park that September.

The following season, Martyn was in even better form. On the way to claiming the unlikely of fourth-place finishes, the Blues won many games 1-0, with their veteran goalkeeper rolling back the years, week after week. Despite making fewer than 100 starts for Everton and retiring through injury at the end of his third season on Merseyside, Martyn is rightly considered one of the Club's greatest goalkeepers of the post-Neville Southall era.

Read an interview with Martyn on page 50.

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