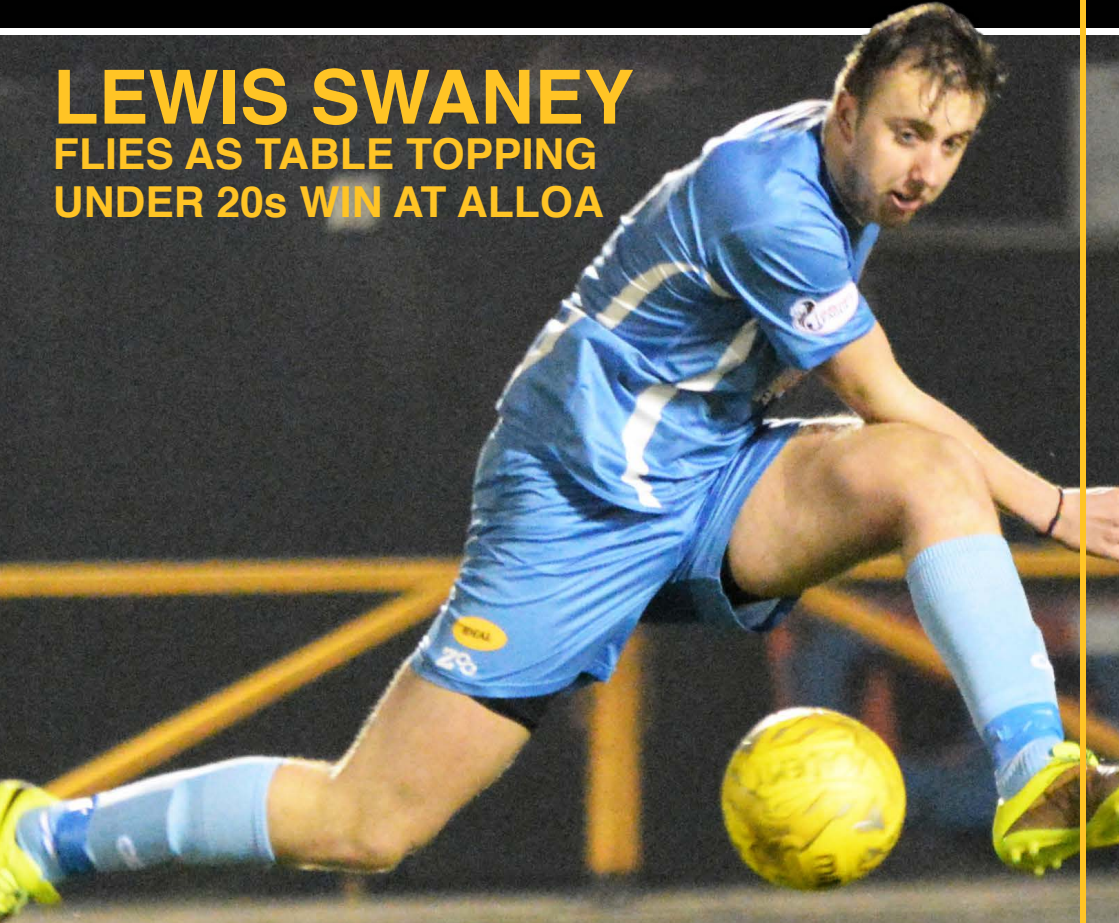


# BERWICK RANGERS SUPPORTERS TRUST

**LEWIS SWANEY**  
FLIES AS TABLE TOPPING  
UNDER 20s WIN AT ALLOA



INSIDE:

**PEA OLIVER**  
CALLS IT A DAY



# Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

**Magazine No. 29**  
**February 2017**



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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

Welcome to our latest Winter edition dated February, 2017. From comments received, our new look magazine, piloted in our previous issue, went down well. "A good read," was the opinion of one non Trust member who was given a copy along with some club merchandise he purchased.

Unfortunately, this has been another season of struggle. Knocked out of two cup competitions by Lowland League opposition, the big fear is that we will be meeting them again for league points next season if matters do not improve. In his article, 'Days of Despair', Ron Kirk details what has gone wrong and what little has gone right.

Another feature is entitled 'A Match to Remember' and no, it is not about the one on January 28th, 1967 though David Spence covers the celebrations marking that one. The Berwick Advertiser gave extensive coverage relating to the famous win over Glasgow Rangers but inexplicably included a photograph purporting to show Jock Wallace's giant killers in the changing room prior to the match which on inspection, featured a different combination of players wearing different style shirts and different socks from those worn on the day!

Since our last publication, we have held two successful events. The Sleeze Sisters proved popular visitors to the town on September 17th. On the night, we raised almost £300

for Trust funds. Exactly three months later, we held our Annual General Meeting also in 'The Black and Gold' at Shielfield. Rangers manager John Coughlin came along to give a brief talk and take a few questions about the team and its performances but our main speaker was 'Pea' Oliver whom you can read more about inside.

Berwick Rangers chairman Len Eyre was also invited but declined because of a clash with another engagement. This was a little disappointing as when he took over from Brian Porteous, he said he was keen to meet with supporters. This would have been a chance to do so. It was not an election year for membership of the Trust Board but one change was announced, Gary Smith stepping down because of other commitments.



A couple of days before the AGM, Len Eyre did chair a tri-party meeting at Shielfield involving representatives of the club board, the Supporters Club and the Trust. Various matters were discussed and though there was little in the way of definite outcomes, it was felt to be a useful first step towards better co-ordination and co-operation with agreement in principle that another meeting should be held in the forthcoming months.

Len opened the tri-party meeting by thanking both supporters' organisations for their financial donations to the football club with the hope that they will continue. In fact, immediately after our AGM, we handed over a cheque for nearly £2,700 for the new gates installed near the main turnstiles of

the stadium. This was in line with our policy of donating money for specific purposes. Consistent with this was an earlier cheque to cover the season's laundry and minibus petrol costs for the Development League team calculated to be £600. There was a further outgoing of £300 to JH Greenwood. Legally, we are obliged to have our annual accounts 'inspected' by competent, qualified auditors with no direct connection to the Trust and we switched to this firm purely on the grounds of reduced cost.

The next important meeting will be the football club's AGM on Monday, February 13th. With the situation on the playing field, the resignation of finance officer Lyndsay Flannigan and questions about the financial impact of last summer's 'Shielfield Rocks', it could be a lively one.

We can only hope that by the time of our next issue, we have secured our SPFL status and without the necessity of a play off. It would be a cruel twist if, fifty years on from the most famous moment in the club's history, Berwick Rangers were to be out of the league.

**Michael**

**FOOT NOTE:** For queries or comments about this magazine or to offer contributions for future editions, please e-mail [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org)

Front cover photo by David Glencross

# DAYS OF DESPAIR

with **RON KIRK**

Saturday 22 October 2016. Scottish Cup Round Two, Berwick Rangers 2 Hawick Royal Albert 3. Some have described this result as the worst in the history of Berwick Rangers Football Club. Saturday 20 May 2017 is of course yet to come round but it may turn out to be a day which has far more serious consequences for Berwick Rangers. The League Two season is scheduled to end on Saturday 6 May 2017, but as I write this article, Rangers have just lost to Edinburgh City on New Year's Eve and have dropped to the bottom of the league and into the relegation play off slot. Should Rangers fail to climb off bottom spot and then lose the two legged relegation play off, then Saturday 20 May 2017 will surely become the worst day in the club's history.

Relegation to the Lowland League may be the beginning of the end for the club. Despite a parachute payment which I believe to be in the region of £40,000, how many of us really believe that Rangers could bounce straight back up to League Two? The club have struggled in recent years to sign players of the calibre of Gareth Hutchison, Gary Wood, Grant McNichol and Robbie Horn and the prospect of Lowland League football will not enhance its prospects of recruiting the standard of player required to ensure a speedy return to League Two. And, remember, apart from winning the Lowland League, Rangers would then have to win a two legged play off against the Highland League Champions and then a further two legged play off against the club which finishes bottom of League 2. All of this makes the prospect of relegation on 20 May a bleak one indeed.

I realise of course, that all of this is unduly pessimistic. The game against Edinburgh City on New Year's Eve brought around the

half way point of the season. There are still 18 league games to play and Rangers are far from detached at the bottom. Indeed they are only bottom by one goal with Stirling Albion having accumulated the same number of points. If you are a glass half full type of person rather than half empty, you will point out that Rangers are only seven points adrift of the promotion play off places. On current form it seems unfathomable to think that they can improve significantly to climb the league and challenge for a promotion play off place but they were in a similar position a year ago and we all know the run they then went on,



*Spartans celebrate an Irn Bru Cup goal  
(Photo by Ian Runciman)*

especially at Shielfield. It is difficult to see how that can be repeated unless there is a major infusion of new blood and confidence into the playing squad.

It is always said that the league table doesn't lie and nor do the facts. Rangers have played 24 competitive games so far this season and have only won 4. They currently have problems in both penalty boxes. At one end, they are struggling to create chances and score goals. They have scored more than two goals in a game on only one occasion,

the recent 3-2 win over Stirling Albion. At the other end, despite a promising start defensively when they had the best defence in the division, Rangers are now beginning to leak goals at an alarming rate. In the 5 games played in December, a total of 16 were conceded.

Looking back, the competitive season started in July with Berwick up against Kilmarnock, Morton, Albion Rovers and Clyde in the new League Cup group format. Although Rangers battled manfully in all four games, they ultimately lost narrowly to both Kilmarnock and Morton and despite holding both Rovers and Clyde to draws they lost out in penalty shoot outs in both thereby missing out on the bonus points available. Without question however, Rangers produced their best performance of the season thus far by a considerable distance in the game against



*Berwick about to score in August's 2-0 win over Annan  
(Photo by Alan Bell)*

Kilmarnock. They were 2-0 up after an hour and playing some really good stuff before being undone by two stunning strikes from Kilmarnock's Ivorian striker Soulemane Coulibaly which paved the way for Kilmarnock to bounce back and win 3-2. Sadly, Berwick have not been able to come anywhere near replicating that level of performance in any of the subsequent league or Cup games.

To some extent the alarm bells started to ring just after the League Cup games when

Lowland League Spartans, boasting several ex 'Gers amongst their ranks, visited Shielfield in the revamped Challenge Cup or Irn Bru Cup as it is now, on a damp and miserable Tuesday evening at the beginning of August. Spartans coasted to a 3-0 win with allowances being given for the lacklustre performance due to it being Rangers' fifth competitive game within the space of 14 days. In hindsight, all the same, I think that some of the cracks we have seen since were evident that night.

Rangers started the league campaign reasonably well with 3 wins in the opening 6 games and a total of 10 points accumulated seeing them sit in 4th place in the table. That said, they weren't particularly convincing in those opening 6 matches which included a fortuitous 2-1 win against Edinburgh City at Meadowbank and a 4-2 defeat at home to Elgin which, in truth, could and

probably should have been 8 or 9-2 had the away side capitalised on the number of times they shredded open the home defence. The fact that Rangers have only managed to win one more game out of the next 12 is ultimately the reason they currently occupy the relegation play off slot with morale amongst supporters at a low ebb. In the middle of that 12 game run there was also the already mentioned calamitous 3-2 home defeat in the Scottish Cup against Hawick Royal Albert when striker Josh Morris returned to haunt his old team

with a first half hat trick. With the greatest of respect to everyone at Hawick, that result was put in perspective by the fact that no one was really surprised when they were whacked 8-1 at Elgin in the next round. To compound matters, Hawick currently sit third bottom of the Lowland League which all adds fuel to the fire of those who say it was the worst result in the club's history.



Jordyn Sheerin challenges the Forfar keeper in August's SPFL 2 clash (Photo by Ian Runciman)

So where has it all gone wrong following the heroic efforts in the second half of last season? I believe that the manager has already stated publicly that he has failed to replace Ewan McNeil, Jordan McGregor and Callum Crane all of whom were pivotal in the system which was successfully deployed in the second half of last season. McGregor and Crane were of course both on development loans from Hibs and were both outstanding players who were always going to be difficult to replace. In addition Jordyn Sheerin has not yet managed to find the net as regularly as Blair Henderson did although in Jordyn's defence he has quite often been left isolated up front on his own and he hasn't had the benefit of wing backs of the calibre of McNeil and Crane to provide him with the service Henderson enjoyed. John Coughlin stated at the recent Trust AGM that he feels that Jordyn has yet to catch fire so hopefully he will do so in the second half of the season.

There has also been the question of Rangers' discipline or rather the lack of it with 8 red cards so far this season. This has the double

whammy of not only leaving the team short handed on the day but means the player sent off is automatically suspended for the next game or in some instances, two or three games, which doesn't help the manager when he is operating with a small squad. The sending offs have also cost Rangers points with Clyde and Cowdenbeath scoring late winners and equalisers respectively following Berwick players receiving red cards in these games.

Questions are also being asked about Manager John Coughlin. I like John and he has done a lot of good things for Berwick Rangers. None of us will forget that he led us to the Third Division title in 2006/2007 the year after losing out on the title on goal difference to Cowdenbeath and then losing 5 of his main players to Stenhousemuir. Nor should we forget what he did last season in steering Rangers away from the foot of the table to mid table security. However, he is currently looking at an unenviable hat trick. Is he going to be remembered as the manager who lost 3-0 to Spartans, 3-2 to Hawick and who presided over relegation to the Lowland League? Hopefully, he will pull the same rabbits out of the hat which he pulled last year but at the moment I get the sense that he is more like a rabbit caught in the glare of the headlights and that he doesn't really know what to do to arrest the team's slide. He is an honourable man as was demonstrated by his offer to resign following the defeat by Hawick but in his most recent interview on Berwick Rangers TV following the Hogmanay defeat to Edinburgh City whilst he was as honest as ever, he had the air of a beaten man who didn't know which way to turn next. Hopefully, he was just deflated following the abject display he had just witnessed along with the rest of us and that like last season he will take us on a second half surge up the league table away from a possible doomsday scenario on Saturday 20 May.

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

asks MICHAEL SMYTH

Quite a lot I'd say and here, I also include nicknames. O.K. I'll get it off my chest. I don't like the frequent reference to our club as the 'Gers. Yes, we are (Berwick) Rangers but this particular diminutive form of our second name was for a long time the preserve of a more famous club based in Glasgow.

A variant of this is the 'Wee 'Gers'. One problem with this is that if you say it quickly, it sounds as if you are referring to a people of western China, the Uighurs. A long time back, a particularly stiff sports presenter on Border Television made a habit of doing this. The rallying call 'Follow the Wee 'Gers!' appears on the black and gold posters advertising home fixtures. As the club is responsible for publishing these, it must be assumed that it is comfortable with this nickname which at least differentiates us from our Glasgow namesakes. Given the limited space on the posters, I can see why it has opted for this and it avoids repeating the full name which sits above it. It could also be argued that something short and catchy is needed to attract people's attention.

Ah, the shortened form, so prevalent in these days of e-mails and especially, texting. But the club website is not a form of either and if 'Gers is in the headline for a club story, you can be pretty sure it will be repeated several times in the main body of the report most likely to the exclusion of alternatives e.g. 'Berwick', 'Rangers' or 'The Black and Gold'. Then there is 'The Borderers' which was introduced by former chairman Alex Macnab and appears on some of the club's merchandise. From the terraces, you might hear supporters shouting, 'Come on the 'Gers' but more often they shout for 'Berwick' or 'Rangers'. The use of 'Gers on the website is disproportionate to its use elsewhere.

This year, we celebrate the 50th anniversary

of the club's most famous match when we beat THE 'Gers 1-0 in the Scottish Cup in January, 1967. In the official programme for the game, all references to the 'Gers indicate the visitors. There was a delicious irony to that result as a few years earlier, THE 'Gers were the instigators of a move to kick out five clubs from the Scottish League, one of them being Berwick Rangers (no Lowland league in those days from which to try and work your way back in). Relations between the two Rangers may be amicable enough these days but some of us around at that time have certainly never forgotten nor, in some cases, forgiven the Ibrox club for their suggestion which, with initial backing from many other clubs, had a good chance of becoming a reality, another reason why labelling Berwick as the 'Gers tends to rankle. Anyway, ignoring the old adage that 'imitation is the sincerest form of flattery', it would be understandable if supporters of the Glasgow club were peeved about us pinching their nickname.

There are a couple of recent instances when supporters have been unhappy with clubs' nomenclature, either already in place or proposed. A few months ago, those of Leeds-based rugby league club Hunslet voted to ditch the appendage 'Hawks' and revert to simply being Hunslet R.L.F.C. Further east, Hull City A.F.C. fans were adamant that its Egyptian-born owner should not change the name to Hull Tigers on the premise that this would enhance commercial and marketing prospects. Nothing wrong though with 'Tigers' as a nickname reflecting the club's traditional shirts---not dissimilar to those of Berwick Rangers.

Going back to Berwick Rangers, of course there are more important issues especially in this difficult season we are experiencing. Maybe I am in a minority of one. Perhaps you'll let me know.

# 'PEA' OLIVER

**Nineteen different managers, admirer and confidant of Dave Smith, a testimonial in 2004. Some of the experiences of 'Pea' Oliver, long serving backroom 'boy' at Berwick Rangers and guest speaker at Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust AGM in December. He does not know the origin of the nickname. The club programme suggests his real name is 'Ian' but even that is not strictly correct. He was christened 'John James' but soon began to be called 'Ian'.**

'Pea' was born in Jedburgh in 1939. His mother was from Ireland, his father from the Berwick area and the family moved to Berwick a few months after his birth.

He played football for then East of Scotland League club Chirnside United. He is precise when recalling that on February 1st, 1958,

he played for the Berwickshire club in a home Scottish Cup 1st Round tie against top flight Scottish League side Third Lanark at Croft Field. The Glasgow team won 4-0. (In the same round, Berwick Rangers lost 3-1 at Albion Rovers). It took three matches against Babcock and Wilcox before Chirnside qualified for the Cup proper. They drew at home and then away in the replay. In those days, the venue for a second

replay was decided by the toss of a coin. Chirnside won that and the match.

Berwick Rangers got wind of it when Southampton offered the young centre forward the chance of a trial and, as his local club, it seemed natural to sign for them. That was also in 1958. That particular stay at Shielfield was short and he went on to play for Alnwick Town.

In 1977, Berwick director James F. Reed asked him to help with the club's Reserves. Dave Smith was player manager, one of nineteen bosses under whom he has worked. 'Pea' rates Smith as Berwick's best ever player commenting, "I never saw him tackle an opponent. He just took the ball off people."

That Smith was in the Glasgow Rangers team beaten by Berwick in 1967 was part

of a football double twist. Berwick's player manager and goalkeeping hero that day, Jock Wallace, later managed the Ibrox club. One of the consequences of the shock result at Shielfield was the departure from the defeated Rangers of forwards Jim Forrest and George McLean. Dave Smith told 'Pea' that had they remained, the Scottish club would have won the European Cup Winners' Cup Final against

Bayern Munich at the end of that season. Roger Hynd, more of a centre half than centre forward, took one of the places up front.

'Pea' names Frank Connor as the best manager he remembers at Berwick. "Well organised and strong on discipline." Others in the hot seat during his time include Jim McSherry (as a player/coach), Eric Tait, John Anderson (a very short tenure), Jimmy Crease, Tom Hendrie, Jimmy Thomson (twice) and Paul Smith. He almost did a stint as temporary manager himself. He was informed by chairman Mike Elliot on a Thursday night that the current gaffer had resigned and asked 'Pea' to take the team for the match on the coming Saturday. It didn't happen because the man in charge had a change of heart and was back in control.....until he resigned again the following week!

As official kitman for the first team, he has met a lot of nice people including other clubs'

kitmen, picking out the 'great set of blokes at Montrose' for particular praise. He also made special mention of the hospitality extended by (Glasgow) Rangers towards Berwick a few years back when the Ibrox club had Ally McCoist and Ian

Durrant at the helm. The only SPFL ground he has yet to visit is that of Inverness Caledonian Thistle. Asked which grounds he liked least, he opted for Albion Rovers' Cliftonhill Park in Coatbridge and East Stirlingshire's old home, Firs Park in Falkirk.

For 35 years, 'Pea's' day job was with the Pringle of Scotland knitwear company in Berwick, their mill in Tweedmouth now long since closed. Various events were held as part of his testimonial at the football club including a match between Berwick Rangers and Falkirk. Son Neil, who had played for both clubs, was behind this as he was a very good friend of Falkirk manager John 'Yogi' Hughes, himself also an ex-Berwick Ranger. Neil made a guest appearance for Berwick in the second half.

At 77, this will be 'Pea's' final season in an official capacity but he will remain a supporter of the club. In the current campaign, there have been more downs than ups. "Coming back from Elgin was really hard," was how he summed up his feelings after the long trip north finished with Rangers lucky to escape with 'only' a 6-0 howling.

He makes a couple of points regarding off field matters. About the debate over whether the club was founded in 1884 or three years earlier, his view is that the club board debated the matter and decided to stick with 1881 so that should be it. Also, the Supporters Club and Supporters Trust should be working together for the club. 'Pea', we do try.



Photo by Ross Aitchison



John Coughlin, one of 19 managers in Pea's time at the club (Photo by Alistair Grieve)

# SPFL DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

by MICHAEL SMYTH

One small crumb of comfort for Berwick fans has been to see the Under 20s sitting top of the table in the Development League East, having been pacesetters for practically all of the season so far. But before we get carried away, a warning came in the form of a heavy defeat at Stirling in the final game before the midwinter break.

Unfortunately, only two of their opening ten league matches were played at Shielfield. A couple were switched to other venues whilst one against Livingston was postponed for reasons unrelated to football.

The team's first competitive game was also away, a First Round SFA Youth Cup tie at Dunfermline. Berwick lost 3-1 after extra time after it finished at 1-1 over 90 minutes.

When the league programme got underway, Berwick embarked on a four match unbeaten run starting with a gritty 2-0 win at Livingston. Next, at Shielfield, they held on to beat last season's champions Stirling Albion 4-3 after going in 3-0 up at half time. This was followed by a 2-all draw with Cowdenbeath at New Central Park in Kelty, a match they really should have won. Back at Shielfield, a 2-1 scoreline against Forfar was Berwick's first ever DL win over the young Loons.

The first defeat came at Alloa before another couple of trips across the Forth Road Bridge brought a 6-3 success against Raith Rovers and a 6-0 rout of Cowdenbeath. These games were also played at Kelty Hearts' ground which both Fife teams are using as home base this season.

The loss at Alloa was partly due to a poor start and it was a similar story at Station Park where Forfar avenged their earlier defeat with a 3-1 victory. Former Berwick forward Jim Lister was amongst their scorers. Berwick shrugged off this defeat with an impressive 4-1 win back at Alloa but really hit the buffers on the Forthbank Astro in mid December. It was practically a repeat of eleven months earlier when Stirling Albion won 7-0. This time, the margin was down to 5-0 and it was different first teamers causing most of the damage, Ross Kavanagh and Darren Smith. Not that Berwick could complain. The rules still allow for up to five overage players on a team's lines and Rangers themselves had five first team fringe men on the pitch. Sean Brennan could not be faulted for the goals but worryingly, none of the others did much to enhance their prospects of gaining a permanent starting spot in the senior XI. Soon afterwards, one of them, Barry Hogg, departed the club.

A rare instance of Berwick fielding an established first teamer occurred when Michael McKenna ( under suspension from SPFL games ) played, scored and was injured in the match against Raith.

The team resumed DL activity on January 23rd in the rearranged fixture at home to Livingston and used the opportunity to give a run out to two Dutch trialists. It looked like they would be part of a winning team until a late equaliser cancelled out Sam Perez's first half goal.

Dunbar-based Jack Cook made his official debut in that match and, as a late sub, so did Scott Sutherland, signed from Cowdenbeath's Under 20s for whom he scored both goals

against Berwick in the aforementioned 2-2 draw. Amongst players signed earlier is another Dunbar lad, Jamie Chapman. A student at Edinburgh College, he was selected for the Scotland Schools F.A.'s Under 18 squad. The Scott twins from Penicuik, Kyle and Stephen, have returned having appeared on a number of occasions during the 2014-15 season.

Though there is a nucleus of players from last time round, Rangers' boss John Coughlin believes the all round quality in the squad is now better. Head of Youth Coaching Derek McKenzie feels it is important that the boys gain experience against men if they are to step up to SPFL level. ( On that basis, the experience at Stirling could be viewed as being

of possible longer term benefit. ) With this in mind, some gaps in the fixture calendar have been filled with friendlies against Junior clubs. Most of the squad turn out for Junior outfits at weekends... when they are not required on the first team

bench. Without the likes of Daniel Watt, Ally McDonald and Gary Dolan there would have been occasions when Berwick could not have listed a full set of substitutes for SPFL 2 matches though on field opportunities for these players at this level have been limited.

Back in the Development League, one welcome change was the abolition of the rule whereby teams had to name a substitute goalkeeper. Sometimes, a club might struggle to find a specialist replacement and in all probability, whoever was named would spend a wasted night sitting in the dugout with little prospect of being called upon.



Sam Perez on the ball v. Livingston (Photo by Alan Bell)



Action v. Livingston 23.1.17 (Photo by Alan Bell)

# LOCKED OUT IN PISA

## GORDON DICKSON ON THE FOOTBALL SITUATION IN PISA ON A VISIT LAST YEAR

For millions of people, the Italian city of Pisa is known for one thing, its leaning tower. As being known for one thing goes, the leaning tower is right up there. It has to be in the top ten most recognisable buildings in the world and, for Pisa, it's the goose that laid the golden egg. Or rather a whole batch of golden eggs as for most

days of the year thousands of business opportunities (tourists) pile off the tour buses, cruise ships and out of the train station, all heading for the tower. Many are there to take on that pose where, if you get it right, it can look like you're propping up the tower and saving it from the inevitable

collapse. Interestingly, not many strike the pose of pushing the thing further over.

The down side is that Pisans are eternally asked for directions to the tower. We weren't in the city 20 minutes before we were asked. It's pretty straightforward as I directed this American couple in the right direction while pointing out that if they walked on for another couple of minutes they could also get to the football stadium. The latter suggestion was met with predictable indifference. Their loss. The local side are AC Pisa 1909. They have

an up and down history, having twice had to drop down to the sixth level of the pyramid for lack of money reasons. They have also enjoyed short periods rubbing shoulders with the big boys in Serie A. Amongst their alumni are former Brazilian captain Dunga and David Beckham's BFF, Diego Simeone, nowadays manager of Atletico Madrid.

The current manager is former Glasgow Ranger, Genaro Gattuso, locally nicknamed Ringo. In his first season he got them promoted to Serie B and, at the time of the visit, in the play off places for the big time in Serie A. So, in footballing terms, you could say that AC Pisa 1909 are enjoying an up in their history. However, as so always happens there is a but, or rather a BUT!

Unlike the city fathers of 800 years ago and ever since, who managed to turn an almighty mess into an unlikely success, the owners of the club have succeeded in achieving the opposite.

At this point it should be stated that the fluid situation is further confused by Italian being a (very distant) second language.

It looks as if the celebratory mood of success began to dim very quickly. The first sign of trouble was when Gattuso resigned his post, citing poor working conditions as his reason. A month later he was back in charge. Then there were problems with the stadium which meant that Pisa's home games took place in nearby Empoli. That was a temporary affair as they were told to return to their home city. BUT, the problem with the stadium remained unresolved and the next home game against

Ascoli loomed large. With neither party giving a 25mm the inevitable happened. The game was to go ahead but the gates were closed and the fans were locked out.

We arrived in Pisa unaware of the politics that was going to deny me and 4000 Pisans their football fix. We alighted into a bar on the way up to the stadium to seek out the tickets situation. It so happened that the owner, Daniele, was a dyed in the wool supporter and it was he that gave us the news. He did mention something about the fans were still going to turn up but what this was all about wasn't clear. Anyway, a couple of beers later we went off to deek the second most important thing in Pisa.



Pisa fans (Photo by Gordon Dickson)

On the day of the game we had wandered around the city for most of the morning. Sure enough, there were black and blue scarves and strips apparent around the town and, bearing in mind Daniele's words, it wasn't much of a detour to the stadium. As we approached, more and more fans appeared and by the time we reached the street behind the home curva there was a match day feel about the place. Souvenir stalls, burger vans, beer tents were all evident. The whole street was buzzing with all kinds of supporters enjoying the sun, taking a drink and generally

having a good crack. Except, that was it. The gates were closed and the street was the closest these fans were getting to the game. This was not so much a demonstration as an act of defiance. They had come to support their team. Even if the players couldn't see them, they were going to hear them. The full repertoire of chants and songs was duly delivered and the celebration as Pisa took the lead was something else! Sure there was a bit of discontent and the banners draped on the perimeter fence displayed the feelings of those in the street. Nevertheless, there was a great atmosphere and no threat or aggression was displayed. The fence would have been climbable and the gates didn't look that strong (which possibly indicates why the place wasn't deemed suitable and why we were in the street). There was no policing or stewarding, nor was there a need for it. The cross section of fans was striking, old and young, male and female and from all backgrounds, as far as I could tell. They were rewarded with a 2-1 "home" win. The day was finished off perfectly as the players climbed up the empty terrace and on to the fence overlooking the street to join their celebrations with the supporters outside. A brilliant gesture by the players in days when the gap between fans and players is ever widening. Not in Pisa.

In the ensuing days and weeks there seems to have been a gradual return to normality and parts of the stadium have reopened. Whether the underlying issues have been solved, I rather doubt it, but a way has been found that doesn't penalise those least responsible and most affected by the dispute.

So if you're ever in Pisa have a quick look at the tower then get yourselves down to the match. Call in at Daniele's bar (just outside the city gates on the way to the stadium – Bar Nerone). From the rooftop terrace you can see the tower, have a cheap beer and take in the pre-match atmosphere. What else would you want?



A post match poster (Photo by Gordon Dickson)

# BERWICK RANGERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

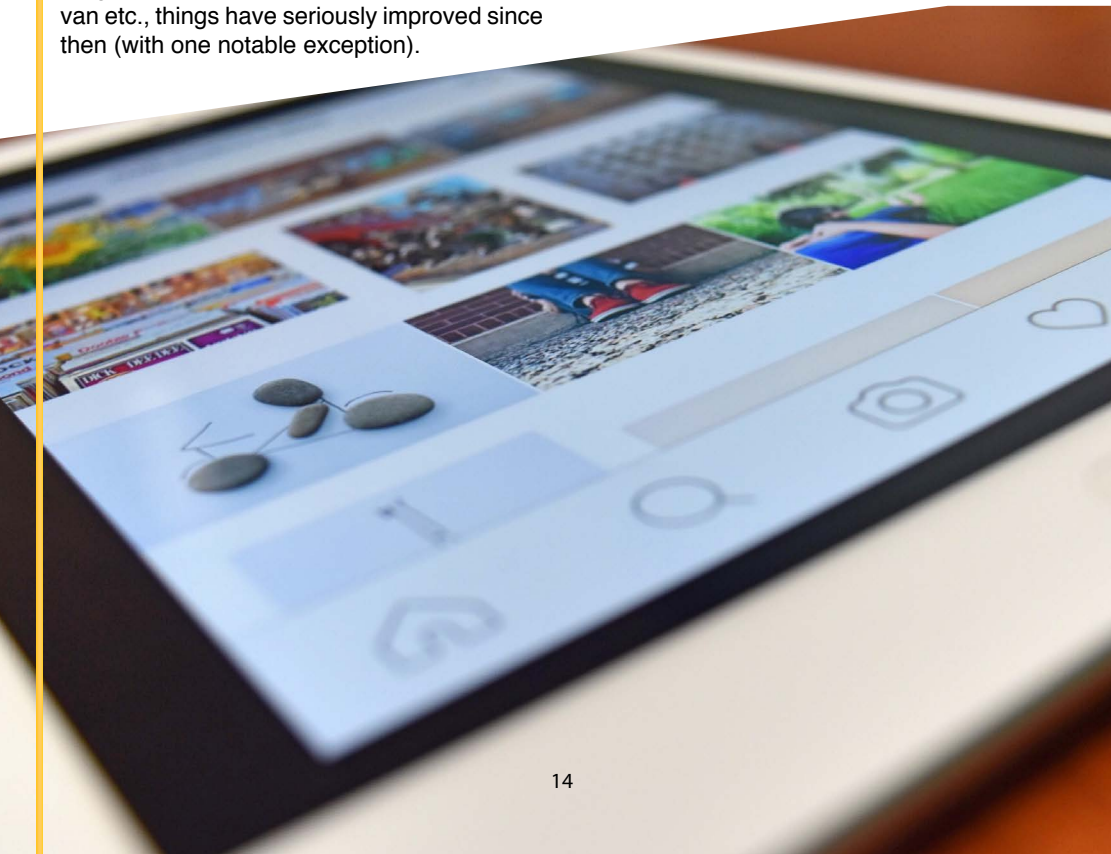
## STUART BELL SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON HOW THE CLUB IS REPRESENTED ON THE NUMEROUS FORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

I imagine that if someone stubs his toe in Prior Park during the 6 O'clock News, everyone in Castlegate will know about it before Emmerdale. Berwick strikes me as the kind of place where everybody knows everybody else's business. Down here in Redcar I have to rely on the media for any snippets of news. And by media, I essentially mean social media. A year or two back, the club was led screaming and kicking to get down with the yooof and whilst I would always like more info on things like current suspensions, injury progress, innovative fatty snacks in the chip van etc., things have seriously improved since then (with one notable exception).

I should add that I am not a slave to the webosphere and maybe I miss some decent stuff. So, these are my personal opinions of websites/social media, based on my own experiences.

### TIZER ONLINE

The Berwick Advertiser has a dedicated tab leading to articles on the Dream Team. All too often they are crappy reports based on some anodyne press release from some provincial Caledonian Comic and the home reports are fairly bog standard affairs.



(This bloke scored, that bloke got sent off, it was another bloke's turn for an almighty cock-up, etc. etc.) But occasionally they will run an interview with John Coughlin which doesn't appear anywhere else, so it is sometimes worthy of a click.

### BERWICK RANGERS APP

Promised lots when it was – commendably – launched, but delivered little. Unimpressed, I deleted it after a while to save memory on my phone. You can download it still from Google Playstore, and I tried 3 times this week only to find that it wouldn't work!

### BERWICK RANGERS WEBSITE

I like the official website, but tend to access it through social media alerts rather than logging into it direct. It is kept pretty well up to date (though with the occasional blip) and has good features on the players, club history the under 20s etc. There are working links to the Supporters Club and the Trust and a link to the online shop. All in all, a decent effort.

### YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The club has its own dedicated channel on YouTube. So lots of post-match interviews by Eric Tait and match highlights. Links are posted on social media and the updates are usually there within a day or two of the match. A very useful way to catch up on the action and reaction, if you miss a game.

### TWITTER

Some great coverage of goal alerts, other live action and team news from the official BRFC Tweeter. It is the best site for getting live info during a match if you couldn't be pestered to go and are sat in the pub. Just occasionally though the man in charge is also sat in the pub, so you are largely goosed.

Other posters include players (who have to be careful what they say) and fans, including an acerbically entertaining local micropublican.

### PIE AND BOVRIL

A fans forum for all Scottish Clubs. For many

years my chief source of good information about the club, including potential signings, match reports and strong opinions in what were excellent debates about the club. Some of that still happens, but it has to fight for pixels with senseless, feeble and aggressive trolls, tapping bile into their tablets till the sun comes up, convinced that they are sharing some cutting edge wit and repartee. If you think Birds of Feather isn't very funny, you should read this excruciating tosh.

It is said that given an infinite amount of time, a monkey on a typewriter would produce the complete works of Shakespeare. Well, if it ever came up with drivel of this magnitude the monkey would crumple it up and throw it in the bin. Shame, because when it is good, this forum is very, very good.

### INSTAGRAM

A photo/video sharing site that has some decent posts from fans and even players such as the legend's son Ben Tait and Geordie Spaniard Sam Perez. Also used to showcase goals on video from behind the back of the net. An unusual and entertaining angle, though I don't seem to see them too often now.

### FACEBOOK

Always the first place I see news about the club (other than on match days). A great improvement on the days of the "Friday update". All involved should be proud of how much the information flow has improved in the last year and Facebook is the pivot for a lot of it. There are Links to those highlights on YouTube, transfer and injury news, info on other events, fantastic pictures from Ian Runciman, etc. etc. I should also add that the Supporters Trust are well established on Facebook, especially with their Development team news and match reports.

### SNAPCHAT, WHATSAPP etc

No idea. I'm 61.



# 1967 ANNIVERSARY DINNER

by DAVID SPENCE

Over one hundred and forty people attended a packed Black & Gold Club on Friday, 20th January, 2017 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Berwick Rangers' famous 1-0 victory over Glasgow Rangers in the 1st round of the Scottish Cup.

To this day this is still considered by most people as the biggest upset in the history of the competition. At the time, Glasgow Rangers were the Scottish Cup holders having defeated Celtic 1-0 in a replay of the final the previous season. It was the very first time they had been knocked out in the first round. They fielded nine internationals (eight Scottish and one Danish) that day, and were runners up in The European Cup Winners' Cup later that season - beaten narrowly by Bayern Munich in the final.

Six of the seven surviving Berwick Rangers players listed that historic day were in attendance - Gordon Haig, Ian Riddell, Russell Craig, Doug Coutts, Alan Ainslie and substitute Andy Rogers. The other surviving player, Tommy Lumsden, who runs a bar in Santa Ponsa, Spain, was unable to attend but sent his best wishes to all at the club. Also in attendance were two representatives from Glasgow Rangers - Dave Smith and Willie Johnston. Dave of course is fondly remembered by Berwick fans as a very successful player/manager from 1976 to 1980, and was in fact voted our player of the



Photo by Brendan Thorburn

last millennium.

At the start of the event, Associate Director Jimmy Crease welcomed all attendees. Then The Reverend Cartwright said grace before the meal was served.

An excellent celebration meal was prepared by staff from The Black & Gold which consisted of a starter course of vegetable soup, a main course of roast beef with various vegetables or a vegetarian option, then a mixed fruit pavlova pudding.

During the meal and at various other times throughout the evening the background music played consisted entirely of songs which were hits in the pop charts of 1967.

An Irish Bingo was held after the meal courtesy of 'Pea' Oliver who also kept everyone entertained with some funny stories from his time of being involved with the football club.

Former Clyde, Chelsea, Everton, Tranmere Rovers, Kilmarnock and Scotland player Pat Nevin was guest speaker for the evening. He entertained the audience with an insight into his long career which included 28 caps for Scotland and told some funny stories from his time as a professional footballer.

Other speakers on the night included Russell Craig and Eric Tait. Russell told the audience all about the build up to the match, which included all the team going to watch a war film at the cinema the night before! He also recalled the lead up to the match on the day itself and the celebrations at night after the victory. Eric spoke about his memories of the game as a fifteen year old standing in the Duckett shouting Berwick to victory.



Russell Craig addresses the audience (Photo by Ian Beresford)

There was also a question and answer session in which anyone attending could ask any of the players involved on the day (including the two from Glasgow Rangers) about their memories of the occasion.

An auction of replica strips for all twelve Berwick players involved in the 1967 game complete with names and numbers on the back was held near the end of the night and raised in the region of one thousand pounds for the club.

At the end of a very memorable and nostalgic night Berwick Rangers Chairman Len Eyre proposed a vote of thanks to all of the players from 1967 and all others in attendance.

**The teams that famous day on 28th January, 1967:**

**Berwick Rangers** - Jock Wallace, Gordon Haig, Ian Riddell, Russell Craig, Doug Coutts (Captain), Jim Kilgannon, Tommy Lumsden, Sammy Reid, George Christie, Kenny Dowds, Alan Ainslie. Substitute - Andy Rogers,

**Glasgow Rangers** - Norrie Martin, Kai Johansen, Davie Provan, John Greig (Captain), Ronnie McKinnon, Dave Smith, Willie Henderson, Jim Forrest, George McLean, Alex Smith, Willie Johnston. Substitute - Davie Wilson.

HT 1-0

FT 1-0

Scorer - Reid (32 mins)

Referee - E.Thomson, Edinburgh

Linesmen - G.Preston, Edinburgh, A. Grant, Edinburgh.

Attendance - 13,365.

# AN INTERNATIONAL EVERY WEEK

ISBN 978-0-9935882-0-4

As a body, Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust remains neutral in the debate about whether Berwick Rangers Football Club was formed in 1881 or 1884. Individual members may have their own views of course.

From the sub title, 'A History and Journal of Berwick Rangers Football Club 1884 to 1914', Alan Bell, author of 'An International Every Week' (Hawkyard Publications) is convinced that the later date is correct. A newspaper extract dated January, 1884, which is reproduced early in the book, offers what he believes to be conclusive proof of the club's formation date.

Yet, even if you remain in the 1881 camp, this publication should be of interest. The credits on page 2 clearly suggest long and painstaking research in libraries on both sides of the border and at Berwick Record Office.

Alan reveals that in season 1884/85, Berwick Rangers played only friendlies, a total of fourteen in all from November through to April. They played teams from both Scotland and England including three others from within 'Greater Berwick', Royal Oaks, Tweedside Wanderers (from Tweedmouth) and Seaside Rovers (Spittal).

By 1895, another Tweedmouth team, Dock View Harriers, had appeared, Rangers beating them twice. Other 19th century opponents included teams from surrounding villages which today would be hard pressed to muster enough players to build a squad; Galagate Lads from Norham, Horncliffe Ramblers and

Swinton Athletic.

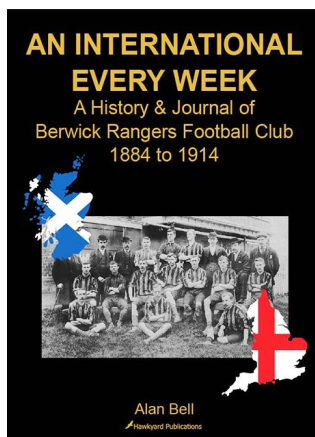
For the majority of games covered over the 20 year period of the book, there are match reports, some more detailed than others. The Rangers' line-up is usually given and sometimes that of the opposition.

In 1901/02, Berwick Rangers were one of seven clubs to form the new Border League comprising three English and four Scottish clubs. In 1904/05, Berwick played in the Northumberland League.

The volume identifies 1905/06 as the season in which Berwick Rangers officially changed affiliation from England to Scotland and explains the reason for this. Some other names still around today appear in the results table for that season including teams representing Hamilton Academical, Heart of Midlothian, Partick Thistle and Cowdenbeath.

The chapter on the book's final season, 1914/15, is relatively short because of the intervention of the Great War.

In total, it comprises 335 pages with illustrations, both black and white and colour. The context of each season is described in an introductory piece to each with relevant statistics rounding off each campaign. The book is available through all booksellers at £20 or by cheque for £22.50 (includes postage and packaging) directly from the author at 146, Main Street, Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 1RD. E-mail hawkyard.ab@btinternet.com for further details or enquiries re other methods of payment.



# A MATCH TO REMEMBER

Saturday, April 29th, 1995 Scottish League Division 2  
BERWICK RANGERS 3 GREENOCK MORTON 4

**As you get older so the memory goes so I hope the facts I give aren't too far from the truth. The game that day was a cracker. In fact nobody deserved to lose. However, sod's law, it had to be us.**

The thing that stood out was that neither side played defensively and the scoreline could easily have been 6-6. From the first whistle both teams attacked and after 5 minutes, the 'Dream Team' went ahead thanks to Warren Hawke. With a good sized crowd (992) inside the ground, the atmosphere was electric and got even better in the 17th minute when Berwick increased their lead with a scrambled goal from Hawke.

Unfortunately, within the space of three minutes, Morton squared things up, Dennis Lilley scoring in the 22nd and 25th minutes. His second was an extremely contentious penalty awarded when Neil Young, who was having a great game in goal, was adjudged to have fouled McInnes in the box. The 'victim's' scores read 5.8 for technical ability and 5.9 for artistic impression! 'Gutted', 'robbed', were the words

which sprang to mind but we just had to get on with it and keep at them but a man short



Warren Hawke

as Young was sent off. Sub Marc Osbourne came on and took over between the posts.

We might have scored again sooner but not for the first time, keeper Wylie saved them. Eventually, on the 38 minute mark, we took the lead again with an absolute belter, our Warren getting his hat trick with a volley from about 25-30 yards. The place went ballistic. Somehow, we held on to half time.

The second half began with Morton kicking downhill against our ten men. We gave as good as we got but missed a couple of half chances. On the hour, they equalised for the second time. It was

probably inevitable against ten part time players but we made them sweat for it. They cranked up the pressure but still we wouldn't give in. Then with a couple of minutes to go, they scored the winner. We had run out of steam.

Still, what a game! We gave the lads right royal applause when they came off. It was a shame as defeat just about ended our promotion hopes but the players could hold their heads high.

It's disappointing we don't get as many games like this at Shielfield these days. All we can do is hope they come back in abundance.

**Berwick Rangers:** N.Young, C.Valentine, A.Banks, A.Reid, M.Cowan, G.Fraser, (M.Wilson 89), P.Forrester (M.Osbourne 25), M.Neil, W.Hawke, W.Irvine, K.Kane (T.Graham 89)

*Footnote: Greenock Morton finished the season as champions and were promoted along with runners-up Dumbarton.*

**STUART LEE**

### STUCK FOR A PRESENT FOR A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER?

Why not enrol them as a member of Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust? Adult membership costs as little as £2 per month or a single payment of £24 per annum though you can donate more if you wish. Junior membership ( for under 16s ) is only £5 per annum. One possible method of payment is via a PayPal subscription. Please see our

website [www.berwickrangers.org](http://www.berwickrangers.org) for more details.

All new members receive a membership pack. In addition, free copies of this twice yearly publication are distributed to everyone in the Trust.



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# TWEEDMOUTH RANGERS

Berwick Rangers' nearest neighbours Tweedmouth Rangers, who play on Old Shielfield, are having a stop start first season in East of Scotland football. Their opening fixture at home to Leith Athletic in the Qualifying League ( to determine places in the League Cup proper ) was belatedly called off because of delays in getting international clearances. Not that they were trying to stack the team with Brazilians, Italians or even the odd Spaniard. It was those who had been playing in English soccer who needed to get the green light now that Tweedmouth had switched to the East League and the Scottish F.A. after leaving the North Northumberland League.

After a 1-1 draw away to powerful Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale in Edinburgh at the beginning of November, they didn't play again for five weeks primarily due to pitch conditions. The rearranged Qualifying League fixture with Leith was one of the games called off. The one match in December was lost 1-0 at home to Tynecastle for whom Louis Swanson, brother of former Berwick favourite Danny Swanson, scored with a cracking free kick.

History repeated itself at the start of the second half of the season with the forced postponement of the return league match against Eyemouth United on January 7th because the referee pulled up with an injury

15 minutes from kick off. Luckily, the team had got some match practice a few days earlier in a friendly away to Juniors Dunbar United. The next scheduled fixture, at home to Coldstream, was also postponed because of a frozen pitch.



*Tweedmouth Rangers v. Tynecastle  
 (Photo by Alan Cockburn)*

Going into the new year, Tweedmouth's league record consisted of one win, one draw and six defeats. Though they won 5-1 at struggling Burntisland Shipyard, goals have been something of a problem for the boys in orange, failing to score in six out of fourteen competitive matches.

Though it was always likely that stepping up leagues would not be easy, Tweedmouth do have quite a few players with previous East of Scotland League experience. They include Shane McGregor, Stuart Coyle, Sean Simpson and Leigh Walker whilst centre back Kieran Ainslie was with Berwick Rangers for part of last season.

Admission to home games at Old Shielfield is by donation via the east gates of the main Shielfield stadium.

They eventually kicked off on August 6th and got something of a rude awakening going down 5-2 away to Stirling University's EoS side ( their first team is in the Lowland League ). However, a couple of 2-1 wins followed, away to Tynecastle and at home to Heriot Watt University. They were eliminated at the first stage of three cup competitions including a 7-2 loss away to Lowland League Preston Athletic in the S.F.A. South Region Challenge Cup.

# HERE AND THERE

## BONNYRIGG CUP RUN

Whilst worryingly, this season could be one that Berwick fans will remember for all the wrong reasons, it's a different story at Midlothian Junior club Bonnyrigg Rose. There is a strong Berwick connection at New Dundas Park starting with manager Robbie Horn, a former player and assistant manager at Shielfield.

Bonnyrigg qualified to take part in the Scottish Cup and played seven games in a memorable run leading to a Fifth Round tie versus Hibernian. Rose were drawn at home but for such a big match, switched venues to Hearts' Tynecastle ground.

No fewer than five members of the squad are also former Berwick Rangers men, goalkeeper Michael Andrews plus Dean Hoskins, Kerr Young, Lewis Turner and Fraser

## READ ALL ABOUT IT

The Berwick Advertiser continues to provide an accurate news service to its readers about the affairs of Berwick Rangers. According to its match report on Berwick's away game v. Clyde in November, the Bully Wee are Cambuslang-based. Ah well, it's somewhere beginning with 'C' though as all true fans will know, their current home is actually in Cumbernauld. Darren Lavery was sent off in that match. Referring to the dismissal in the following week's edition, the error was compounded by the pronouncement that he'd been sent off at Annan! Clyde certainly get around!

In the final issue of 2016, manager John Coughlin was quoted as saying, " Last season we had Jordan Forster and Calum (sic) Crane, both from Hibs,...." Er, no. Last

McLaren. Their team was amongst the goals in the early rounds. An 8-2 win at Glasgow University was followed by a 14-0 demolition of East of Scotland League side Burntisland Shipyard at home. Highland League clubs provided sterner opposition with two matches needed to see off Turriff United whilst the margin against Cove Rangers was only 2-1. SPFL Championship Dumbarton were the next visitors. In front of over 1,500 fans, the game ended goalless though some observers believed the Sons were lucky to get a second chance. They didn't take it as Bonnyrigg won the replay 1-0 with a late goal from Adam Nelson. However, in the match against Hibs it was Rose who were on the receiving end, the Championship side storming to an 8-1 win. Hoskins scored the consolation goal from the penalty spot. Former Berwick loan player Jordan Forster's was the final name on the Hibernian scoresheet.

season it was Jordan McGregor. Maybe Cough just said 'Jordan' and assumed the sports writer would know exactly whom he meant. Never a wise thing to do with the Tizer, John.



Steven Thomson scored the winning goal at Cowdenbeath (Photo by Alan Bell)

## BETTING ON BERWICK IN BEIJING AND BANGALORE

They are discreet and if spotted, could be taken for press men. But the data company men are there at SPFL 2 and even Under 20s matches. They are not gathering facts and figures for the League authorities nor the Scottish F.A. Their job is to provide up to the minute information on the state of play as an aid to those betting on the matches.

Where are these gamblers who are so interested in Cowdenbeath v Berwick Rangers or a Development League game on a cold night in Kelty? Apparently, there is a big demand in Asia for what is known as 'in-running betting' or 'live betting'. For example, based on information from the man in Scotland and relayed by smart phone, a punter in Beijing, Bangkok or Bangalore may decide to place a bet on Berwick being next to score. The big question is, do the clubs receive any licence fee for use of their fixtures in this way?

## WE KNOW THE FEELING

Like Berwick Rangers, Italian club Pisa, featured in Gordon Dickson's article, are having a tough season though their league position at the end of January was not quite as precarious as ours. After 23 matches, Pisa were 17th out of 22 clubs in Serie B on 25 points, six more than bottom of the table Trapani. On the final Saturday in the month, Pisa drew 1-1 away to Novara.

## UEFA SURVEY

UEFA's annual 'European Club Footballing Landscape' reveals that at 37%, money from gate receipts in Scotland is the highest percentage of revenue in any of its 53 national leagues. ( For Berwick Rangers, the proportion of income from this source in a normal season is likely to be lower. ) In 2015-16, attendances in Scotland totalled 2.2 million compared to 1.9 million the previous season. It was the sixth biggest increase amongst UEFA members.

## JANUARY ROUND UP

### BERWICK RANGERS

**7/1/17 SPFL 2 AWAY v. COWDENBEATH WON 1-0 ATT: 343**

Steven Thomson's late header gives all three points to Berwick who are backed by tremendous vocal support from the travelling fans.

**14/1/17 SPFL 2 AWAY v. ARBROATH LOST 1-4 ATT: 539**

Berwick take a first half lead through Michael McKenna but collapse inside the final half hour.

**21/1/17 Friendly AWAY v. STIRLING UNIVERSITY WON 3-2**

A first win of the season against Lowland League opposition. The two Dutch trialists get a run. Stevie Notman scores twice.

**28/1/17 SPFL 2 AWAY v. MONTROSE LOST 1-2 ATT: 1,222**

More misery as big Chris Templeman heads Montrose level after Rangers again take the lead through McKenna. Brian Martin gifts the home side what proves to be the winning goal.

### TWEEDMOUTH RANGERS

**21/1/17 EoSL AWAY v. PEEBLES ROVERS LOST 2-7**

Tweedmouth fall away badly in the second half after being only 2-1 down at half time. Sean Simpson scores both their goals.

**28/1/17 EoSL Qualifying league HOME v. LEITH ATHLETIC LOST 1-9**

Another heavy defeat as this game goes ahead at the third time of asking. No qualification for the Berwick club whose consolation goal comes right at the end.

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