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Transcript:

I'm Colin Addison. My football clubs were York City, Nottingham Forest, Arsenal, Sheffield Utd and then I came to Hereford Utd as player/manager.

I was very interested in getting into management and the opportunity arose. I was approached by Hereford whilst I was at Sheffield Utd, the club prior to coming here, and I was invited down just to look around, meet a few people. And I did that and was very impressed with the set-up here at Hereford and, as they say, the rest is history. I joined Hereford Utd in October 1971 and had four wonderful years here at the club, and when I did leave I stayed in the city and have lived here ever since. I like the city, my wife likes the city, our two children – one of them was born here, Lisa, and Rachel, the other one, was born at Sheffield. But we liked Hereford very very much. Even though I managed clubs abroad and far away, we kept our house here.

When I arrived I took over from the late great Jon Charles, who I got to know reasonably well, not very well. But a great man, enjoyed his company when I was with him. But a great player, a wonderful player for club and country. Jon was an absolutely magnificent player and of course the Hereford public saw Jon Charles towards the end of his career. Great man, great player and will always be remembered in Hereford and other places of course and throughout the world.

When I was approached obviously I looked into Hereford Utd's history, what league they were playing in. I knew they were geographically and on this side of the country. I'd never ever been here but I did a lot of homework and looked at the background of the club and the traditions. I need to satisfy myself – this was going to be a big decision – if I made that decision to take over as manager, but I'm glad I did.

I know when I got started in coaching towards the end of my career, I was very interested in getting into coaching and management and I did that. I was only in my late twenties then, no, I was 31 in fact when I came here as player manager. I was always very positive, very confident in my own ability, both

as a player and then as a manager/coach. I was just very positive in everything I did and I knew what I wanted to do when I came to Hereford. The club were part-time, I was full-time when I joined to give me the time to make decisions and get to know everybody and of course later on when the club went full-time when we got into the football league. But very very positive and I just looked forward to that challenge of going into football management and coaching. Later on, when the club went full time and got into the football league, I was very positive and I just looked forward to that challenge of going into football management and coaching.

Hereford was in the FA cup and the draw was made and, if you're a smaller club you have rounds to play, preliminary rounds. We had one in that great FA cup run against Cheltenham, I'll always remember that. We won it and progressed and got into the draw and had to beat Northampton Town. We had three games against them, two draws and then we won the third game at West Bromwich Albion, on neutral ground.

The FA cup was a great competition, always has been and always will be. And of course we were, Hereford Utd, were drawn with Newcastle Utd. We were southern league then, a non-league club, they were first division. And Hereford just came alive, the city and the interest. It was just electric, it was wonderful. Everyone wanted a ticket, it was a wonderful time.

We got through to the third round and drew Newcastle Utd away at St James' Park so it was an excellent draw for us and we as a club would have preferred at home but of course that was to follow because we got a wonderful result up there and performance from the players. We drew 2-2 and then Newcastle had to come here to Edgar Street, Hereford. As soon as the draw was made the interest, and around the city, with everybody, hundreds, thousands, wanted to see that game. To Newcastle I think we took four or five thousand people and that was a Monday night. So it just showed the interest in the club and in that wonderful tie, great tie against Newcastle, the great Newcastle Utd, who I think won the FA Cup on maybe four or five occasions in the history. So it was a wonderful game for us, a wonderful experience for a lot of the players, because a lot of them had never been to St James' Park, never played against a big club. I fortunately, along with one or two others, Kenny Mallender played in first division football, along with myself, and played at Newcastle. So it was a wonderful experience for them, for us all. For me as a player manager going back to play at St James' Park, wonderful venue, I think the crowd that evening was 40,000, on a wet and windy, cold January night. The game had been cancelled two weeks earlier due to the bad weather. But we really enjoyed it, the crowd got behind us.

I remember Brian Owen having the kick off and I think it was timed 18 seconds the ball lands into the Newcastle net thanks to

Brian Owen. Wonderful shot and flew into the top corner. People couldn't believe it; we couldn't believe it. When he's making the shot and looking at the goal, from where he was, we were all shouting to pass the ball, pass the ball wider, but he didn't take any notice and good job he didn't because it ended up in the top corner and we were winning one nil. Malcolm MacDonald responded, the great Malcolm MacDonald came back, and just prior to half time he made it two one. But right on half time, I don't remember what it was, about 42/43 minutes I just got latched onto a ball that had been played through and just took it forward, and I was about 25 yards out and I thought, go on, what do I do there, go on, try your luck, and I did and that flew into the bottom corner, so that gave us 2-2. Going into half time, Newcastle 2, Hereford 2, it was absolutely outstanding. I think the public thought, 'oh, we've got a game here'. Even the Newcastle players. And of course, as it turned out, that's exactly how it finished. Newcastle 2, Hereford Utd 2.

A hard second half. I can still see it now. They attacked us, but as I said, we had a very good side, experienced players, you know, Fred Possum, Mick McLoughlin, who has sadly died recently, Kenny Mallender, Alan Jones, Tony Gough, Ronnie Radford, Dougie Tyler. A side that were competitive, great characters, great lads. There was always a lovely spirit about them. I like to think I created that in the dressing room, people being together, working hard for one another and we got our 2-2 and I looked forward to our replay back at Edgar Street.

What was the atmosphere like? Well you can imagine after the game the team stayed the night, the team all stayed up there. The supporters, four or five thousand came back on the train and arrived back in Hereford about four in the morning. We shared a few beers. Nights like that don't come very often you know, to non-league clubs, and we enjoyed it. And I always remember Mick McLoughlin, who was centre defender and he just recently had taken on a new job, lived in Newport. And after the game I can see him rushing to get changed and showered. And I said, what's the rush, Mike? And he said, I'm going back on the train. I said, 'what for?' he said, 'I need to be back, Colin. I recently took on a new job and had to be there in the morning. I said new job, say two or three months. And I couldn't talk him out of it. The greatest, that night might be the greatest day of his footballing career – it wasn't because there was another day to come ten or twelve days later – but he got on that train and travelled back and was at work at 8 o'clock in the morning at Newport the next day. That's the sort of character I was working with. We couldn't believe it but he did it. All the players tried to talk him out of it. I can see it now, the players going up to him, Meadows, Ricky George, Radford, and he wouldn't have it. He went back and it shows great character.

I didn't feel pressure, not at all. The pressure was on Newcastle. They had to come here. They had the chance at home of

course in front of 40,000 supporters. No pressure. It was a lovely feeling, we had a chance to make history, to make big news and of course we did. But that period between the two games was wonderful in Hereford because everyone wanted a ticket. Everybody was so excited about the prospect of the great Newcastle Utd coming to play Hereford Utd in Edgar street. And they couldn't wait for it. We couldn't wait for it. Along the way we just got on with our league matches, I think we had maybe two or three league matches. I know we kept the players focussed because it was so important, we wanted to win the league as well. We wanted a Newcastle game, which was a lovely bonus, so we got them at home. We might win, we might lose, but that was secondary, we had to keep the league going, we wanted to win the southern league to get into the football league. The lads were good; their attitudes were good.

I can still see people down and roundabout still trying to get tickets. It was a complete sell out, I think 15 or 16 thousand, I can't recall. I do recall a lovely little story that I must tell you, that when we got back from Gloucester on the train the following day, this place when we arrived here, we came over by car – there were only half a dozen of us lived here, Ken Mallender, Roger Griffiths, myself, Peter Isaacs, Alan Rogerson – there were so many people you thought there was a game on. Four o'clock on the following afternoon, after the game, on the Tuesday, they're selling tickets, and I walk in the board room and the chairman's there, Frank Miles, and all the directors, and the phones are going and they're selling tickets. Arthur Bush, the vice chairman, came rushing in and at the top of his voice shouted: 'Frank we have a big problem, a big big problem'. And he said, 'what is it Arthur?' 'We've sold out of tickets.' And down the end of the table was the then chief of police, John Keat and I'll never forget Frank Miles saying to him and he looked at him and he looked at Arthur Bush and said: 'Silence Don't worry about it Arthur. John, we'll print some more. Is that alright?' to the chief of police. And his answer was: 'Well, yes, but not too many.' True story.

The day of the match itself I think was the shortest day of my life. We met for a pre-match meal as we had been doing anyway. The players being part-time were scattered all over the country: Radford in Cheltenham, McLoughlin in Newport, Alan Jones in Swansea, so I didn't like people just turning up and walking in to the dressing room, and getting changed, and who's playing today, type of thing. Because they were all scattered I introduced pre-match meals, some of them had had it before at other clubs. I thought it was so important for us to be together and not just turn up at two o'clock in the afternoon. One was a little bit late, got stuck in traffic at Ross-on-Wye, you know it was a shambles. I said, do you always do this. And that was the one and only time and then I got them in for pre-match meal. Wasn't much, poached eggs on toast, tea, coffee, whatever, but they were together, they were here, with their minds on

football, not driving in the car and worrying about traffic and whatever. But I remember it cost about a pound a head down at the Spread Eagle, still there now. And I remember at a board meeting the vice chairman, a guy called Arthur Bush brought up any other business, and he brings that up. 'yes, I would like to ask the manager Colin Addison, why have you started pre-match meals, it's more money.' I think he had a receipt there, it was £16 it was for players and three staff, me, Peter Isaacs and somebody else. But I just looked at him so when he finished I said, 'can I answer that, Arthur?' 'That £19 that we spend now in this football club is the most important £19 of the week as far as I'm concerned and I'll tell you why. Because you've got McLoughlin lives in Newport, Jonesy in Swansea, two in London, two in Bath, one in Birmingham, Freddie Potter, Ronnie Radford – I said they're in cars. The first time I got here, I said, four or five hadn't turned up and the instruction was to be here at 1.45 and they hadn't arrived. It was unprofessional, very amateurish. This will improve the club in terms of status and in terms of professionalism, getting players in early, they want to bring the wives and families and let them go and shop, they come with me for a pre-match meal, they relax, get focussed on the football at three o'clock. I don't know how they did it before because Peter Isaacs told me that's what used to happen. Trying to get into Hereford on a Saturday, any Saturday, coming over that bridge. He looked at it – Arthur Bush was financially a very astute man shall we say, can we save this, can we save that, anyway we didn't' change. I said if you're going to have a vote on this I'll pay it myself. I remember saying that, I'll pay it myself. So important. Where I've come from I'm used to that and that's what I want Hereford Utd to get used to. And of course we did all the way through.

The big day itself all the preparation was all there, the excitement the colour, everything was black and white, the balloons. It was just like Christmas again or a big birthday, like celebrating the Queen's birthday. We had the pre-match meal, Newcastle were in town, the TV and the cameras. The interviews I did, not only me but the players and staff, directors, everybody, it was awash with the media, from all over the country, London, Birmingham, the Midlands, Gary Newbon I recall was here. Some of them lived here, there was a story every day. But the big day arrived and it was, well, you had to pinch yourself and keep a lid on it, players arrived for pre-match meal. They knew the team the day before. There were no injuries, went down for the pre-match meal, just a light meal, like tea and toast. There wasn't' enough room at the Spread Eagle then to just relax for an hour. And my friend then who was manager at the Green Dragon let us have the lounge. He let us have the lounge private just for one hour, from 12.30 to 1.30, and we would sit in there and relax. The lads would chat, play some cards, give the team a bit of a motivational talk, did that, then we used to walk through town because we could walk to Edgar Street in three to five minutes. Through the crowds, and

they would ask to sign autographs. It was lovely, you know. It was like a film. But that's how it was, with the people and the black and white scarves. It was wonderful. Then we got here and got ourselves ready. And the crowd – I think the ground was full maybe an hour before the game. People just wanted to get in. And the big moment came and the referee blew the whistle and off we went. Cracking game. It was full of incident. They might have scored; we might have scored. The pitch was very muddy, everybody knows that. We'd had a lot of rain. It was a cracking cup tie. It was a classic, the minnows taking on the giants, what's going to happen? Can Hereford beat them, can we knock them over, can we roll them over? Newcastle are the stars with your Malcolm MacDonald's, ad Bobby McCurry, John Tudors. I think they had five internationals, but today was the big day.

I always remember saying to them, the last thing before we went out, don't let's go out and come back in and go 'if only'. I said, 'do it, be bold, be brave, make it happen, don't worry about mistakes. We might not get another chance like this. And of course as you know how it turned out, the game was 0-0, we had one or two chances, they had chances, half time comes and goes. Sadly, Roger Griffiths, who has sadly died eight or nine years ago now, played on with a broken leg, absolutely strong, he was a great little player Roger and played with a fractured leg. Had to come off at the end of 90 minutes but the point being that just prior to the end Malcolm MacDonald gets a goal, a great goal, super header, gets it just under the cross bar and a super goal and we've got to come from behind.

And we did. Long ball through the middle from Fred Potter. I can still see that ball. I don't think it bounced but it bludgeoned, and splurged through and I can see Ronnie Radford – I was quite close to Ronnie Radford – and he came out with a classic little line in his Yorkshire accent, 'get out of the way Colin, I've got it'. And of course he did have it. He got the ball and played a little pass to Brian Owen the forward, an eight or nine-yard pass. And Brian with the greatest of respect, wasn't technically the best of players, but a wholehearted runner, he was so important to us, he just knocked the ball back into his path and again as they say, the rest is history. 30/35 yards, it goes right behind it. As soon as it left his foot it just flew in. I've often said to people if there had been two goal keepers there would still have been a goal that afternoon, you wouldn't have stopped that. So that goes to 1-1 and extra time.

Roger had to come off, Roger Griffiths. I remember Peter Isaac coming on and getting a little drink and whatever. Literally two or three minutes, we didn't go off the field. Just give them a bit of motivational, come on we can do this. They're tired. I remember saying to them, look at him, Joe Harvey their manager, they're desperate now, they didn't want this. We'll take this now; they didn't want it. And tricky Ricky, Ricky George, gets us the winner. Wonderful. He just cuts inside and flashes a

great shot into the side of the net and the place just goes wild, the cheers. I remember people saying to me, we could hear the cheers from the top of Aylestone Hill and Tupsley where I live. They could hear the cheers and we're wondering what it was. We had 18000 seeing what was the winning goal. We got through, we scrapped it through. We did what we had to do to get through ad we did. What a wonderful day.

Without a doubt it was one of my career highlights. I played at Nottingham Forest for nearly six years in the First division, the equivalent of the premier league, played at all the big grounds, Manchester Utd and City's, Leicester, Chelsea, whatever, then I was transferred and played for Arsenal for just under two years, a lovely great big club, and I had some moments but they didn't come any better than that. Five divisions below first division Newcastle, and to win. It's happened in the past and smaller clubs have won, but not too many, so it was nice to join that club.

After the match the atmosphere was wonderful. The papers were full of it, the reports, films, videos, we just didn't go out of the papers. There was a story from Hereford every day and it just went on and on. But we had to get on with our football now in the league and win as many games as we can to get into the football league, that was the priority, but of course there was more to come after that game. Four days after West ham Utd came to Edgar Street for the next round. So there was break at all. It was Newcastle Saturday and West ham Wednesday. West ham was coming to town with the late great Bobby Moore, Harry Redknapp, Geoff Hurst, World Cup players coming. We didn't have a chance for a breather. We just needed to keep cool, keep calm, keep focussed on the next match. But it was easy to do for the players. Well we didn't win but we didn't lose either. But it was a great game again with West Ham Utd.

I always remember the team stayed in the Green Dragon so we couldn't go to the green dragon that day to do the team talks in the lounge. I remember bobby Moore stepping out and I was down here in the morning, and the pitch was wet and muddy, and bobby Moore stepping over and I remember opening the window of my office and saying 'Hey, Moore be careful'. He had some lovely crocodile skins shoes on and the mud was going over the top of them. Anyway, we had a little bit of a laugh about it. I said wait 'til you get out there in your football boots, they'll be worse than that. But he was a great lad bobby and it was a great game. Ron Greenwood was the manager. Again a great game and we gave as much as we got, they hit the post and we hit the bar. Another great classic cup tie. The pitch was muddy but to be fair West ham got on with it. It was a 0-0 draw and a replay in London a week later. And that was magnificent. We went out eventually. We got knocked out of the game in London, I think it's still a record crowd: 42,000 for a FA cup tie think it still stands for a FA cup tie at Upton Park. That was great. We

descended on London. I think eight or nine thousand descended on London to see the replay with West Ham.

We eventually got beat by 3-1. Geoff Hurst got a hat-trick, scored the three. And I remember Ricky George telling me a little story once. He had been doing a bit of after dinner speaking, he still does, we still keep in touch, from time to time we have reunions. I remember Ricky George speaking about the time he was asked about the West Ham game and told about Geoff Hurst scoring the hat trick. But he made the point about the cup run ending at Upton Park and eventually we got beat by a Geoff Hurst hat trick, but then again, he only scored hat tricks on very special occasions. That was brilliant from Ricky George. I told him I used that when I do after dinner speaking. Wonderful.

The 'dream team' have kept together. Sadly, we lost Roger Griffiths, Mick McLoughlin, but the others all keep in touch and ring each other even though we're scattered about so to speak. But it's good, it's great. We're due another get together. February 5th it will be 44 years but we'll probably get together sometime this season. Who knows, Hereford FC are at Wembley so who knows we might have a get together at Wembley to support Hereford.

The end of the season finished off and we didn't' actually win the league, we finished second to Chelmsford and we got voted in. you got voted in then, you had to apply for re-election - the teams that were in the bottom four had to get voted into the league and we got that. We were fortunate. I was there that day of course with the directors and staff. The first count we were 24 votes each with Barrow and then of course they had to go again and I forget exactly what it was but the main point of significance of it was that Hereford got more than Barrow, 28, 29, I can't remember what it was, but it was a long 20 minutes, a long long time when you think you've come this far, so close, and you're level with Barrow - and in the old panels act they used to talk about the ???? clubs, clubs like the Barrows and Hartlepool's and Newport's down the road here, would always get back in. they'd finish in the bottom four year after year after year, and got voted back in, and used to call It the old panels act???? Or something like that. But it didn't happen this time. Sadly, Barrow went out and we came in.

It was excellent for the club, number one, good for us all. Good for Colin Addison. I wanted to come into football management, I was in football management, I wanted to be successful, I was successful. The cup runs highlighted it all. The press and the media highlighted it all, the club, the city, everything. So for me personally it's been wonderful. I've hundreds of friends in the city I still see now and play golf with now, watch cricket with and football and whatever. It's just been me. Before I had ten years in the premier league, with Sheffield, Arsenal,

Nottingham Forest, so I'd had time in the top league, the high life, but this was different because I was coaching and managing. It was so important. They named a place behind here Addison Court. It was very nice, a wonderful thing for me and my family, to cement the success that I had given this club and the city. I was always delighted with that. I didn't expect it. Someday I get a call and a message and a letter. It meant a lot to me, means a lot to me, still living in this city I love.

Apart from when I was at Derby County as manager, we've always come back and have never sold our house. My wife was excellent. Hereford football club means a lot to the city. I mentioned a while ago John Charles. They had great managers here, John Charles, Joe Wade, Ray Daniels, John Newman, John Sillick who took over from me and took them into the second division, which was no mean feat. They've had great managers, coaches, players. And the progress of the club when they got into the football league. That's what wanted. They'd been striving for that prior to me coming. But they couldn't get there but they did eventually and they went on. All the way to the second division.

Unfortunately, the club dropped back and fell on hard times. And harder times now unfortunately. But to the fans and the city, oh yes, means a lot. Everyone loves to be associated with success up and down the country but that's been illustrated this year at Hereford FC, but over the years it's been the same. When I say the people in that first year of the league, people ask me how well we did. We got promoted in that first year in the league.

The average attendance was 7,800 used to be then in that first years in the football league. Unheard of if you had said that a few years earlier. You know you got that for a big game, a cup game or whatever. But special games, unless it was Worcester City, a big local derby, I know you used to get big crowds for that.

Fans were families. Especially in that first year of mine. Newcastle was special. It was going to be special and the excitement. The kids, the schools, they could identify with Malcolm MacDonald, the four international players, you know, it was so exciting, it started the interest. Lots of women and families came, which was great. We had season tickets of women, and families and kids. There was a lot of interest and it was new. Great cup run, great interest, lot of media television coverage, and then all of a sudden we're in the football league. It was a wonderful, wonderful four years.

Derek Evans, great man, great guy and friend. Met him in the first week I was here. Always had a camera with him, always a smile on his face, always had a joke. I just got to know him very well because he was here and what was happening and we'd talk about cup runs, and Newcastle, West Ham and into the League, selling tickets, and signing players, selling players,

something on in the boardroom, Derek did it all. And also he had a lot of work for the television. I often used to joke to him as the years went on, oh, I wish I had a pound for every time you took my photograph, Derek, I'd be a millionaire. And he used to laugh that little laugh of his. But a nice guy, a nice family guy. Used to have a game of golf now and again with him. He loved his golf at Wormsley. He loved his golf. I was a member there for a long time. People like Joe Wade, the next manager here. We all got along together. But enjoyed his company. I think at times he came around to the house doing work, doing photographs when the children were growing up, you know of my wife and the children, Lisa and Rachel. I enjoyed being with him. I recall the year Peter Isaac had a testimonial and I bought Derby County down – I was manager there then – to play in his testimonial game. Also he had arranged a golf day. And the golf day was, I think, the day after. I remember going up to Wormsley and all the players were out, I was last. I never forget walking down out of the carpark at Wormsley, with Peter and one or two press guys, I think Ted Woodriffe was alive then, I'm sure it was ted and Barry Griffiths. They said, come on Colin, you're late. I said, Peter, who am I playing with? I hope I'm not playing with that Derek Evans. And his head popped around the corner and he said: oh yes you are Mr Addison. I'll never forget that. Only joking Derek.

I can very much remember him at matches taking photos. During those four years so much happened here. Derek was there. I signed a team in the summer and I remember Derek doing every one. He was always there, always around, on the field, behind the goal as they used to do then. They don't do it so much now. I can still see Derek and Barry Griffiths, that's how it used to be in those days. When he got the pics he wanted, you'd talk about a player, he could do this or do that. He was every so keen. He was on the game with football. Yeah, he knew it. He was interesting to talk to. We used to have some laughs. We didn't agree with him on everything. I remember him saying to me one day, why did you drop Harry Gregory today? Harry Gregory was a great player and he had a little injury and he thought I'd dropped him. I said to Derek, he's out there. Ask him to show you the bruise on his ankle.

I think I did go to his studio in Broad Street but there was no need for me to go there. He was here so often.

I was a manager in 71 and when I left in 74 I became a supporter. Ex-manager of course, but I came back twice, was it 89, whatever, always supported them. Even now, Peter Isaac and myself, Tommy Hughes, we've got season tickets. I don't see all the games but I've been a supporter for 44 years you might say. I love to see how Nottingham Forest are doing, Arsenal, York City, my ex clubs. I've always supported the club because I've lived here so long and because of the success we've had. There's never a day goes by when the Newcastle game is mentioned. You

walk up through town now and you bump into somebody and they mention it. It's nice because it meant so much to them, means so much to me, but it still sticks in the mind and it will never go away.

We went to the May Fair regularly. The children loved it. When we moved to town someone mentioned the may fair and I said, what's that? Oh, they do this, Colin, and they do that in the middle of town. You'll see in the morning; you'll see Friday morning. Used to love going with my wife Jean and the kids.

That's Hereford isn't it, the May fair, it's there then it's gone. I couldn't believe how the very first time when we were walking and all of a sudden the swings and the roundabouts, and then three days later it's gone, all cleared up. But lovely for children. It's a traditional thing for children, Hereford May Fair. Part of life for children growing up in Herford. And the mums and dads enjoyed a few rides, didn't they?