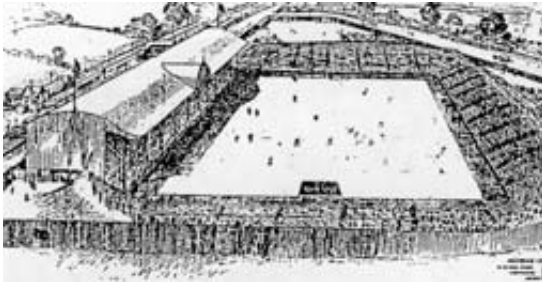


## OWN GOALS

In Football League matches from 1908 until 1970 Bradford recorded 3,516 goals of which 54 were scored by a player in the opposing team. An unusual scoring feat came in 1927-8, the club's championship-winning campaign. On Christmas Eve Bradford beat New Brighton 2-1 at Sandheys Park with home defender John McDonald putting through his own goal. In the return clash at Park Avenue on the last Saturday of the season, May 5, Bradford completed a Third North double with a 2-1 victory. Again New Brighton's McDonald helped by scoring another own goal!

## PARK AVENUE



*Noted grounds architect Archibald Leitch proposed this early plan for Park Avenue.*

During 1879 talks took place between Bradford Cricket Club and Bradford Rugby Club, which at the time was playing rugby several miles away at Apperley Bridge. The cricket club had been forced to vacate their ground in Great Horton as it was required for building and a short move was planned to a site adjacent to a station that had been opened in 1878 by the Bradford and Thornton Railway. As a result of talks between the two clubs an amalgamation was agreed and the combined body became Bradford Cricket Athletic and Football Club.

The new ground at Park Avenue was soon made ready and on July 21 1880 it was officially opened by the mayor, Alderman A. Holden. The eight-acre site boasted two grand pavilions, the lower of which had frontages on to both the cricket and football grounds.

The rugby club brought Park Avenue into great prominence by winning the Yorkshire Cup in 1884. Thereafter the ground became a battlefield for giants in the carrying game.

Following the "Great Split" as it was commonly known, in 1895 the rugby club continued to bring success as a member of the Northern Union. Despite the club's excellent record there was sufficient evidence to show that the dribbling game, which had caught on in a big way with the emergence of Bradford City (1903) and Leeds City (1904) would eventually absorb the public interest. As a pointer to this the club formed an association team and on September 14 1895, they defeated Moss Side (Manchester) in front of a 3,000 crowd.

Things finally came to a head in 1907 and through the efforts of club chairman Harry Briggs the

changeover to association football took place and the rugby fraternity left for pastures new.

Extensive alterations were carried out at Park Avenue and the club committee secured the advice of architect Archibald Leitch who had designed the stands at Fulham, Chelsea and Hampden Park. On completion of the work the ground was capable of holding 37,000 although such an attendance was never achieved.

On June 14 1947 the club completed the purchase of Park Avenue football ground as a result of funds raised on the security of the club's properties.

Not long after Football League status was lost in 1970 a rapid decline set in and by mid-1972 the financial situation was very grave indeed. The local council offered to buy the ground for £80,000 in February 1973 but this was turned down by the board, the offer being described as derisory. Chairman George Sutcliffe said: "As it is a fully-equipped stadium we think the ground is worth much more than the Corporation have offered." By the end of March the board had received approval to sell Park Avenue for any offer in excess of £80,000 which was regarded as "fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case." This decision had been made by shareholders at an extraordinary general meeting. Within a month a Leeds-based development company, Titan Properties, had bought the ground



without planning permission for a sum in excess of that offered by the council, but not over £100,000. The sale of Park Avenue enabled Bradford to clear their debts and move across the city to share facilities with neighbours Bradford City for the 1973-4 season. In November 1973 the council tried to buy the ground from Titan Properties and in February 1974 agreed terms, believed to be £110,000. This gave the property company a quick profit and left the football club with the feeling that they had been badly treated by the council. Despite various grandiose schemes being put forward nothing was done with the ground and it gradually fell into rack and ruin.

In May 1988 any hopes of soccer returning to Park Avenue were ended when a cricket centre was built on part of the land next to Canterbury Avenue. Ironically the firm which won the contract to build the centre was Ham Construction (Bradford) Ltd., a company run by two former Avenue players, Bobby and Allan Ham!

## EDDIE PARRIS



Long before dark-skinned folk from Pakistan formed a significant portion of Bradford's population, Avenue supplied the first coloured footballer to appear in the home internationals. This was Eddie Parris, who was born near Chepstow of Jamaican parents on January 31 1911. Signed on trial in August 1928 at 17, he made his first-team debut in the cup the following January and scored the goal at Hull which brought the Tigers back for a replay. Parris had the creditable scoring

record for a winger of 38 goals in 133 League matches and in 1931-2 he was the club's leading marksman with 14. That season he was capped by Wales against Ireland in Belfast. He later joined Bournemouth (summer 1934), Luton (February 1937) and Northampton (November 1937). During the war he turned out for Bath City, Northampton and Cheltenham Town.

The first coloured player in League football was Arthur Wharton, a Ghanaian, who appeared in goal for Sheffield United in 1894.

## PENALTIES

On March 8 1924 Bradford's goalkeeper faced four penalties in five minutes during a Third North match at Crewe. It all started when Andy McCluggage handled and Alf Laycock saved the penalty taken by Jack Doran. Avenue's Bob Turnbull was adjudged to have handled a few minutes later and Crewe were awarded another penalty. This time Doran shot wide. However because Turnbull had been prancing about, a retake was ordered and William Goodwin struck the crossbar. Alas Turnbull had moved again and another retake took place and this time Doran scored!



During 1927-8 Bradford goalkeeper Jack Clough saved seven out of nine penalties awarded against his team.

Arthur Farrell scored against West Brom in a home match on November 20 1948 and in one against Barnsley on February 25 1950 Jack Haines shot wide. Between those two Second Division fixtures Bradford played 53 others without receiving a penalty award.

Bradford once went 57 Second Division matches without conceding a penalty. That was between penalties taken by Manchester United's Bryant at Old Trafford on the last day of the 1935-6 season and Fulham's Woodward at Craven Cottage on October 2 1937.

On August 23 1948 Bradford had three penalties – one missed and two converted – given against them at Blackburn, but won the Second Division match 3-2.

Ronnie Bird (1961-5) was the undisputed Bradford penalty king. He converted 14 spot kicks in League football - a club record.

One of the hardest shots the club ever had when it came to taking penalties was Alvan Williams (1957-60). From October 1957 to March 1959 he was successful ten times.

## PLAYER OF THE YEAR

### *Football League*

1966 Kevin Hector  
1967 John Hardie  
1968 John Hardie  
1969 Glen Andrews  
1970 Graham Carr



*John Hardie is congratulated by Gillian Simpson, Miss Park Avenue 1968*

### *Non League*

1971 Tony Leighton  
1972 Les Massie  
1973 Wilson Rose  
1974 Alan Myers  
1990 Billy Payton  
1991 Darren Wardman  
1992 Rohan Eli  
1993 Graham Jones  
1994 Karl Goddard  
1995 Lee Williams  
1996 Mark Price  
1997 Tony Brown  
1998 Phil Sharpe  
1999 Wayne Benn  
2000 Jason Maxwell  
2001 Jason Maxwell  
2002 James Stansfield  
2003 Andy Quinn  
2004 Andy Quinn