

Tomorrow's game will be the fourth time we have met the Rams in the FA Cup. The first came in 1945/46, the first season after the end of World War Two. In the 1960/61 season, both Albion and County were in the second division. The third round paired the two teams, just two weeks after the league encounter at the Goldstone Ground. Albion won that game 3-2 and manager Billy Lane was looking forward to another good game.

"If the previous match is any criterion, we will all see a most enjoyable match". We had come back from 2-0 down, thanks to "the fighting spirit of the lads".

Mr Lane named an unchanged team for the cup-tie. In goal was Charlie Baker, who was unusual in that he was a part-time professional. He combined his role between the sticks with a job at Bell Precision Engineering in Crawley. The full-backs were Bob McNichol and Joe Carolan, who had been signed from Manchester United just a month previously. At centre-half was the domineering figure of Roy Jennings. A stalwart of the side since 1952, he made nearly 300 appearances for Albion. The wing-halves were Jack Bertolini and Steve Burtenshaw. The former was a tough-tackling Scotsman, famed for his consistency. He played 193 consecutive games in the late 50s and early 60s.

Albion's wing-men were Mike Tiddy and Bobby Laverick, who had joined us from Chelsea at the start of the 1960/61 season. At inside-forward were Ian McNeill and Tony Nicholas, who made over 200 appearances between them over this period. The centre-forward was Dennis Windross, who never really settled on the south coast after signing from Middlesbrough.

Albion carried on where they had left off in the previous game against Derby and took the game to their opponents. The crowd of 18,397 were treated to a brilliant all-round performance with Lane unable (or unwilling) to single anyone out. "It would be invidious of me to select any particular player for special praise, so I say "Well done, everybody" was his diplomatic comment. A first-half goal from McNeill took us in ahead at the break and in the second half, further goals from Laverick and Windross put us out of sight, before a late consolation from the Rams.

The win against Derby set up a fourth-round tie with reigning league champions Burnley. The manager felt that "the win ended the bad luck that had been dogging us during the last few weeks". The present-day Albion team has also been on the wrong end of some questionable decisions recently, so let's hope a cup win will see a similar turn-round in our fortunes.