

**File:** BMD Dave Smith Boro Bear.mp3  
**Duration:** 0:06:53  
**Date:** 10/08/16  
**Typist:** 808

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Dave Smith: My name's Dave Smith, I'm 64 years of age. My relationship is - I'm actually Boro Bear and a 25-year supporter.

Interviewer: How did you become Boro Bear?

Dave Smith: It was really strange, I suppose... When I went to away games nobody ever did the bear so I suggested that I wouldn't mind doing the bear on away games. Then the person that was doing the bear went abroad and they asked me to carry on doing home and away games, which I do now.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy it?

Dave Smith: I love it, yes. I find it very rewarding really, yes.

Interviewer: What is it about it that's so rewarding?

Dave Smith: I think it's the children. The kids come - everybody loves Boro Bear. Even when you go away, the away fans, the kids come up and they give you a cuddle and they shake your hand, and I think that's very important.

Interviewer: Aside from being Boro Bear at the ground, where's the most - where's your best memory of being Boro Bear at an opposing- or another ground.

Dave Smith: Well I think the best time was probably - there are two really, one at Wembley when we played there, and also when we won promotion to Division 1 in the Division 2 play-offs at Manchester United's ground. That was absolutely superb.

Interviewer: What was it about playing at such a fantastic ground?

Dave Smith: Everything about it. The whole atmosphere of the ground, the whole fans coming up, they were just really superb days.

Interviewer: Did you ever imagine that Stevenage could get to that level, to play at a ground like that?

Dave Smith: Well I think you always dream that the team you support is always going to do well and get up to the Premiership, and I think that's what we've got to believe for Stevenage eventually. We've got a

really good team now in Division 1, if we can consolidate that I'm sure that things will get better as time goes on.

Interviewer: Could you tell me about the Wembley game that you mentioned?

Dave Smith: Well yes, we actually lost the game itself but the actual day was superb. There were lots and lots of supporters there, the whole atmosphere - I think the whole of Stevenage was there, and it was excellent.

Interviewer: What do you feel like you bring to the club by being Boro Bear?

Dave Smith: Well I think it's very important for the bear to make the children happy at the club. Because I feel that when you get the children enjoying themselves, especially for their visit, their parents will bring the child down, and if they can interact with Boro Bear that's important for them to come back again.

Interviewer: Do you feel like children are important for the club, that they're fans?

Dave Smith: Oh children are the future of the club. You've got to get the children involved in the club in all sorts of ways, and they are the future, yes.

Interviewer: You said that you've been a fan for 25 years. What made you start becoming a fan of Stevenage?

Dave Smith: I played cricket actually with a chap named Dave Venables who used to play for Stevenage, and I came down to watch him play because we used to play cricket together in the summer, and then I used to come and watch him play football here. Then he left I just carried on watching Stevenage.

Interviewer: What was it that made you carry on?

Dave Smith: The atmosphere, the place, it's just a lovely place. Lots and lots of lovely people here.

Interviewer: Any favourite games that you have?

Dave Smith: Normally the big ones, yes, you know, the Wembleys, the ones at Man United. The cup game here, obviously we had two lots with Newcastle where we drew here and then lost at Newcastle, but second time around last year we actually beat Newcastle here, which was rather exciting.

Interviewer: How did you feel to finally beat them - a second, well third attempt-

Dave Smith: Yes, it was - it's a dream that you just don't think is possible really in some ways. But on the day we really deserved to beat them.

Interviewer: What was the whole day like? The atmosphere and-

Dave Smith: Excellent. Yes, it always is when you're playing someone from the Premiership, it's just a different feeling. Everyone's up for the game and it's just lovely.

Interviewer: Do you remember the winning score?

Dave Smith: Yes, 3-1 I believe it was.

Interviewer: And who scored those goals?

Dave Smith: I think the last goal was scored by Peter Winn, who is no longer with us at the moment, but yes - sometimes you never remember who scores and who doesn't, so... But it was a great day.

Interviewer: What about the first Newcastle game? Do you remember much about that?

Dave Smith: Well yes, I think we actually drew 1-1 here, then it was taken up to Newcastle and the actual Newcastle away game was a bit of a blur really, because it's just an exciting day, but we played some good football up there and I thought they were quite fortunate to beat us.

Interviewer: Were you Boro Bear at those games?

Dave Smith: Not the first Newcastle one, no, but the second one yes.

Interviewer: And what was it like being Boro Bear in front of Newcastle Premiership team?

Dave Smith: Well I never worry about the away fans because you always get some sort of abuse, but it's all done in good humour normally so I never really worry about the away fans, it's the home fans that I find important.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your most memorable away game?

Dave Smith: Yes, I think it must be the game where we played at Torquay, I've got a friend of mine, Mick Lamir, that had some flying lessons some years ago and he knew a guy that had a six-seater plane. So what we did, we drove out to Royston, got in this plane and actually flew down to Exeter. Then we got a taxi from Exeter to Torquay to watch the game, and then the reverse on the way back. We were sort of

home indoors within in an hour and a half of the game finishing, which was quite surprising.

Interviewer: Did you ever imagine that you'd be watching Stevenage - travelling to them on a plane?

Dave Smith: No, not really you know, mostly you go by car or train, but it was something special to go via aeroplane, yes.

END AUDIO

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