

**File: BMD Tony Reeve and Philip Coates**

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Tony Reeve: My name is Tony Reeve, I am 63 years old and I have supported them since 1960 or 1961.

Philip Coates: My name is Philip Coates, I am 64 and like Tony I have been supporting them since 1961 or 1962.

Interviewer: What made you start supporting Stevenage?

Tony Reeve: I have always liked football as a boy. My father brought me the first time in the '60s and I just caught the bug from there and carried on watching them.

Philip Coates: I think roughly the same. My dad brought me along to the first few matches and as I lived in Stevenage I thought, "I will support Stevenage." Like Tony I like watching football, it was in me to watch it.

Tony Reeve: We both live behind the stand here really, so we are both local.

Philip Coates: We are very local.

Tony Reeve: It is a five minute walk to the ground.

Interviewer: So you have seen the ground change over the years then.

Philip Coates: Oh yes.

Tony Reeve: Well in the early days it was covered with stones when they first made it and they asked for volunteers to come and pick stones from the pitch. Every game they had there used to be players with blood pouring from their legs because of the stones really. Today you wouldn't believe that was the same pitch, you just can't believe it.

Philip Coates: The pitch now is like a billiard table, but years ago when it rained the water wouldn't drain away at all. They put sand on to soak up the water, but eventually it just became like a beach where you just had grass around by the corner flags.

Tony Reeve: A lot of the games were postponed because of the pitch. Eventually when they had the floodlights they put a light on the top of the floodlight. If the game was called off it would flash, so it would stop people travelling to the ground. You could see the light for some distance because they were such huge floodlights in those days that you knew the game was off.

Philip Coates: It was an amber coloured light. I could see it from the bedroom where I lived. If you had an evening game and it had been raining you would look and if it was on you'd think, "Oh no it's off." You could see the light going.

Tony Reeve: Yes, you were always disappointed to see that light going because you knew the game was off.

Philip Coates: The pitch is so much better now, it is unbelievable compared to what it was 40 years ago.

Tony Reeve: You can't compare it can you.

Interviewer: Would you ever have imagined considering what you were saying the pitch having stones on it and also at one point playing on King George playing fields that you could ever get this level?

Tony Reeve: No, when Stevenage Town folded I never believed there would ever be another club here really. Then when Athletic folded as well I thought, "That is definitely the end." Didn't you?

Philip Coates: Yes, I think we were really disappointed because we really loved Stevenage Borough Football Club above all the London clubs of Chelsea and Arsenal. This was our club because we lived here and we have lived here since we were boys. When it moved down to King George playing fields it was just a roped off pitch really, but it was the start and it has all come from that. When you see the ground now how much it is built up. We have seen

how the stands have been little stands and now they are massive stands compared to what they were then.

Tony Reeve: The grandstand in the old days was the same side as it is now, but to sit down you had to pay a shilling. The chap would take the shilling at the stand and give you a raffle ticket.

Philip Coates: Like a little ticket.

Tony Reeve: You had to come in. If you didn't have that raffle ticket you couldn't get in the stand, so you had to come and sit for a shilling. A shilling today is obviously 5p.

Philip Coates: We always used to come early so we could get the same seat every match.

Tony Reeve: We liked the same seats. There was a man who sat next to us with a belted raincoat and a cap. Every time at halftime he would take an orange out, he would peel this orange and you could just [waft 0:03:55] this orange across the ground couldn't you. You don't get characters now like you did then. I don't think so, do you?

Philip Coates: No.

Interviewer: Do you think that affects the fans and the team because you don't get characters like that anymore? Do you think it is just

one big group now, rather than individual characters you have all come together?

Tony Reeve: I think the fans now are no different in the way they support the side. You don't get man with the raincoat with the bag with his sandwich or the flat cap or the flask of tea. It has gone more professional now, so obviously the club wants to sell their own food and drink. Those sorts of people don't appear anymore do they?

Philip Coates: No.

Tony Reeve: You just get the standard fan really. The chants and everything...

Philip Coates: There are so many more people coming now really.

Tony Reeve: In those days you could shout at the bloke next door and he would be 100 yards away it was that big, you are talking 150 people rather than 2500. It is a lot bigger now.

Interviewer: What are your fondest memories, are they from before Stevenage turned professional or back when it was smaller crowds?

Tony Reeve: I have enjoyed each era they have been in really.

Philip Coates: I think we have been fairly lucky at this club over the years because compared to other clubs we have seen such a lot of success. We have had our little blips, but when we look back you think we have had so many promotions, highlights and cup winning games.

Tony Reeve: I think each generation has had its good team. I don't think I have been disappointed in any team they have had. The old team in the '60s the team was 11 players, no subs and those same 11 players played every week. They never seemed to get injured.

Philip Coates: No one seemed to ever get injured, but now people are out for weeks sometimes aren't they. They only sneeze and they are out for a couple of days, but not in those days.

Tony Reeve: The team you could name them and I can still name it. It was Peacock, Standing, Oakley, [Heinton 0:06:05], Mills, Freeman, Watson, Walker, Ince, Brooks, England. That same team played week in and week out, I doubt they missed more than one game each.

Interviewer: You mentioned there were a few blips over the time, care to tell me what they were?

Philip Coates: We did fold a couple of times.

Tony Reeve: It was Town that folded in 1967 I think.

Philip Coates: Yes, '67 I think it was.

Tony Coates: Purely because of money I think.

Philip Coates: Financial reasons.

Tony Reeve: I don't think it was particularly well run then. It was amateurs running a professional outfit really, which didn't work.

Philip Coates: I think the club were trying to build up. We don't know what happens behind the scenes, but it seemed to get out of hand a little bit. They were overspending probably.

Tony Reeve: Yes, they had big players, probably paying big money and probably couldn't afford it and that is why I think they went under.

Philip Coates: I think there was another time when \_\_\_\_ [0:07:12] was it Bournemouth?

Tony Reeve: Well after they folded a Bournemouth properly developer I think his name was [Revolver], we called him revolting. He took over the club and he wanted to develop it believe. He wasn't really interested in football and that was Athletic days wasn't it.

Philip Coates: I think it was, yes.

Tony Reeve: The club again folded.

Philip Coates: He stopped us playing on the pitch didn't he?

Tony Reeve: The club wanted to reform and he stopped them playing by ploughing a big trench right through the pitch so that you couldn't play football on it. That is what he did. In those days I think he held the lease of the ground whereas today the council hold the lease of the ground and they don't let anybody take it over. I am sure he wanted to build houses or something on it and that is why the club folded.

Interviewer: After folding twice could you ever imagine that it would ever..?

Philip Coates: Where we are now, no, Division One.

Tony Reeve: When Stevenage Borough started didn't they.

Philip Coates: Yes.

Interviewer: When you first heard that Stevenage Borough was starting how did you feel about that?



Tony Reeve: Pleased because again they had risen from the ashes again, but I never expected them to get to where they are today in all honesty.

Philip Coates: There has been a lot of managers that have come through. A chap named Brian Williams and Derek Montgomery.

Tony Reeve: Frank Cornwall.

Philip Coates: Frank Cornwall and Paul Peterson was here for a time wasn't he as assistant. It is all those men that have gradually built the club up towards Paul Fairclough.

Tony Reeve: When Paul Fairclough came that was when the club really took off because he got them promoted season after season.

Philip Coates: He actually won the Conference didn't he?

Tony Reeve: He won the Conference, but he was denied promotion to the Football League because of the stand and the ground.

Philip Coates: Ground conditions, yes.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that?

Tony Reeve: Very disappointed.

Philip Coates: We felt disappointed for the players really because... Well for everybody really, but the players especially because they are ones who actually went out on the pitch and did the job and they were denied a place in the Football League.

Interviewer: What was the season following that like as a fan?

Tony Reeve: Hoping they would win it again and perhaps the ground would be ready for promotion. In actual fact they had a good go and they finished third did they?

Philip Coates: Yes, I think they finished quite high up.

Tony Reeve: It was only in the last few games that they failed to win the league. I think Macclesfield got it didn't they? That was the day we played Macclesfield here, we were so many points ahead of them and we needed to beat them and we were 2-0 up. Then all of a sudden for some reason Paul Fairclough the manager took off Barry Hayles I think.

Philip Coates: He took off two players didn't he?

Tony Reeve: Two good players and Macclesfield turned it round and beat us.

Philip Coates: Yes, 3-2. That was on my birthday.

Tony Reeve: Yes, it was. The atmosphere in the ground...

Philip Coates: It was like a funeral.

Tony Reeve: I think that game was the day that we lost the title because Macclesfield went on then to win it.

Philip Coates: To win it I think, yes.

Tony Reeve: We should have beaten them that day shouldn't we?

Philip Coates: That is football though.

Tony Reeve: After that I think they finished about fifth or sixth. Then they struggled a bit for years, well not struggled so much as never really challenged.

Interviewer: What was it like being a fan when you were so close to the Football League and then going into a couple of struggling years?

Tony Reeve: It was disappointing, but the enthusiasm was still there because it was still your club and they were still in a good league. You always hoped that they would do it again, but it took a long time.

Philip Coates: It did, 16 seasons before we got into the league.

Tony Reeve: But now that we have done it and got promoted again you just don't want to drop back do you?

Philip Coates: No.

Tony Reeve: You just want to stay where you are now. I can't see them getting any higher, but you never know.

Philip Coates: No, the club now I think they have got two men in charge, Phillip Wallace and... They are supporters and they are Stevenage people I think.

Tony Reeve: When Phil Wallace took over from Victor Green, because the club nearly went out of existence again when we didn't get promoted. Victor Green the chairman, I don't want to be rude but he wasn't the best of chairmen. I don't think again he run the club very well financially and he wanted to merge the club with Barnet.

Interviewer: That probably didn't go down very well with the fans did it?

Philip Coates: No.

Tony Reeve: The fans were furious with that because it wouldn't have been Stevenage it would have Barnet. Nobody was going to travel I shouldn't have thought to Barnet. It is like Milton Keynes Dons isn't it when Wimbledon went to Milton Keynes it is just not the same club. Luckily Phil Wallace came along and bought the club off him. Since he came it was just success after success really.

Philip Coates: You feel as though \_\_\_\_ [0:12:22].

Tony Reeve: \_\_\_\_ disappointed, if he ever left I think I would commit suicide.  
(Laughter)

Philip Coates: I wouldn't go that far. Those two seem to have...

Tony Reeve: They have so much success.

Philip Coates: They run the club in their own styles obviously.

Tony Reeve: I would say so, probably the best chairman we have had without a doubt.

Philip Coates: The ground just seems to be progressing all the time and we are just hoping that the north stand is... I think that is Mr Wallace's one thing he wants to get that built so as you pass the ground you think, "Oh, what a ground this is."

Tony Reeve: It is a lovely stadium but it is just lacking that north end. I am sure that is in the pipeline to do.

Interviewer: Do you reckon having that north stand would attract more people to come like you said driving past and thinking, "Wow." Would that be the factor to get more people to come?

Philip Coates: You would hope that because people would probably be encouraged and attracted by it to say, "Let's go and have a look at that." We have got to attract more people, they younger people I think. Instead of them going to London to watch Arsenal, Chelsea and West Ham we want Stevenage to be their number one club not Stevenage to be their number two club. They are the people we have got attract to get into this ground. Hopefully that will help by having the north end rebuilt.

Tony Reeve: It still looks non-league. If you drove past that ground there it looks non-league, it doesn't look like a football ground, a proper league club. With something there suddenly people notice it. I am not even sure some people know it is here. If you came to Stevenage you wouldn't know it was here driving down that road. The locals obviously should but I don't think many people, so we are pleased.

Interviewer: What do you reckon your greatest away game was?

Tony Reeve: What of any club, Stevenage Town, Borough or Athletic? Well each one.

Interviewer: Yes of Stevenage Town, which one?

Tony Reeve: Good gracious that is going back a way isn't it. I can't think of any now.

Philip Coates: It is going back a bit now isn't it?

Tony Reeve: I think with Stevenage Borough...

Philip Coates: When you go to Wembley \_\_\_[0:14:46].

Tony Reeve: It is going to Wembley yes and winning that trophy.

Philip Coates: Winning against Kidderminster 19-whatever it was. That was when we were 2-0 down at halftime and everybody thought, "Well that is it." I always remember Stimson who was the manager said, "A game is 90 minutes old." I always remember him saying that at other games and sure enough he was right because we got three goals in the second half.

Tony Reeve: Also of course winning the play off final at Manchester, Old Trafford, that was another good game pleasing result.

Interviewer: What is it like going to these big stadiums as a small side?

Philip Coates: It is nice, but it doesn't impress me so much.

Tony Reeve: It is alright if it is full, but when you have got a small crowd in it the atmosphere is not quite the same. I think this ground we have got here when it is full and even on a Saturday because there are no spaces really you get a good atmosphere. If the ground was too big and half empty it wouldn't be the same. I went to Milton Keynes Dons and they have got a massive stadium, but only 8000 people. It holds 20,000-odd and it looks empty when you are in it, so the atmosphere is not the same. Here I think the atmosphere is tremendous. I think that adds to the success of the \_\_\_[0:16:01] because they can hear the crowd and they get that atmosphere. If it was half empty they would be a bit... Wouldn't it?

Interviewer: You mentioned Victor Green previously. The selling of the club that was shortly after the first FA Cup tie with Newcastle.

Tony Reeve: Not long after that, the same season was it? I can't remember if it was the same season or not. I don't want to say things I shouldn't, but I don't think he was popular let's put it that way.

Philip Coates: I don't think he was popular in Newcastle.



Tony Reeve: He certainly wasn't popular in Newcastle, no.

Interviewer: Because he refused to swap the tie didn't he?

Tony Reeve: Yes, Newcastle wanted us to change the tie to their ground because they had a bigger stadium and a bigger crowd. I think he would have done had Sky not decided to show the game live because he was probably offered money there to televise it.

Philip Coates: We all thought it was right to have the game here because we were drawn. The draw said play Stevenage, so that is where the supporters wanted it to be. I think Newcastle were just as bad there was a lot of squabbling about the ball.

Tony Reeve: Yes, Kenny Dalglish the manager of Newcastle said the ball... Because we drew, they didn't beat us here, complained that the balls were too bouncy. Yet he was one of the people who endorsed the ball, so god knows how it was bouncy. Then they complained that the pitch wasn't very good. You can see yourself the pitch is excellent, in fact it was better than Newcastle's pitch.

Then they complained that Stevenage wouldn't let the safety officers, but why they didn't let them in because they turned up unannounced expecting, "We are the big side let's see what you can do." I think he was right to refuse entry to them. Then of course the papers got hold of it and it was blown into all nonsense really. Stevenage were the bad boys because we are the minnows probably.

Philip Coates: I think we remain that \_\_\_\_ [0:18:10].

Tony Reeve: We still remain bad boys to this day I think. I still believe that the media and a lot of the football world dislike Stevenage because of that event. That is when it started, we were looked upon as disrespectful to a giant club. I don't think they were I think they had every right what they did, but that is the way they were portrayed.

Interviewer: What was it like having Newcastle come to Stevenage?

Tony Reeve: It was exciting a big club.

Philip Coates: It was, we couldn't lose really could we. We weren't expected to win, well we didn't win that particular time.

Tony Reeve: No, but it was exciting. The atmosphere was good.

Philip Coates: It is the cup draw that brings the top side here and you can see the top players. Then they didn't perform did they really Newcastle.

Tony Reeve: No, it was Alan Shearer's first game back from injury after a long injury and he scored within the first three minutes. We thought,

“Oh my god, this is going to be 10-0.” But all of a sudden we started playing.

Philip Coates: Yes, they didn't worry about that did they? They just went on and we equalised.

Tony Reeve: And we weren't having a good season ourselves in the Conference that year.

Philip Coates: No, we were about 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> then I think.

Tony Reeve: I think they raised their game and it was exciting.

Philip Coates: Was it Grazioli who scored from a header? It was a corner wasn't it from Gary Crawshaw.

Tony Reeve: Crawshaw crossed.

Philip Coates: Grazioli headed it in to the delight of the crowd.

Interviewer: What was the atmosphere like when Grazioli scored?

Tony Reeve: You couldn't hear could you? It was deafening the noise, really deafening.

Philip Coates: Yes, your heart was pounding. My heart was pounding.

Tony Reeve: No, it was good. I enjoyed it.

Interviewer: Did you go to the Newcastle?

Tony Reeve: No, couldn't get to the Newcastle game. Watched it on telly though. Again if you looked at the crowd's reaction we were booed and everything by their crowd \_\_\_[0:20:08] because it was whipped up by the media. I think they played very well and I still believe Shearer never scored because there was a controversial goal given by the linesman which Mark Smith cleared off the line.

Philip Coates: Yes, \_\_\_ cleared off the line and the goal was given.

Tony Reeve: What can you do?

Philip Coates: Lost.

Tony Reeve: Lost.

Philip Coates: Although Gary Crawshaw scored and it was his birthday. I think we lost 2-1 did we?

Tony Reeve: Yes, 2-1 we lost.

Philip Coates: We did get a goal so I was chuffed.

Tony Reeve: Was it 3-1? No 2-1, Shearer scored two didn't he?

Philip Coates: Yes, but we got them here again and we beat them. Excellent \_\_\_[0:20:51].

Interviewer: Could you ever have imagined Stevenage beating Newcastle?

Tony Reeve: Not on paper, no, but on the night.

Philip Coates: They deserved it. Everybody we spoke to that didn't come to the match or didn't support Stevenage said, "Well they deserved it." In fact we did deserve it, we played better than them. We scored the goals and that was it.

Tony Reeve: It was very pleasing to get revenge. (Laughter) But it didn't have the same atmosphere as the first game, not for me.

Philip Coates: No, I suppose the first time is always the best isn't it. I shouldn't say that really should I?

Interviewer: What was it about it that was different?

Tony Reeve: I didn't find the atmosphere the same. I think Stevenage have grown in stature now. We were minnows then, real minnows, but now I think this club thinks it can take on anybody really. In those days you'd think, "Oh god Newcastle, 10-0." But I don't think you would think that now because of the way the club has grown. We are looked upon now as we are not an easy game I don't think. Yes, it was good.

Philip Coates: People describe us now as not being a very attractive side to watch. I don't know if that is true or not, because our side is Stevenage we just see we want them to win. We were just reading in the newspaper today, we are playing Bury today and...

Tony Reeve: 'Strong physical side.' That is how they described Stevenage.

Philip Coates: That is how described us as strong and physical and hoofed the ball up the front, but it is not all like that is it?

Tony Reeve: I don't think so, no I don't think so. I think Mark Stimson had the best passing side we had, but Westley has had more success.

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Tony Reeve: I don't know, perhaps it is the way... Mark Stimson left under controversial circumstances. I still believe if he had stayed he'd have got Stevenage promoted, I do because he had a good side.

Philip Coates: He took about five players with him didn't he?

Tony Reeve: Yes, he took some players with him. If he'd stayed we'd have got promoted that year.

Philip Coates: We had a good side didn't we? Of course when he had Mr Peter Taylor come, ex-England manager wasn't he?

Tony Reeve: God knows, I could manage England.

Philip Coates: We don't like to... He was a big mistake wasn't he?

Tony Reeve: I think it was a huge mistake. I think he was probably a very disappointing manager, they didn't perform under him. They didn't get the results under him and thankfully he left and Graham Westley came then.

Philip Coates: We saw a couple of the televised matches didn't we and it was embarrassing to watch Stevenage players. You felt as though they weren't playing for him don't you.

Tony Reeve: I don't think they were.

Philip Coates: No.

Tony Reeve: It was embarrassing to say you were a Stevenage supporter when he was there, terrible.

Philip Coates: We were hoping he wouldn't be there the next season and he did, he left.

Tony Reeve: Luckily he left.

Interviewer: Then Graham Westley came back.

Tony Reeve: Graham Westley came back.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that?

Philip Coates: A lot of people were bit, "Oh." They remembered the time he was before. Mr Wallace was saying that he was different then.

Tony Reeve: A changed man.

Philip Coates: He had changed his way a little bit.



Tony Reeve: I think a lot of people were sceptical when he came back, but he has won them over.

Philip Coates: He has, I think he has won the people over now by results.

Tony Reeve: I must admit I was a sceptical person when he first started.

Philip Coates: A lot of people were against him coming back.

Tony Reeve: I am pleased he is here now, I would be disappointed if he left.

Philip Coates: As I said before I think he is a Stevenage person now. Inside he is a Stevenage person. Like we are, we are Stevenage people. We couldn't go and support Hitchin, Barnet or Chelsea we are Stevenage supporters and I think he is now, deep down he is.

Tony Reeve: Yes, I am sure he is.

Interviewer: I would just like to get a few memories from the early parts of when you first started supporting Stevenage. Any great games from Town or Athletic that really stick out in your mind?

Tony Reeve: Stevenage Town for me was when they won the East Anglian Cup and they beat Norwich City here, I think it was 2-1. Again

the team was Peacock, Standing, Oakley, Hyner, Mills, Freeman, Watson, Walker, Ince, Brooks and England. Peter Walker who in those days was called an inside right and scored both goals I believe. He was the greatest striker this club has ever had. I don't think anybody we have had since could strike a ball like he could. If he was in front of the goal you knew that ball was going in the net, he never missed. A superb striker.

Philip Coates: He wasn't a fancy player, but he was where he should be just to knock the balls in.

Tony Reeve: He was just dangerous wasn't he?

Philip Coates: Yes, he didn't miss did he, he didn't seem to miss.

Tony Reeve: A superb player, the best striker. You would have to call him a striker today.

Philip Coates: Of course we have got a good defence now and we had a good defence then didn't we?

Tony Reeve: Yes.

Philip Coates: We had a good goalkeeper and good defenders. I think they based their game on their defence, they didn't let many goals in.

Tony Reeve: We were just saying to Ray Peacock downstairs they played 34 games and 25 of those he didn't let a goal in.

Philip Coates: Yes, clean sheet.

Tony Reeve: That tells you how strong the defence was in those days. John Mills the centre half was a giant of a man. I mean you think Ashton and Roberts are big but he was bigger than them I think. His chest was about as wide as this room, he was enormous. He really was, wasn't he? I think that is probably the standout game with Town for me.

Philip Coates: There were so many games they won it is hard to pick out a particular game.

Tony Reeve: I do remember one game on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1966 and they were playing, I can't remember if it was Barry or Merthyr, it was a Welsh side. They turned up here and the coach driver had to go in goal.

Interviewer: Merthyr.

Tony Reeve: Was it Merthyr? I knew it was one of those two.

Philip Coates: Have you heard this story before?

Tony Reeve: The coach driver was in goal, I will never forget that game because it was just hilarious. This coach driver I don't know if he had played before, I think they let five or six in I can't remember. He was saving shots and he got cheered by the Stevenage supporters as much as his own supporters because of the way he behaved, superb. That is the standout thing for me with Town I think, but there are so many.

Philip Coates: There are so many games. When \_\_\_[0:27:52] was that..?

Tony Reeve: No, that was Borough.

Philip Coates: Was that Borough.

Tony Reeve: It was going to Barnet with Athletic. In those days Barnet was a top side.

Philip Coates: Yes, they were one of the top sides. They were a good amateur team weren't they?

Tony Reeve: And \_\_\_[0:28:10] the two strikers.

Philip Coates: \_\_\_ we can never remember their names. If they were playing against us we thought, "Oh no."

Tony Reeve: If they played you knew you had lost, you just gave up.

Philip Coates: They had John [Bar] in goal didn't they, he was a good keeper.

Tony Reeve: We had a fullback then, a Scottish fullback called Tommy [Pettigrew], he was a dirty player. He was playing against Barnet and he fouled somebody and he was sent off. As he walked off he just put his hands in the air like this. Clubbed his hands together cheering the crowd and he got the almightiest cheer when he came off that ground, singing his name and everything. Again a character, it is like Chopper Harris with Chelsea.

Philip Coates: He was that type of player, he was a good player but he had that element in his game where he wouldn't hesitate to take someone's legs away from them.

Tony Reeve: I just want to mention while I remember \_\_\_[0:29:05] they were a small side as well Pitt and Parkinson.

Philip Coates: Yes, they weren't very particular. Not like now we have got some real giants in the side, they were really average.

Tony Reeve: Small players weren't they. Again when I was talking about characters there was a woman in the crowd she was with her husband. She was an elderly lady and it doesn't matter who got the ball her favourite player was Steve Pitt and she would shout at top of her voice, "Give Pitts it." She would scream this across the stadium when everybody got the ball. People like you see or notice them, perhaps you don't notice them now I don't know.

Perhaps they are there but you don't notice them because it was such a smaller crowd then you probably did notice them. I do remember that, she is probably dead now.

Philip Coates: Moving away from Town, but one of the most exciting players we have had has been George Boyd he seemed to have everything. He could dribble the ball, he could pass the ball and he scored goals. I think it was against Merthyr in one of the cups, was it the FA Cup?

Tony Reeve: He got seven of them didn't he?

Philip Coates: I don't know, he got quite a few.

Tony Reeve: I think we won [7-1 0:30:21] and I think he got about five.

Philip Coates: He was superb. He was just walking through them and just scoring goals at will really. He was a very exciting player to watch, I think one of the most exciting players I have ever seen down here. If you want to watch and feel excited he was one.

Tony Reeve: Without a doubt, yes.

Philip Coates: We have had some great players down here all through the leagues and through the years.

Interviewer: What do you think George Boyd's greatest game was? Can you remember a game where he really stood out?

Tony Reeve: Certainly that one.

Philip Coates: He certainly stood out at that one. Although Merthyr weren't as high a league as us.

Tony Reeve: Was it a trophy game or a cup game?

Philip Coates: I think it was the FA Cup one of the rounds.

Tony Reeve: They just couldn't hold him. In the end I think Stimson took him off.

Philip Coates: He took him off in the end, yes.

Tony Reeve: The Merthyr players were getting so fed up they were trying to foul him in the end, they were kicking him and everything so they took him off. If he'd stayed on it would have been 10-1, I am sure it would. That is probably the most outstanding game I have seen.

Philip Coates: He scored some outstanding goals home and away, his passing ability was fantastic. There have been so many great players

through the years we could mention loads and loads couldn't we, forwards, defenders and goalkeepers.

Tony Reeve: From different eras so you can't really compare can you?

Philip Coates: You can't really compare them all, no.

Tony Reeve: Ray Peacock without a doubt of all the keepers we have had was the best.

Philip Coates: Probably one of the best defenders has been Mark Smith.

Tony Reeve: Yes, Mark Smith.

Philip Coates: He is still playing I think or was, he played for Hitchin. I don't know.

Tony Reeve: I don't know if he had gone to [Hong Kong 0:32:06] has he?

Philip Coates: I don't know, but he was not so long ago. He is one of the most superb defenders we have ever had.

Tony Reeve: Definitely.



Philip Coates: If you had to name a team of all time in the last 40 or 50 years he would be in it wouldn't he?

Tony Reeve: Yes.

Philip Coates: Mark Smith would be in it. How he never played league football I don't know. Perhaps he didn't want to because of his own circumstances, but he was a superb player.

Tony Reeve: Yes without a doubt. They are not as prolific as he was, definitely not.

Interviewer: What was the goalkeeper that you mentioned?

Tony Reeve: Ray Peacock.

Interviewer: What about him was so special?

Tony Reeve: He rarely let a goal in. His appearance looked a bit relaxed, but he was so relaxed he could almost catch a ball with one hand, spin it on his finger and just run away with it.

Philip Coates: He was just an outstanding keeper.

Tony Reeve: We went to Hereford, I remember going to Hereford to watch Stevenage Town play. In those days Hereford was quite a big club and they had a striker called John Charles. John Charles was a huge name he played for Juventus in Italy, he was a Welsh international and he played for Leeds. He was coming to the end of his career and he joined Hereford. He played against us that day and I think Hereford really battered us that day, but Peacock in goal he made save after save. In the end I think Charles did beat him with a very close header. At the end of the game even the Hereford fans stood up and cheered Ray Peacock off the pitch he made such a fantastic game.

Philip Coates: He was at the time acknowledged one of the best in the Southern League

Tony Reeve: He was, yes. The best non-league goalkeeper in the country without a doubt.

Philip Coates: He just had everything good catching ability, he was a good shot stopper and he governed his area. With John Mills our centre half they were...

Tony Reeve: You couldn't get past them could you?

Philip Coates: No.

Tony Reeve: We went to Margate and we travelled in the players' coach. There weren't that many going, so we were on the players;

coach. Ray Peacock, talk of the devil there he is outside the window, got on the coach straight after the game. I think we had won, I can't remember.

Philip Coates: We lost one game, we lost 1-0. It was a top of the table clash.

Tony Reeve: I don't think it was that game. We got on the coach and Peacock got on the coach, he sat down on the coach and immediately he was asleep for the entire journey. That is how relaxed this goalkeeper was, superb.

Interviewer: Out of all the players do you reckon you could name all across your greatest team?

Tony Reeve: Well we have mentioned it before. I think Peacock would definitely be in goal.

Philip Coates: We have had some really good goalkeepers.

Tony Reeve: But he just was outstanding.

Philip Coates: One that comes at your mind is Ray Peacock, alright it was a different era in 1960s.

Tony Reeve: Oh that is my phone.

Philip Coates: It is like the middle of the defence isn't it.

Tony Reeve: I suppose defenders it would be...

Philip Coates: Mark Smith.

Tony Reeve: Definitely Mark Smith, definitely John Mills.

Philip Coates: Fullbacks you would have to...

Tony Reeve: We have had so many good ones haven't we?

Philip Coates: Yes.

Tony Reeve: Kenny Webster was one and John Nutter.

Philip Coates: Tony Oakley and John Nutter. Barry Fuller was a good back. Ronnie Henry now I think you would be hard pushed to beat him.

Tony Reeve: Ronnie Henry, yes he has been \_\_\_\_ [0:35:41].

Philip Coates: He used to play in the middle of the defence didn't he, but now you just want to see him at right back.

Tony Reeve: But forwards definitely Peter Walker.

Philip Coates: And your left \_\_\_\_ is Morro isn't, Morrison, Steve Morrison.

Tony Reeve: Boyd would get in the side.

Philip Coates: Boyd would definitely get in the side. Barry Hayles was a prolific goal scorer, he wasn't so good when he first came was he? Then the season after he came he was just scoring goal after goal Barry was.

Tony Reeve: Dear me, yes.

Philip Coates: There have been so many midfielders that have been good.

Tony Reeve: There was Reg Pickett.

Philip Coates: Reg Pickett, these are 1960s now. Even Johnny Brooks who you have mentioned before he was an England international, I think he had about three caps didn't he? He was a superb player he was.

Tony Reeve: Daddy Long Legs Alan [Paley 0:36:33]. He was called Daddy Long Legs because we so tall and his legs were huge. He had great long legs and he was known as Daddy Long Legs and his name was Alan Paley. He was a midfield player wasn't he?

Philip Coates: In the 1960s we also had a winger called Tommy Watson. He was the fastest thing, he was like a greyhound. Not so much skill-wise but he was so fast. The fastest player I think I have...

Tony Reeve: I think so, yes. He was a Scotsman wasn't he?

Philip Coates: Yes.

Tony Reeve: But he could run like \_\_\_[0:37:05]. In fact they sold him to Walsall, he went to Walsall and that was in the '60s wasn't it. He didn't get much higher than that because he didn't have a lot of skill, but he had a lot of pace a very quick player. That is about as high as he went. Dickie England was a tricky winger.

Philip Coates: He was a left winger, a young winger called Dick England. He was a really good tricky winger, a bit temperamental wasn't he?

Tony Reeve: He could be, yes.

Philip Coates: But a good player.

Tony Reeve: It would be very difficult to pick a team. The ones we have mentioned like Peacock, Mills, Walker, Morrison, Boyd and Smith would definitely be in it.

Philip Coates: They definitely would be in it.

Tony Reeve: But then the others...

Philip Coates: There have been a lot of good ones haven't there it is hard to pick one above the other really.

Tony Reeve: Hayles may get in.

Philip Coates: Barry Hayles might get in it.

Tony Reeve: You would struggling with the rest you could pick any of them I think to put in.

Philip Coates: We used to have a centre forward called Pat Terry didn't we?

Tony Reeve: Oh god, yes.

Philip Coates: A dynamic header of the ball, very powerful in the air. I have never seen a person head a ball so hard.

Tony Reeve: No, he was very good.

Philip Coates: Very powerful in the air. If he got his head to it then it was in the net.

Tony Reeve: There was a player in the '60s a centre forward called Terry Ince. His nickname was Dobbins because he was built like a cart horse, but he wasn't quick.

Philip Coates: He wasn't very skilful actually.

Tony Reeve: But the goals he scored were unbelievable because he was so powerful. If a player tried to knock him over they couldn't knock him over because he was just square. If he did fall over as he hit the deck clouds of dust because he was so heavy. He wouldn't get in a game today because he just couldn't move.

Philip Coates: Actually we haven't mentioned many of the players today. We have only mentioned Ronnie Henry haven't we oh and Boyd I suppose.

Tony Reeve: Today's players, the current Stevenage side is a good one defensively. I am not quite so sure on the strikers, I don't think they are prolific as they should be.



Philip Coates: I think we have got to remember they have gone up two leagues in a very short space of time.

Tony Reeve: But I don't think they are as prolific as they should be, I just don't. The midfield is good without being too creative I think.

Philip Coates: I think a lot of it is the learning process. We are in Division One now we are not in the Conference and I think you have got to remember that. We are playing against teams like... I know we beat Sheffield Wednesday 5-0, but there are a lot of teams that are really good teams. I think we are doing really well.

Tony Reeve: I think so as long as we stay mid-table.

Philip Coates: We always reckon if you get 50 points you are safe, so we are hoping for another 10 wins to make us up to 50.

Tony Reeve: I think 50 would see us [Cross talk 0:40:08].

Philip Coates: You have another go in the league and hopefully... But of course we need the money, if you are going to get better players it is all about money it seems.

Tony Reeve: Well the higher you go the more money you need. This club will never get that sort of money.

Philip Coates: This is where we need the supporters to come in. We want people to come to support Stevenage and not other clubs.

Tony Reeve: I think the club is trying that direction by going to schools and things haven't they.

Philip Coates: They are trying to make people see Stevenage as their number one club because they are Division One now they are not non-league.

Tony Reeve: Kids nowadays will perhaps see that.

Philip Coates: That is what you have got to aim for I think the young people of today.

Tony Reeve: Hopefully yes, like yourself.

Interviewer: Can I just ask, did you two know each other before you started watching Stevenage?

Tony Reeve: Yes, we live round the corner from each other.

Interviewer: Did you come together or did you come separately?

Tony Reeve: No, we sat separately. Sometimes we came didn't we?

Philip Coates: Yes.

Tony Reeve: As I say we used to come with our dads at one time. There was nothing here then it was just a field and a pitch.

Philip Coates: The stands were a lot smaller. The east terrace now was only a little bit in the middle not all the great terrace was it?

Tony Reeve: No, it was corrugated iron roof on a little bit of it. It was terrible if you think about that.

Philip Coates: But that is coming through the years isn't it.

Tony Reeve: It is how they have developed, they have grown as a club. Hopefully we will see another stand here soon and that will make it even better.

Interviewer: Great, thank you very much

Tony Reeve: Thank you

Philip Coates: Thank you.

Tony Reeve: There was a player called Johnny Brooks who never headed a ball because he had a quiff on his... A beautiful haircut and I think he was scared it would flatten his hair if he headed it, so he used to chest it and leave the heading to other players.

Philip Coates: We believed he had a haircut nearly every day to keep his hair in trim.

Tony Reeve: Never a hair out of place. If it was raining he would puff it up after halftime, I am sure he did. It was a marvellous hair do. I think he is still alive today, he has got to be in his 80s at least. A super player.

Philip Coates: A super player, [he joined twice 0:42:25].

Tony Reeve: He played for Chelsea, Tottenham and England.

Philip Coates: And Toronto City I think and Reading.

Tony Reeve: Reading and Stevenage Town and that was it, a good player.

END AUDIO

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