

## 09) TWTD Issue 63, Aug 2002: "Raydon sign one-armed keeper"

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Malcolm Baggio has planted the Ramblings seed from which blossoms forth the Raydon news flower. There were few personnel changes at Clockton Park during the pre-season. Goalkeeper Jason Gooseflesh hung up his gloves as his weight has now reached 22 stone and manoeuvrability was proving difficult. "Just walking from the changing shed to goal area knackers me out now," said Gooseflesh at a recent press conference before stuffing a lard donut into his mouth.

Gooseflesh's retirement is good news for groundsman Lionel Stubbs. "The goal areas looked like a bloody ploughed field after 45 minutes of that fat git lumbering round on them. I used to have to re-turf the them after every bloody game."

The departure of Gooseflesh saw Roland Peters secure the signature of 32-year-old goalkeeper Ian Buffalo from Harlow Town. The signing of Buffalo raised a few eyebrows at Clockton Park as Buffalo lost his left arm in a horrific lawn mower accident just after the end of last season. Roland Peters explained, "I have every faith in Ian. He has proved that he is a highly competent goalkeeper and you don't become a bad goalkeeper overnight just because you've lost an arm."

Raydon played a showpiece friendly against their wives before the start of the season to raise money for an artificial arm for their new goalkeeper. Any questions about whether Raydon would treat the game as a bit of light hearted fun were answered after just 90 seconds when a two footed lunge from Jack Crankleshank left Elaine Funtingdale with a six inch gash down her thigh. She had to be carried off and Crankleshank was shown a yellow card. Credit to Elaine's husband, midfielder Jack Funtingdale who showed no animosity towards team-mate Crankleshank and indeed patted him on the back straight after the challenge. As they had done last year in the Lads v Dads match, Raydon players treated the game like a cup final, putting in 100% commitment and determination. There was only really one team in the contest with the result 32-0. Striker Dougie McManahammond scored 18 goals and duly took home 6 of the clubs 10 match balls.

Manager Roland Peters said after the game, "I don't know why we bother playing these poxy games every year. We've been far too good for the sons in previous years and this year we've been far too good for the wives. It's a bloody waste of time. We could have beaten this bunch of nobodies without bloody breaking sweat...It's absolutely..." The interview was cut short when Peters' wife clouted him round the head with one her stilettos leaving a small indentation in his forehead.

Raydon's season begun with a trip to Thetford Foresters. Ian Buffalo was proudly sporting his brand new artificial arm and the lads were confident that this addition would enhance his goalkeeping ability. However, this confidence proved ill judged. Ten minutes into the game, Buffalo raced off his goal line and swung his artificial arm at the ball in attempt to punch clear a corner. However, the arm became detached, flew off and struck Raydon's right back Andy Slipper in the testicles. The ball landed at the feet of a Thetford striker who tapped it home from close range. Slipper recovered from his injury after the application of a water-soaked sponge to his testicles by physio Lionel Stubbs.

There was a ten minute delay while Buffalo's artificial arm was securely re-attached using masking tape and the game restarted.

Raydon battled back and equalised following a period of sustained pressure when 6 foot 7 inch striker, Dave Mackinackie headed home Saul Quan's cross. Raydon dominated the remainder of the half but failed to hit the target. The worst miss of all came when Candlestick played a defence splitting ball through to McManahammond that enticed the Thetford keeper off his line. McManahammond nudged the ball past him but the ball struck a post a nestled on the goal line. Mnunga followed up and with the goalkeeper stranded and no defender particularly close, he opted to kneel down

and nudge the ball over the line with his head in a bid to cause hilarity amongst the Raydon contingent. Unfortunately, just as he made contact with the ball, a Thetford defender who had sprinted back, slid in and scooped the ball to safety, booting Mnunga in the face in the process. The incident officially made Mnunga look a twat\*. Raydon's dominance continued into the second half but it was not until the 85 minute that the breakthrough came. Mansley Kilkorkey scored with an acrobatic overhead back-heel from Jack Funtingdale's knock down.

The drama was not over as Thetford won a penalty in the dying seconds after left back, Jean-Pierre Duval yanked a Thetford striker's ponytail in a bid to stop him breaking into the area. Goalkeeper Ian Buffalo's only previous involvement of any significance in the contest was the unfortunate incident that led to Thetford's goal. This time though, his artificial arm proved to be the saviour. As the Thetford striker blasted a perfect penalty towards Buffalo's top right hand corner, he quickly ripped his artificial arm off and threw it at the ball, deflecting it wide. The referee sparked fury amongst the Thetford Players by not only refusing to allow them to retake the penalty but also by awarding a goal-kick instead of a corner on the grounds that no part of Buffalo's body actually touched the ball. The final whistle was blown seconds later marking victory for Raydon in the first game of the season.

\* This is based on feedback received from John Motson after we sent him video footage of the incident.