

Peter J Seddon, compiler, *A Football Compendium: A Comprehensive Guide to the Literature of Association Football. The British Library, Boston Spa, 1995. £60.*

At last soccer has something to match Padwick's Bibliography of Cricket. This compendium claims to be a comprehensive guide to the literature of Association Football. It 'is a bibliography of all books and serials published in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland about the game of association football in all its aspects'.

It covers works published up to March 1995. There are various exclusions. Dissertations and theses, periodicals, programs and club yearbooks are not included, with a few exceptions. On the other hand, there is a very helpful list of fanzines and there are sections on music and film.

It is organised in fourteen chapters, from History and Development, through Club Histories, Personalities, Theory and Practice to Reference Books, Humour, Fanzines and Music, with four separate indexes and a list of addresses. Fantasy football and Subbuteo

have their references. The only Australian mention in the subject index is of Tom Gough's Introduction to Australian Soccer, and the compiler's comments about English follower's knowledge of the game in Australia, while probably accurate, are a little less than helpful. Craig Johnstone's Walk Alone is there, though again the comment seems to miss the account of his apprenticeship and his family circumstances, which help explain his abrupt departure from the game, which is otherwise so incomprehensible. The three important works on Ayr United are included!

Initially I was concerned about the cross referencing system which results in numerous repetitions throughout the text, sometimes complete with compiler's notes, which must add to the length and cost of the exercise. So, for example, Bill Murray's The Old Firm appears three times, once each for Rangers and Celtic, and once in football and society. But as Roy Hattersley points out in his introduction, most readers, as fans, will turn to their own club and their own heroes first, and they will expect to find the full details they want there, not cross referenced to another section entirely. The provision of both ISBN numbers and British Library catalogue details, where known, is a real boon for the book purchaser or serious researcher. It has been meticulously edited,

no small praise these days. Among the few errors I noted was the missing number one before the entries in the left hand column of page 278.

When there is so much in this book any grizzles are bound to appear carping, yet surely Tony Mason's incomparable Association Football and English Society, 1863-1914 ought to be mentioned up front in the introduction to the history and development of the game, not tucked away in the football and society section, among a plethora of works on football hooliganism. Pete Davies's All Played Out is in, but his exemplary Twenty-two Foreigners in Funny Shorts is not, perhaps because it was only published in the United States, though it ought to be under the Wrexham club section as well as football and society and the lighter side of the game. Philip Scraton, Ann Jemphrey and Sheila Coleman's No Last Rights: The Denial of Justice and the Promotion of Myth in the aftermath of the Hillsborough Disaster, just missed the March 1995 deadline. When we send Peter Seddon all our suggestions for the second edition, will we still be expected to pay full price all over again, or, once the British Library has recouped its costs from the institutions, will it do a cheap, paperback edition for the fans to whom the book is ostensibly directed?

Given that he has just spent £60 (\$120) on a book on football, this Scot must ask, 'Is it too well produced?' Would the fans not be better served by something more accessible and perhaps less polished? On this I must confess that I finally came down on the side of the author (he is an author, however much he wishes to hide behind the modest role of compiler) and his publisher. Hang the expense. Let us have something worthy of the sport. The game deserves a beautiful book of books and this is it.

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