NUNEATON FOOTBALL HERITAGE HEROES

No. 10
Malcolm Allen

Malcolm Allen signed for Nuneaton Borough in 1961, having previously played for Coventry City, who he joined from school. He spent four years at Coventry before joining Rugby Town, and during that spell, he had trials with Derby County. He was captain of the Army and Combined Services teams before signing for Boro' in July 1961. A stylish ball-playing wing-half, he was at his peak in season 1962-63 when Boro' were promoted to the Southern League Premier Division, and got to the final of the Southern League Cup, where they were defeated over two legs by Guildford City.

During one of the finest seasons ever experienced by the club, 1966-67, Nuneaton took second spot in the league, losing the championship by a single point to Romford. The team also reached the 3rd Round of the FA Cup, where Malcolm was outstanding in the ties with Swansea and Rotherham.

Allen, who made over 470 appearances for Boro' was appointed team manager in March 1970, holding the position until May 1971, when he took on a similar role with Atherstone Town. Malcolm had the distinction of playing both cricket and football for Nuneaton at schoolboy and senior level.

An article in the Nuneaton Evening News, some years later, described Malcolm Allen thus:

"Good in the air, two footed with good control and passing ability. The skills which made him stand out were his reading of the game and anticipation. He would often nick the ball off opponents' toes and make interceptions which could quickly take Boro' from defence into attack. He had a 'good engine' and would find space to help his team-mates – the kind of midfield player every successful side needs."

Malcolm Allen had an outstanding disciplinary record, never having been booked or sent off in his time with the Borough. Long after his playing days were over he could still be seen at home matches, giving his support to a new generation of Boro players. Malcolm passed away in George Eliot Hospital in July 2017.

Part of the From Town to Town Project