

# MARCH 1969 – THE FIRST EVER MATCH?!!

## Southampton 1-0 Sunderland

SOUTHAMPTON	
1	Gerry Gurr
2	Ken Jones
3	Denis Hollywood
4	Fred Kemp
5	John McGrath
6	Jimmy Gabriel
7	Terry Paine
8	Mike Channon
9	Ron Davies
10	David Walker
11	Mike Judd
12	Frank Saul

Venue	The Dell, Southampton
Date	Saturday, 8th March 1969
Competition	Football League Division 1
Referee	Mr T W Dawes (Norwich)
Attendance	19,843

SUNDERLAND	
1	Jim Montgomery
2	Cecil Irwin
3	Martin Harvey
4	Brian Heslop
5	Richie Pitt
6	Colin Todd
7	Gordon Harris
8	Calvin Palmer
9	Malcolm Moore
10	Bobby Kerr
11	Billy Hughes
12	Colin Beesley (used)

Match Details			
44	1-0	Davies	

IT was a Saturday afternoon family day out in the city! As a bored young boy I was wandering around Southampton aimlessly with the folks when, at around 2.30pm, Dad spotted a bus that showed its destination of 'The Dell' and suggested that we should go. We got on and, in no time, we were all standing on the Milton Road end of the former Southampton FC ground watching a First Division match between Southampton and Sunderland.

It was my first ever football match. Now there's a statement—was it though? Okay, change that to, my first ever football match in living memory and, to me, that's all that counts. There was an exciting atmosphere and I loved it. Ron Davies scored the only goal and I came away happy. Other than that, what else did I know? Well, I didn't know that a home match happened almost every other week at that point, I didn't know there was a Football League and I certainly didn't know there was such a thing as a programme! I couldn't say much more about the match itself. Yes, there was indeed a lot to learn from this sudden decision to go to The Dell. But I would get there eventually. Needless to say it was my only football game watched in the 1968/69 season.

I have always remembered the score but had to otherwise research this one a bit and I had no recollection that the only goal scored came close to half-time. The most wonderful publication about the club called *In That Number* most brilliantly researched by Gary Chalk and Duncan Holley reveals that Saints had dominated for long periods, Sunderland had been pointless away from home for five months and Saints were vastly superior.

A friend went to the match and, thanks to him, I am able to show the programme front cover. The cover price of 1/- (one shilling) is equivalent to 5p in modern day money!

