

LITTLE BOOK OF

# WEST HAM



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## Allardyce

WHILST NOT A UNIVERSALLY popular choice for manager of West Ham, with several fans voicing their concern that the team would resort to long ball tactics in order to get out of the Championship, Big Sam Allardyce got the critics eating their words. More importantly, he got the team promotion back to the Premier League at the first time of asking.

Born in Dudley on 19 October 1954, as a player Sam was an uncompromising defender, traits he took into management with Blackpool, Notts County, Bolton, Newcastle, Blackburn and West Ham. Appointed to the Upton Park hotseat in June 2011, his brief was to fashion an immediate return to the Premier League. He quickly brought in players who would enable him to accomplish that goal, most notably Kevin Nolan, Abdoulaye Faye and Joey O'Brien, all of whom had played under Big Sam at Bolton.

A dogged battle at the top of the championship ensued, with West Ham contesting the automatic promotion spots with Reading and Southampton all the way to the final day of the season. Whilst automatic promotion was just beyond West Ham, there can surely be no better way to secure promotion than with victory at Wembley, with West Ham seeing off the challenge of Blackpool and earning their place back in the elite League, with Big Sam hailing the victory as his best ever achievement. With the first objective duly accomplished, attention now turns to consolidating the club's place in the top flight and then the onward push for glory. And Sam Allardyce has proved he is the man to take on the challenge.



**ABOVE** Sam Allardyce looks on from the sideline

## Allen

THE ALLEN FAMILY ARE LEGEND-ary in London football history. Les Allen was a member of Tottenham Hotspur's double winning side of 1960-61. His son Clive has an incredible record of being on the books of seven different London league clubs: Arsenal, Chelsea, Crystal Palace, Millwall, Queens Park Rangers, Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham United. He scored in his West Ham debut at Stamford Bridge in a 2-1 defeat in April 1991, amassing a further 17 goals for the club. Clive's spell at West Ham was brief, just three seasons, but he was part of the Billy Bonds' side that bounced back from relegation in 1992 into the new Premiership.

Part of the reason for the success achieved in that 1992-93 promotion season was Allen's 15 goals, only 6 less than the top scorer that season, Trevor Morley. Clive Allen's predatory instincts in the six-yard box and his likeable personality made him one of the most popular players at the club during Billy Bonds' managerial reign.



**ABOVE** Clive Allen in action during the promotion season of 1992-1993

## Allen (Paul)

ANOTHER PRODUCT OF THE ALLEN dynasty, and Clive's cousin, Paul will mainly be remembered as the 17-year-old 1980 FA Cup final winner with John Lyall's Second Division team of underdogs who eked out a 1-0 victory over the not-so-mighty Arsenal.



**ABOVE** Paul Allen in the 1979-1980 FA Cup winning season

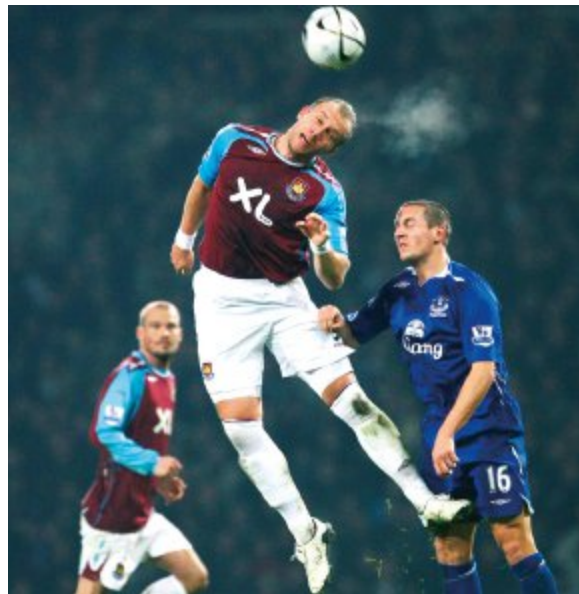
Allen made his debut that season and played in every round of the FA Cup, even scoring in the 2-0 fifth round victory over Swansea Town. He probably would have scored a second cup goal, in the final at Wembley, but for a cynical tackle from hapless Arsenal defender Willie Young, who these days would have received a straight red for his brutal lunge. The balance of luck tipped against him four days later when he played poorly in the European Cup-Winners' Cup final that Arsenal lost.



**ABOVE** Paul Allen is most famous for being the youngest player in a Wembley FA Cup Final

## Ashton

AN ALAN PARDEW £7M SIGNING from Norwich when he was just 22, Ashton is an old-fashioned English striker, very much in the mould of Geoff Hurst, and became an instant favourite at the club in the 2005-06 season, when he featured prominently in the FA Cup run that saw the club get to the final against Liverpool.



**ABOVE** Dean Ashton (L) rises above Phil Jagielka (R) of Everton during the League Cup Quater Final, 2007

Although they lost on penalties after a thrilling 3-3 game, Ashton showed his talent and timing with a goal that put West Ham 2-0 up.





**ABOVE** Dean Ashton master in the air, 2007

Dean suffered a broken ankle whilst training with England and missed the whole of the 2006-07 season. Although he eventually returned for the 2007-08 season he was still troubled by the original injury and made just five appearances the following campaign. In December 2009 he announced his retirement at the age of just 26, a loss to both club and country.

## Barthez

25 JANUARY 2001 IS A DATE THAT will remain forever etched in the hearts of all West Ham United fans. This was the day that saw their team force the genius of Manchester United out of the FA Cup in front of 50,000 of their own Old Trafford fans. The nature of the goal that did it was almost as sweet as the victory itself.

Alex Ferguson's penchant for maverick keepers like Peter Schmeichel, Les Sealey and Raimond van der Gouw, had recently extended to including a bald French international whose name, Fabien Barthez, sounded not unlike a swashbuckling villain from Herge's Adventures of Tintin, or a shady suspect character from one of The Marquis de Sade's novels. That afternoon, Barthez had experienced relatively little action on the pitch until the 76th minute when Paolo Di Canio found himself careering down on goal, just Barthez between the Italian and a little piece of footballing history. Ignoring the advice never to try to 'kid a kidder', Barthez stepped out imperiously, raising his hand high to invoke a certain offside flag from the nearby assistant referee. It never came.

After an elaborately swift shuffle from Di Canio, the ball was soon nestling in the back of the net. The greedy stadium owners were soon rueing their decision to stage the Rugby League World Cup final at Old Trafford earlier that week. It would be a year before their side's next FA Cup fixture.



**ABOVE** Paolo di Canio salutes the fans after beating Manchester United and Fabien Barthez in 2001

## Best



**ABOVE** Clyde Best in action, 1972

THE 1960S WERE FAMOUS FOR introducing two great Bests to the English footballing public. George was the first, his sublime talents taking apart defences up and down the country, week in week out.

The second Best, though never second Best, was Clyde, the Bermudan, who made his debut for the Hammers against Arsenal at Upton Park on 25 August 1969. Playing alongside Martin Peters and Geoff Hurst in his first full season, the black striker's six goals were only eclipsed by the England pair's efforts. In the Seventies in the UK, the ugliness of racism seemed to find a home at many football grounds, so it was refreshing to find West Ham's modest new hero doing a great deal to allay the effect of the many morons in the average Saturday afternoon crowd.

Two seasons later, the ever-present Best hit a stunning 23 goals in 42 appearances, top scoring again two seasons later with 13. All in all, Best hit 58 goals in 7 seasons.

Many great black players such as Liverpool and England's John Barnes have since declared that it was seeing Best's success in English football that inspired them to work hard on their skills and believe in the possibility of a career in the top flight.

## Blackpool

THE ILL-FATED FA CUP THIRD round draw of December 1970 drew West Ham United away to the Lancashire coast for a fixture against the First Division's newly promoted – and struggling – Blackpool.

Their manager Bob Stokoe, who was to achieve phenomenal success with Sunderland just three years on in the same competition, put together a perfect game plan, using an ace in the hole, young Tony Green, as the architect of the unforgettably convincing 4-0 thrashing of their relegation rivals. In the post match analysis, it came to light that Bobby Moore, Brian Dear and Jimmy Greaves had headed off to the local attractions for a few sherberts the night before, so raising questions of whether or not they would be 'fit for duty' the following day.

Clyde Best had tagged along, and although he had only consumed a couple of fruit juices, he was fined along with the other three who were unceremoniously dropped for the next game, a home fixture against Arsenal that the Hammers lost 2-0. Some say Bobby Moore fell out with Ron Greenwood after the Blackpool saga, and that he and Greenwood never saw eye to eye again. It was the first time that Billy Bonds had donned the (then) metaphorical armband, something that he would do on a regular basis once Bobby Moore left the club for Fulham, a few years later.



**ABOVE** Tony Green who had a major impact in the game against Blackpool

## Boleyn Ground



**ABOVE** The West Ham stadium more familiar as 21st Century Upton Park

IN THEIR FIRST INCARNATION as Thames Ironworks FC, West Ham United played a handful of fixtures at Hermit Road in East London before moving to a small piece of land in East Ham off Browning Road, but in January 1897 they moved to the Memorial Grounds in Canning Town.

Close to West Ham tube station (which opened four years later), the site is nowadays the home of the East London Rugby Club. It was at the Memorial Grounds where they adopted their new name of West Ham United in June 1900. The Hammers stayed there until the approach of the 1904-05 season when they realised they would have to move or would not satisfy the Southern League authorities that they could fulfil their fixtures. The club were about to be made homeless and penniless but a local brewery