

# Tony's aim to cap it

By NIGEL CLARKE

**T**ONY COTTEE began the season with a sensational hat-trick after his £2 million move from West Ham to Everton.

Now he's keeping his fingers crossed he will not only finish it with his first full cap for England tomorrow, but another explosion of goals.

Cottee is certain to figure strongly in manager Bobby Robson's team-planning as England face Scotland in their Rous Cup match at Hampden Park.

And he says: "To be selected for a full game would be a nice end to a difficult season."

"I've been dropped twice by Everton and my six games for England have all been as a substitute."

"But I tell myself you don't become a bad player overnight and so after two years with the England set-up it's important to make the final breakthrough."

Cottee's 18 goals this season is way below the target of 30 he set himself on his Merseyside move.

"When you go around shouting your mouth off about what you are going to do and then don't produce, you have to expect criticism," he explained.

"But I'm the kind of player who keeps a scrap book and I analyse every goalscoring opportunity I get."

"It's because I want to be the best. And I'm not at my peak yet and I believe I have another two years of learning before I reach it."

Cottee has been boosted by his appearance in the final 20 minutes against Chile on Tuesday, when he made an immediate impact.

Robson's dilemma is whether to give another chance to John Fashanu and Nigel Clough or put Cottee in for a full game.

# HILL DEAL IS HALTED

By TONY STENSON

**R**ICKY HILL's battle with Luton took a new, unsavoury twist when they blocked his move to French club Le Havre.

The deal has been shelved for three weeks and may not be completed if Luton hold Hill to a contract that still has one year remaining.

The club is angry over publicity surrounding the move. Hill claimed Luton went back on a promise to give him a free transfer, and he had to pay £50,000 out of his own pocket to enable the move to go through.

Luton managing director John Smith said: "Our directors are so upset by the misleading publicity that they are reviewing the situation."

"The player signed a three-year contract worth £300,000 two years ago and now wants to break it."

Big-spending Trevor Francis is ready to sign former £1 million striker Garry Birtles for nothing. Birtles has been released on a free transfer by Notts County.

Millwall beat a West Australian state team 1-0 in Perth yesterday through a goal by Teddy Sheringham.

Everton's Trevor Steven was last night having talks with Rangers manager Graeme Souness about a possible move to Ibrox.



## HOW THEY STAND

	P	F	A	Pts	GD
LIVERPOOL	37	65	26	76	+39
ARSENAL	37	71	36	73	+35

ARSENAL star David Rocastle will be a key figure in the battle for the championship at Anfield tonight.

## THE TITLE SHOOT-OUT

# WE

# Our title dream

**T**HIS is it. The championship decider. And we are not afraid of the task confronting us at Anfield tonight.

We shall not concede the title until the last ball is kicked, until the last challenge and the last attempt on Liverpool's goal. Liverpool have dedicated the FA Cup to their fans, quite rightly after Hillsborough. Now we want to win the championship for our fans.

You're going to hear an awful lot of noise at Anfield, but it won't just be coming from the Kop. We'll have thousands of our fans there. We'd like nothing better than to show our gratitude to them by winning the title.

Many people got the wrong impression after our last home game of the season against Wimbledon. They thought we went on a lap of honour, despite the fact that we had only drawn. That wasn't the case. It was a lap of thanks.

We wanted to thank the fans for all their support this season. They have followed us everywhere. We got a standing ovation, and the players were choked by their reaction when we got back to the dressing room. Those fans have made us even more determined.

They realised that we have tried so hard. I received a few letters when we struck a bad patch saying we were not trying. But they were not from true fans.

Those at Anfield will be our real fans. So are those who can't get tickets yet will still be willing us on in front of their TV sets.

Impossible? We realise the extent of our task. But you may be surprised to know that we are all relaxed and looking forward to it.

## Tense

We know we should be tense, but we're not. That's probably because we've not been in this position before.

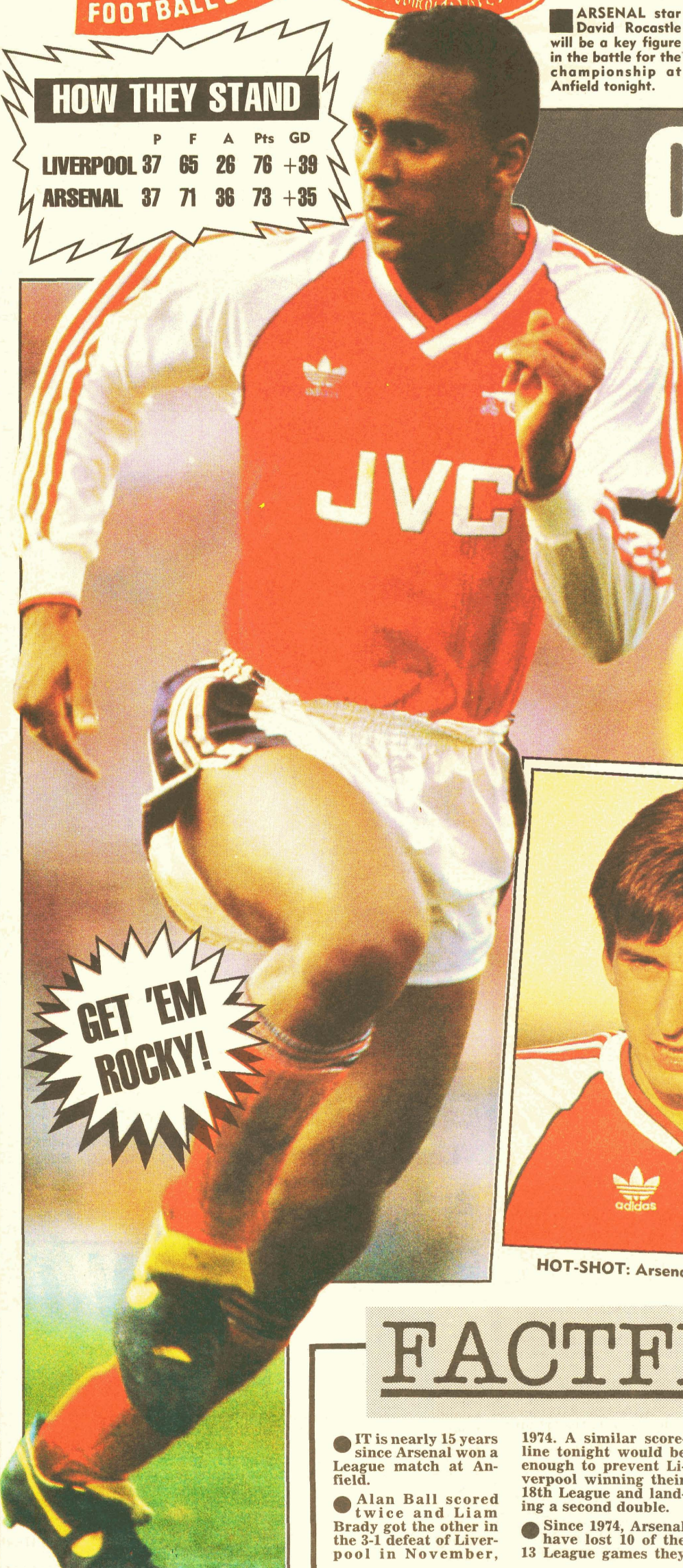
Instead of feeling the tension we're joking and laughing in training. It hasn't got to us yet.

On paper it does look an improbable mission, but this side of ours has a happy knack of coming up with something special — such as the 5-0 win against Norwich and the 4-1 victory at Nottingham Forest.

Perhaps our best performance of the season was at Anfield. In the first Littlewoods Cup tie we could have won 5-1, but goalkeeper Mike Hooper made some unbelievable saves that night.

We created eight clear-cut chances, and time

# 'We



HOT-SHOT: Arsenal striker Alan Smith.

## FACTFILE

● IT is nearly 15 years since Arsenal won a League match at Anfield.

● Alan Ball scored twice and Liam Brady got the other in the 3-1 defeat of Liverpool in November,

1974. A similar scoreline tonight would be enough to prevent Liverpool winning their 18th League and landing a second double.

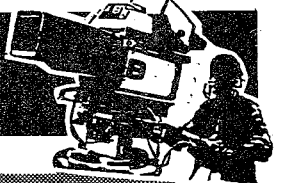
● Since 1974, Arsenal have lost 10 of the 13 League games they

have played at Anfield. Arsenal scored just seven times in those matches, Liverpool 26.

● The last time Arsenal kept a clean sheet at Anfield was in season 1973-74 when they won 1-0.



# LIVERPOOL v ARSENAL 8.05 TONIGHT



# CAN SILENCE THE KOP



## GIVE 'EM A BLOODY NOSE

**A**RSENAL can still win the First Division championship by giving Liverpool the biggest roughing up they have had in years.

And that should start before they even kick-off in tomorrow's title decider. That's the belief of Alan Ball, who captained the Gunners the last time they won a League game at Anfield nearly 15 years ago.

He confided his success secret to Mirror Sport: "You have to do everything to get up their noses. Make sure they don't have their own way. Get them at it."

"It should start when Tony Adams leads them out. He should not let Liverpool have their favourite end — he should take the Kop."

"Arsenal must go to the Kop end — it will get Liverpool going and throw them out of their stride."

Ball's verdict: "Arsenal can win there, but I go for a draw."

Ball is one of six survivors from Arsenal's last Anfield victory — 3-1 on November 9, 1974 — who have talked to Mirror Sport.

**JIMMY RIMMER:** Owns a golf centre in Swansea, and said: "It depends who settles their nerves first."

**Verdict:** "Liverpool will win."

**TERRY MANCINI:** Runs a sports shop in Harrow and a Hammersmith pub. He said: "I backed Liverpool for the League when they were 19 points behind — I fancied they'd start winning."

"I got 14-1 and put £20 on them. I am not a gambler — I just fancied they'd have a good run."

**Verdict:** "It would be nice to see the Gunners blast 'em off the top, but I don't see it happening."

## says Alan Ball

**PAT RICE:** Still at Highbury as Arsenal youth coach.

He said: "I don't believe in such things as bogey teams and if everyone does their job properly, we will get the just result."

**Verdict:** "I don't see any reason why we can't do it."

**BOB McNAB:** Now lives on America's west coast, running his own executive recruiting agency, but keeps in touch.

"Teams that get beaten at home in the last three or four games, as Arsenal did, don't win League titles."

**Verdict:** "My heart says Arsenal and logic says Liverpool."

## WALLOP!

By **TONY STENSON:** Fulham 0, Bristol R 4 (Agg: 0-5)

**B**ILLY "The Judge" Clark sentenced Fulham to more hard labour last night. And at the same time gave Bristol Rovers a chance of early release from their eight-year sentence in the Third Division. They now meet Port Vale in the play-off final.

Clark earned his name after 33 consecutive appearances on the "bench" as substitute.

He only came into the side because Geoff Twentymen has been suspended indefinitely.

And Clark rewarded manager Gerry Francis's faith with a 64th-minute opener.

Then Ian Holloway added a second after 74 minutes to break Fulham's dogged resistance.

Fulham, trailing 1-0 from the first leg, never recovered from the loss of midfielder Peter Scott — sent off in the 67th minute for fouling Holloway after a previous booking.

Dennis Bailey and Andy Reece rounded off the scoring after 82 and 88 minutes.

Fulham manager Ray Lewington said: "We never created enough chances."

"Gerry Francis said these play-offs are a terrible thing, but I don't think so. We've had a great season."

## By DAVID ROCASTLE

and again we were left asking: 'How did he save that one?' That performance will give us encouragement.

We will not be intimidated by the fact we are going to Anfield having to win by two goals.

Whatever happens, we believe we have had an outstanding season. I don't care what anyone else thinks.

It just seems we have

too many critics. Too many don't like us.

Yet we've scored more goals than anyone in the League, and that includes Liverpool.

"Alan Smith is top scorer but there are many players capable of getting among the goals, and we have played entertaining football."

But the knockers are still on our backs and we cannot shake them off.

If we go away and snatch a 1-0 win, we're accused of stealing the points, but if Kenny Dalglish's Liverpool do the same it's a great professional performance.

If we beat Liverpool by the required two goals then I feel we would be worthy champions.

For now, all we are thinking about is winning at Anfield, and winning convincingly.

But we cannot go there thinking we have to win 2-0 or 3-1.

All we can do is let our football do the talking.

Interview:  
**HARRY HARRIS**

## Graham

● From Back Page

season that there was a chance we could win it with the last game, I would have settled for that."

Whatever happens Graham insists it has been a good season for his Gunners.

Graham has to make a bold decision concerning Steve Bould.

The Arsenal manager cannot afford to go all-out for goals and risk conceding an early one that would then end the title decider before it starts.

It might mean re-employing the sweeper system he ditched against Wimbledon and would mean a recall for Bould.

## SPORTS SUMMARY

### BARCLAYS LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS Semi-finals, Second leg THIRD DIVISION

Fulham.....(0) 0 Bristol R.....(0) 4  
10,688 Cark, Holloway, Bailey, Reece

(Bris Rov win on agg 5-0)

Port Vale.....(1) 3 Preston.....(1) 1  
Beckford 3 Patterson 13,416

(Port Vale win on agg 4-2)

### GREYHOUNDS

**MOVE.**—7.30: Goldie Moon 5-2jf (4-2, £15.80). 7.45: Ambridge Rainbow 2-1f (5-4, £7.60). 8.00: Knocklong Barney 10-11f (4-1, £4.25). 8.16: Special Deposit 5-1 (4-1, £17.92). 8.33: Spiral Ann 4-5f (3-4, £5.69). 8.50: Eddie the Con 4-1 (5-1, £10.50). 9.07: Walton Marker 2-1f (4-3, £11.83). 9.24: Ardills Luck 5-2 (2-4, £17.06). 9.41: Winsor Sport 7-1 (4-1, £30.93). 9.58: Knockreigh Seal 9-4 (2-3, £21.17). 10.14: James Ration evensf (1-2, £6.91) N: Find the Ball (6). 10.30: Speedy Venture 6-4jf (1-2, £13.13).

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—7.00: Nippy Patience 11-4f (6-1, £12.31). 7.15: Coolnamona Sand evensf (3-1, £2.90) N: Flying Grouse (2). 7.30: Tallahachie 5-1 (5-4, £51.08). 7.45: Spot Luck 3-1

(6-5, £9.55). 8.01: Honey Dancer 4-1 (3-1, £20.44). 8.18: Sotas Chatter 7-4f (2-6, £14.17) N: Ferry Quarter (1). 8.35: On Cron 8-1 (6-3, £38.35). 8.52: Romantic Jacko 7-2jf (6-4, £37.70). 9.09: Donaskeigh Star 9-4f (3-6, £8.48). 9.26: Al Capone 7-4f (5-2, £11.40). 9.43: Biggs Lass 5-2 (2-6, £6.46). 10.00: Deeds Emblem 2-1f (1-4, £10.78).

**WIMBLEDON.**—7.30: Wandering Nellie 20-1 (2-1, £239.79). 7.45: Coolnamona Bullet 3rd. 7.45: Coolnamona Style 2-1f (6-2, £23.06). Broken Wings 3rd. 8.00: Angels Skylark 25-1 (5-4, £30.47). Rocky Wishes 3rd. 8.15: Luxury Prince 6-1 (2-5, £16.91). Burnpark Wish 3rd. 8.30: Bold Rover 5-4f (3-5, £3.49). Knockanekirka 3rd. 8.45: Ardeen Best 33-1 (4-2, £34.35). General Watson 3rd. 9.00: Beane Boris 12-1 (4-2, £144.23) N: Stoney Stroney (1). 9.15: Wendys Dream 2-9f (1-5, £2.14). Kiltown Prior 3rd. 9.30: Ard Knock 1-4f (5-4, £12.97). King Whisper 3rd. 9.45: Galtymore Lad 4-9f (1-3, £3.55). Pur Gold 3rd. 10.00: Foretop 4-1 (6-2, £20.44). Terminator 3rd. 10.15: Ample Spark 9-4jf (3-4, £12.02).

### TONIGHT'S SOCCER

#### FIRST DIVISION

Liverpool v Arsenal (8.05).....

#### INTERNATIONAL

N Ireland v Chile (8.00).....

## are relaxed