

Hearts Great Alex Young has died



Photo: Everton FC

One of Hearts greatest players, Alex Young, has died less than a month after his 80th birthday.

Young was born in Loanhead, Midlothian in February 1937 and began his football career with neighbouring Newtongrange Star in the early 1950s before signing for Hearts in 1955. He made his debut for the Maroons against Partick Thistle in a League Cup tie at Tynecastle in August 1955, making an immediate impact by scoring in a 2-1 win for Hearts. The Evening Times of that day said the game was 'poor, poor stuff with Hearts newcomer Alex Young the day's big success'.

Young would become a vital member of the all-conquering Hearts team of the 1950s helping Tommy Walker's side to win the Scottish Cup in 1956, the league championship in 1958 and 1960 and the League Cup in 1959 when he scored in Hearts 2-1 win over Third Lanark in the final. Young missed Hearts League Cup triumph of 1958.

If Willie Bauld was the King of Hearts, Alex Young whose elegance and skill were combined with a never-say-die determination, was nicknamed the Prince of Hearts.

Inevitably, as the great Hearts team of that era was dismantled, Young followed another Hearts great of that side, Dave Mackay, down to England. Mackay was sold to Tottenham Hotspur for £30,000 in 1959. As 1960 drew to a close, anguished Hearts fans saw another of their heroes depart when Alex Young was sold to Everton for £42,000.

Young would prove a huge success at Everton making over 270

appearances in his eight years at Goodison. He was a key player in the Merseyside's league-winning team of 1963 and the side that lifted the FA Cup in 1966 having fought back from 2-0 down to defeat Sheffield Wednesday 3-2.

Young was nicknamed the 'Golden Vision' by Northern Ireland and Tottenham Hotspur legend Danny Blanchflower with a nod to Young's superb passing ability.

Young made eight appearances for Scotland, scoring five goals. What the current Scotland players would do for that scoring rate is anyone's guess.

Young joined Northern Irish team Glentoran in 1968 before joining Stockport County. Sadly, injury forced him to give up playing in 1969.

The Edinburgh Reporter sends its condolences to Alex's family as Hearts and Scotland mourn the passing of a footballing giant.