



Phill Walker signed full-time in December 1977, having completed his apprenticeship as a plumber. He came to The Spireites from the same Mansfield-based youth club that produced Steve Ogrizovic. A good, skilful player, he held the ball up well and had a productive all-round game, but he never quite fulfilled the expectations of management and supporters.

Exasperated fans would say that he was

born offside!

As his reputation deservedly grew, there were talks of moves to bigger clubs; Liverpool were one such club, and it is said that they were watching both Phill and Chester's Ian Rush at the same time, before deciding to sign the latter player.

Phill joined Rotherham United in December 1982 in a deal that brought Mick Gooding to Saltergate. It was an odd move, especially since it was rumoured that neither player particularly fancied his new club! Three goals came from 20 Millers appearances before he was farmed out on loan to Cardiff and released in the summer of 1984.

Chesterfield invited him back and he became a key member of the 1984-5 Fourth Division championship team, where his particular strengths suited John Duncan's strategy of playing him in away games and Ernie Moss in home matches. Towards the end of his time at Saltergate he took over the Chesterfield Arms, on Newbold Road, while helping Scarborough out of the Conference and into the Football League. The usual ex-Spireite tour of local-non-league sides followed. Until retirement, Phill ran soccer schools at the Center Parcs complexes in Nottinghamshire and Suffolk and worked on the youth coaching staff at Chesterfield, while emulating Ray Middleton and serving as a magistrate.

Phil's son Jamie had some pedigree as a local non-league player before being diagnosed with lymphoma. Subsequently, Phill has thrown his support behind the Jamie Walker charity matches set up by his son. Such games have been played at Chesterfield's stadium and have raised a six-figure sum for good causes associated with the club and the fight against the disease.

For Chesterfield: 181 + 23 Football League appearances, 47 goals.

Career: 203 + 29 Football League appearances, 50 goals.