



Alan Stevenson is mathematically the club's finest goalkeeper, conceding a mere 0.846 goals per game. He graduated from Chesterfield's junior side in a hurry, the manner of his debut entering Spireite legend. Alan Humphreys, the regular number one (and no slouch between the sticks), failed a fitness test one Saturday morning and the team bus stopped en route at Stevenson's Staveley home to

pick him up for their match at Scunthorpe on October 4th, 1969. With very little time on his hands to be nervous about it, he played so well that Humphreys never made the first team again.

Alan was a fine all-round sportsman. A wicket-keeper and batsman, he posted a record high score of 147 not out for Staveley Works in the Bassetlaw Cricket League and also played in Derbyshire's second team. Upon his transfer to Burnley he began playing Lancashire League cricket and played competitive tennis and table tennis for his local clubs. He could have chosen a career in any of these sports: it is to the great relief of Chesterfield fans that he chose football.

Alan's career between the sticks commenced at the age of seven. He played in goal for Middlecroft School and Chesterfield Boys, and signed amateur forms for Chesterfield while working as an apprentice fitter at Staveley Works. He had trials for Burnley but the players in front of him rather let him down: he was given little chance to shine as eight goals were put past him. Understandably, perhaps, the Clarets overlooked his potential and he joined the Spireites.

Ask a fan for one memorable Stevo save and they'll probably come up with the one against Barnsley in October 1970 where, having started going one way, he appeared to twist through one hundred and eighty degrees in mid-air to keep out a shot. Anyone performing such a feat would be beyond the help of an osteopath, of course, but that is how people remember him: an excellent 'keeper, with fine reflexes, agility and limpet-like handling. Scouts began to follow Alan's career: Leeds were reportedly interested and Brian Clough's Derby were dithering about an offer when Burnley came in, determined not to lose him a second time.

If the fee that the Spireites received from Burnley was £50,000 (£60,000 is also reported), then that was only £15,000 short of the British record fee for a 'keeper, at the time. Alan assumed legendary status at Turf Moor, winning Third and Second Division championship medals to go with the Division Four gong he won here in '69-70. He became a regular in England's under-23 side, winning eleven caps and appearing as a substitute in the forward line on one occasion. He played for the Football League against the Scottish League at Hampden Park but a full England

cap eluded him: he came closest to that when named as one of the substitutes in Lisbon in 1974.

Having joined the likes of ex-Spireite George Strong among the goalkeeping greats of Turf Moor, Alan was staggered when released just two games short of equalling Burnley's appearance record for a goalie. After brief service at Rotherham he formalised a move to Hartlepool in January, 1985 (having joined the previous September on loan) and soon began to combine playing duties with that of the club's Commercial Manager. It is in this latter sphere that Alan continues an involvement in football, specialising in helping teams capitalise on stadium relocation projects - something that brought him back to Saltergate in 2007 as the club looked to move to its new ground. Alan was involved in this capacity at the new Wembley development as well as at Coventry City, Shrewsbury Town and St Helens rugby league club, among others. After managing the club's "End of an Era" project Alan returned to serve Chesterfield FC as the club's Commercial Director until 2014.

For Chesterfield: 104 Football League appearances; 41 clean sheets, 88 goals conceded.

Career: 601 Football League appearances, 178 clean sheets, 751 goals conceded.