

When the Whistle Blows: The Story of the Footballers' Battalion in the Great War (Centennial Edition)

Andrew Riddoch, John Kemp



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This new and updated edition of 'When the Whistle Blows' is published to coincide with the centenary of the formation of the 17th Middlesex– the 'Footballers' Battalion' – in December 1914.

Following the outbreak of war in August 1914, a heated debate took place about the continuation of professional football during a time of national crisis. The Footballers' Battalion was raised in response to claims that footballers were not 'doing their bit'. Professional footballers with connections to around seventy present-day Premier League and Football League clubs, from Aston Villa, Manchester City, and Liverpool to Plymouth Argyle, Millwall and Leyton Orient, enlisted in the battalion They were joined by amateur players, officials and football fans eager to serve alongside players, like Vivian Woodward (Chelsea), Tim Coleman (Nottingham Forest) and Walter Tull (Northampton Town).

Based on extensive original research, Andrew Riddoch and John Kemp draw on many previously unpublished letters, personal accounts and photographs to paint a vivid portrait of a remarkable battalion that saw fierce fighting on the Somme and elsewhere on the Western Front. This centennial edition features additional material that has come to light since the publication of the first edition in 2008.

REVIEWS OF 2008 EDITION

When Saturday Comes - 'lucidly written and extraordinarily well researched'

Reading Evening Post - '... one of the best football books written for many years.... meticulously researched, beautifully written and lavishly illustrated ...'

Cross and Cockade International – 'Recommended to anyone with an interest in the war... and/or an interest in football history.'

The League – '... a significant addition to the literature of football and that of the war'.

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