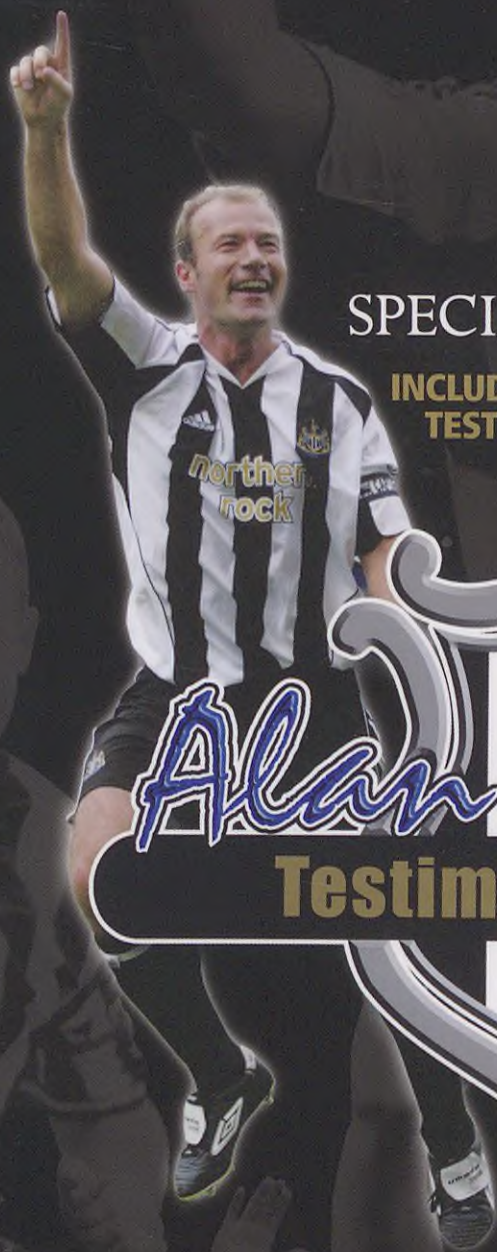


ALAN SHEARER'S NEWCASTLE UNITED XI V CELTIC



SPECIAL EDITION

INCLUDES EXTRA 8-PAGE
TESTIMONIAL NIGHT
FEATURE

Alan Shearer
Testimonial 2006

St. James' Park

Thursday 11th May 2006 • Kick-off 7.45pm

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SOUVENIR PROGRAMME
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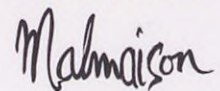
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FREDDY SHEPHERD
CHAIRMAN, NEWCASTLE UNITED



ALAN SHEARER ...

A legend IN THE FOOTBALL WORLD



There are players, there are great players, and there are legends, and Alan Shearer is without doubt a footballing legend.

In 10 magnificent years at Newcastle United, Alan has become one of the great Tyneside heroes of all time, and has more than justified the world record fee we paid to bring him here from Blackburn Rovers in July 1996.

Records stand proudly in posterity, and Alan Shearer has established many in his time, but what Alan has achieved takes him far beyond mere records. He has become a symbol of Tyneside and an iconic figure for every Geordie as well as an internationally-respected figure.

Now, tonight, as Alan takes his thoroughly-deserved testimonial at a packed St. James' Park, we are paying tribute to a man who has raised the profile of Newcastle United Football Club to a new level and written a special chapter in the club's history.

When Alan came here in 1996, he was already established as one of the world's leading strikers. There were many competitors for his signature, but as a true Geordie he chose to come home to Newcastle United.

His loyalty to the club has never wavered, and our supporters' faith in him has been strong, constant, and amply rewarded.

Tonight, that faith will be seen in the unique and conclusive context of a testimonial match and undoubtedly the emotional send-off the Geordie Nation affords one of its own here this evening will be sincere and heartfelt.

It is fitting that, on such an occasion, one of Britain's finest clubs, the Scottish champions Glasgow Celtic, will provide the opposition.

On behalf of everyone at Newcastle United, and on behalf of Alan Shearer in particular, I warmly welcome the directors, officials, players and supporters of Celtic to St. James' Park and thank them for their contribution to what will be one of the most memorable nights ever seen here.

In his generosity, Alan has chosen to donate all proceeds from this evening's match to his chosen charities - a gesture typical of the man, and one which means every paying spectator here this evening has made his or her contribution to very worthy causes.

Of course, there is no cause more worthy than Alan Shearer himself, and as he takes his final bows on the pitch tonight before retiring as a player, Geordieland will embrace one of its finest representatives.

Thank you, Alan Shearer, for all you have given us in the last decade.

I am sure football will still have a place for you in the future, and wherever your path leads, we wish you and your family every success and happiness in the years to come.



TESTIMONIAL NIGHT SCHEDULE (PLEASE LISTEN CLOSELY TO PA ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE EVENING)

6.15pm TURNSTILES OPEN

7.05pm PLAYERS WARM-UP

7.35pm



KEEDIE PERFORMS 'NESSUN DORMA'

We would request supporters to be in their seats at this time.

7.40pm TEAMS ENTER THE PITCH

■ When Alan emerges from the tunnel if you are sitting in the North, South and East Stands - please hold your seat card above your head with the plain side facing towards the pitch to create a spectacular effect.

7.45pm KICK-OFF

8.30pm HALF-TIME PENALTY COMPETITION **England v Scotland**

8.45pm SECOND HALF

9.30 pm FULL-TIME

■ Following the final whistle there will be an interview with United's record goalscorer and a number of presentations all hosted by **ANT & DEC**

WE WOULD ASK ALL SUPPORTERS TO REMAIN SEATED UNTIL AFTER THE PRESENTATIONS HAVE FINISHED AND ALAN HAS LEFT THE PITCH FOR THE FINAL TIME. ENJOY YOUR EVENING.



ALAN SHEARER tonight says farewell to football as a player after 10 years with Newcastle United and 18 years in the game.



A hero to the Geordie Nation, Alan has experienced all the ups and downs of a remarkable decade but retires in possession of the club goalscoring record after 206 goals in 404 appearances.

From the day he signed for United in July 1996, to his retirement in May 2006, Alan has led the way with dignity and pride.

Now he looks back over a dramatic decade at St. James' Park ...



By 1996, Alan Shearer was already a world-famous figure. A Championship winner with Blackburn Rovers after four formative years at Southampton, he was much in demand when the big names came calling ten summers ago. And his options presented him with a dilemma that would eventually be resolved by his own Geordie heart.



I HAD FOUR CHOICES...

One was to stay at Blackburn. I also had the choice to go to Newcastle, to go to Manchester United, or to go to Liverpool.

It was a massive decision for me and when I flew over to Jack (Walker, the Blackburn owner) – Jack put his jet on to fly me to Jersey – I spent the afternoon there and had made my mind up to stay at Blackburn. I listened to what he had to say, and I thought I would come home to think on it and discuss it with the family, as you do.

Blackburn even offered me the manager's job, but at 26 that was ridiculously early.

And then I decided that if I was going to make the right decision, it was fair that I met everyone.

I had met Alex Ferguson, and I had met Kevin Keegan. Freddy Shepherd, Douglas Hall ... I got on great with them. Everyone was great. Everything was fine. I got on with them and liked what I heard. And Newcastle was my home-town club.

I also got on with Alex Ferguson at Manchester United. I had a chat with him and he was fine. I didn't want to go abroad, so it was a matter of deciding which of the English teams I wanted to play for. I've never really fancied going abroad, so I had met all the relevant parties and my mind was everywhere, to be honest.

But one night I suddenly said to Lainya: 'That's it – I'm coming home.' It was the pull of playing for Newcastle – the No 9 shirt and all that. I wrote down the plusses and the negatives on everything. And I defy anyone to tell me that I didn't do the right thing.

It's been everything I wanted it to be. I've lived my dream. I've lived for my boyhood shirt and got the record – and that's a great trophy to have.

We've had some great times and some desperate times. Kevin Keegan left after six months, which was obviously disappointing, but there have been so many good things about playing for Newcastle United since then.

I signed for Newcastle and had my medical in, of all places, Manchester! I passed my medical and they said to me: 'You're going to the Far East – we would like you to come.' I said: 'When?' And they said: 'In about three hours!'

We flew from Manchester, we were living in Formby, so Lainya packed me a bag and put it in a cab, I got my bag at the airport, and I met up with the lads in the Far East. And I never ever went back to that house!

By the time we flew back, we went straight to Newcastle and it was the press conference at St. James'. By then Lainya had had to pack the house up by herself and sell the house herself – which she did. So at least the move got me out of packing the house up! I went to the Gosforth Park Hotel – and I was a Newcastle United player ...

ALAN DIDN'T HAVE THE GREATEST START TO HIS CAREER AT NEWCASTLE. A HEAVY CHARITY SHIELD DEFEAT WAS FOLLOWED BY A FIRST-DAY PREMIER LEAGUE REVERSE AT EVERTON. BUT THEN IT STARTED TO GO RIGHT ...

We had the Charity Shield which was 4-0 to Manchester United. And then we had Everton away and we got beaten 2-0 and I thought: 'Jesus – what have I done here?' I was serious. I thought: 'We've been done by Man U, at Everton I've had a goal disallowed – and I never pushed him – but that was us off to a poor start.'

I had to wait until the Wimbledon goal in the next game on my home debut – after 86 minutes – and it was a brilliant feeling. There was excitement, because I had always wanted to do it. And my parents and family were there.

It would still have been a great night even had I not scored. I had achieved something I had always wanted to do. There were butterflies of excitement. I just wanted to get out there.

There were a lot of special moments after that in that first season here, not

least in the 5-0 against Man United in the October.

As the world's most expensive player, it was always nice for anyone going to a new club to score a goal. You are judged on goals, and you have to score them.

Soon after Wimbledon we played my old team Blackburn at home and the one big thing I did think about in the Blackburn game was my old mate Tim Flowers being in goal for them. He knew my game inside out – I'd travelled with him in a car to training all the time. If anyone was going to know me, Tim was going to know me.

Then when we got a penalty against Rovers (and I took them against him day-to-day in practice) he knew what I was thinking. He's a big mate. But I scored – even though Tim went the right way.

I knew what the stadium was like and I knew what the fans were like. I knew what the Newcastle team was like because I had sat and watched them. Les Ferdinand was my best strike partner ever at club level though we only had one season together. He had pace and it was a great combination.

We also had Ginola, Gillespie, Beardsley, Lee ... it was a team designed to score goals and get forward and me and Les were at the front of it. It was a very good team – I knew that. The 5-0 v Man U was a special game, particularly because of what had happened in the Charity Shield, but there were so many special matches.



SHEARER