

= Sam Cowan =

Samuel Cowan ( 10 May 1901 ? 4 October 1964 ) was an English football player and manager . A relative latecomer to the sport , Cowan did not play football until he was 17 and was 22 by the time he turned professional . He made his league debut for Doncaster Rovers in 1923 , and signed for First Division Manchester City the following season .

Cowan played centre half for Manchester City for 11 seasons , captaining the team in the early to mid @-@ 1930s . He is the only player to have represented Manchester City in three FA Cup finals , as a runner @-@ up in 1926 and 1933 , and as a winner in 1934 . Internationally , he gained three England caps between 1926 and 1931 . In total he played 407 times for Manchester City , putting him 12th in terms of all @-@ time appearances . In 1935 , he transferred to Bradford City , and subsequently moved to Mossley as player @-@ manager .

In 1938 , Cowan joined Brighton & Hove Albion as a coach , and set up a physiotherapy business . He returned to Manchester City as manager in 1946 , winning the Second Division in his only season in charge . He continued to work in sports and physiotherapy until his death in 1964 .

= = Football career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Cowan was born on 10 May 1901 in Chesterfield , but moved further north in his early years and was raised in Adwick le Street near Doncaster . He did not play football as a child , only gaining an interest in the sport when he took part in a game at a local park aged 17 . He then started to play for local teams , including Adwick Juniors , Bullcroft and Denaby United and had an unsuccessful trial at Huddersfield Town .

In 1923 , Cowan gained his first professional contract following a successful trial at his local league club , Doncaster Rovers of the Third Division ( North ) . Despite playing as a defender , during his time at Doncaster he scored regularly , including a hat @-@ trick of headed goals against Halifax Town in March 1924 . His performances gained the attention of bigger clubs , and in December 1924 he joined Manchester City , who sought a successor to the likes of Mick Hamill and Max Woosnam .

= = = Manchester City = = =

Cowan made his Manchester City debut in a 2 ? 2 draw against Birmingham City on 20 December 1924 , and scored his first goal for the club two weeks later , against Nottingham Forest . He played in all but one of the remaining league matches that season , 21 in total .

Starting all but four of Manchester City 's matches in the 1925 ? 26 season , Cowan was a key part of the team which reached the 1926 FA Cup Final , winning several ties by wide margins en route . However , in the final City were beaten 1 ? 0 by Bolton Wanderers . Further disappointment followed in the league , when after a campaign characterised by erratic form , City were relegated on the final day of the season . By this time Cowan 's reputation as a competent centre @-@ back had grown , and he received an international call @-@ up . He made his England debut on 24 May 1926 playing an unfamiliar left @-@ half role in a 5 ? 3 win against Belgium . By 1931 , he had earned three international caps , the others gained in matches against France and Austria . He also made appearances for the Football League team , including a trial match against England in 1931 .

In the 1926 ? 27 season , Cowan made 27 appearances as his club sought an immediate return to the top division . The race for promotion went to the final match , with Manchester City and Portsmouth both in contention for the second of the two promotion places . Cowan played in a resounding City win , an 8 ? 0 victory against Bradford City . The watching crowd believed the result to be sufficient for promotion , but Portsmouth 's match had been delayed by 15 minutes and was still in progress . A late Portsmouth goal meant the final scoreline in their match was a 5 ? 1 win ,

enough to give Portsmouth second place on goal average by a margin of one two @-@ hundredth of a goal . The club won the Second Division championship the following season , gaining promotion to the top flight . The Second Division championship was Cowan 's first honour in professional football .

In the early 1930s , Cowan became Manchester City captain , succeeding Jimmy McMullan . During his captaincy the club reached two further FA Cup Finals . The first of these was in 1933 , against Everton . During the match Cowan was up against Everton captain Dixie Dean . Both players were renowned for their heading ability . Matt Busby claimed that Cowan could " head a ball as far as most of us could kick it " , but Dean prevailed in the aerial battle , scoring Everton 's second goal with a header . The Daily Mail observed that Dean 's presence gave Cowan a dilemma : " He was torn between a determination not to leave Dean and a desire to help his forwards . He broke down between the two . " Everton were 3 ? 0 victors , but when Cowan received his runner 's up medal from the Duke of York , he remarked that he would come back next year to win . True to Cowan 's word , City returned to Wembley the following year . In the 1934 FA Cup Final , Cowan became the first and thus far only Manchester City player to represent the club in three FA Cup finals . He captained City to a 2 ? 1 victory over Portsmouth . As team captain Cowan held primary responsibility for motivating his fellow players and match tactics . This was typical for a captain of his era , as managers of the period were chiefly administrators who had little input into coaching and tactics .

Cowan 's final season at Maine Road was 1934 ? 35 , in which he was ever @-@ present . His final match for the club was a 5 ? 0 defeat of Wolverhampton Wanderers on 4 May 1935 . In total he made 407 appearances for Manchester City , scoring 24 goals . As of 2008 he ranks 12th all @-@ time for Manchester City appearances . Bob Donnelly was signed to replace him in the 1935 close season , and Bradford City signed Cowan for a fee of £ 2 @,@ 000 in October 1935 . At the time the transfer fee was the second highest ever paid by the club .

= = = Bradford City = = =

Bradford City were struggling in the Second Division at the time of Cowan 's signing , having won just one of their first ten games of the 1935 ? 36 season . Cowan made his debut for them on 19 October 1935 in a 2 ? 2 draw with Swindon Town , but it was not until Cowan 's third game that Bradford won for the second time that season . Cowan missed just three of the club 's remaining fixtures that season , playing 29 times in the league and three in the FA Cup as City finished 12th . The following season , City again struggled . Cowan missed just one of the first 23 games , but after Christmas , he was restricted to just six ; and without Cowan , Bradford finished 21st and were relegated to the Third Division ( North ) .

= = = Managerial career = = =

In 1937 , Cowan was appointed player @-@ manager at Mossley . He led the club to the seventh place in the Cheshire League and to the Manchester Challenge Shield title . On the pitch , he played 39 matches and scored one goal . At the end of the season Cowan resigned to join Brighton & Hove Albion coaching staff . In October 1945 , a shortage of players resulted in Cowan taking to the field in a wartime match against Bournemouth . Aged 44 years and 156 days , he became the oldest ever Brighton player . While at Brighton , Cowan started a physiotherapy business based near the Goldstone Ground .

In November 1946 , Cowan became Manchester City manager , succeeding Wilf Wild , who moved to a purely administrative role . Cowan had been known for his motivational skills as a player , and was part of a new generation of managers who took responsibility for tactics and team selection , of which Cowan 's contemporary and former team mate Matt Busby became the most well @-@ known . Cowan was given a salary of £ 2 @,@ 000 , and came to an agreement whereby he spent part of the week with the Manchester City team and part looking after his business interests in Brighton . His first match as manager was a 3 ? 0 win against Newport County , and the team then

embarked upon a run of 19 matches without defeat . Despite achieving the Division Two title in his first season in charge , Cowan resigned in June 1947 as his commute from Brighton caused tension with club officials .

= = Post @-@ football = =

Cowan later worked as a physiotherapist for cricket club Sussex CCC and ice hockey team Brighton Tigers . As a trainer with the Tigers he was named in the British National League All Star team for three years running from 1956 to 1958 . He died on 4 October 1964 aged 63 , when he suffered a heart attack , while refereeing a football charity match in aid of Sussex wicket keeper Jim Parks . He left behind a widow and one son . In 2004 , he was elected to Manchester City 's Hall of Fame . A street near Manchester City 's former ground Maine Road , Sam Cowan Close , is named in his honour .

= = Honours = =

Player

FA Cup

Winner : 1934

Runner @-@ up : 1926 , 1933

Second Division

Winner : 1927 ? 28

Manager

Manchester Challenge Shield

Winner : 1937

Second Division

Winner : 1946 ? 47