

= Roy Paul =

Roy Paul (18 April 1920 ? 21 May 2002) was a Welsh footballer who played as a half @-@ back for Swansea Town and Manchester City . He also represented the Welsh national team over 30 times and is regarded as one of Wales ' best ever players .

Brought up in the Rhondda Valley , Paul became a miner after leaving school , but an offer of a professional contract from Swansea gave him the opportunity to leave the colliery . His football career was then disrupted by Second World War , during which he was a physical training instructor . After the war , Paul made his League debut , and spent four years playing first team football for Swansea , winning the Third Division South championship in 1948 ? 49 . Transfer listed after an abortive move to Colombian club Millonarios , Paul joined Manchester City for £ 19 @,@ 500 in June 1950 .

At Manchester City Paul spent seven years as captain , leading the club to successive FA Cup finals in 1955 and 1956 , losing the first and winning the second . In 1957 he became player @-@ manager of Worcester City , and subsequently wound down his career in his native South Wales , becoming a lorry driver . He died in 2002 aged 82 .

= = Early career = =

Paul was born on 18 April 1920 in Ton Pentre , Glamorgan , in the valleys of South Wales , and was one of 12 children . He attended Bronllwyn School in Gelli . Paul left school at 15 , and like many boys from the Rhondda Valley he became a miner . While playing football for Ton Boys Club he was spotted by Swansea Town , for whom he signed first as an amateur , and then a month later as a professional . The Swansea captain was Bill Imrie , a former Scotland international . Paul named Imrie as a strong influence in his early career , particularly for instructing him in the fundamentals of good wing @-@ half play . Paul played for Swansea 's junior sides , but just as he was approaching the fringes of the first team , the league was suspended due to the outbreak of the Second World War .

At the start of the war Paul returned to the mines . He continued to represent Swansea in wartime leagues , and played for the senior team for the first time in 1939 . Paul struggled to readapt to mining life , and volunteered for the Marines in 1940 . He served as a sergeant physical training instructor , primarily in Devon , though he also spent part of the war in India . When in Devon he played football as a guest for Exeter City , and when in Wales he played wartime football for Swansea . Once the war was over Paul finally made his League debut for Swansea , having lost six years of his career to the war .

The Swansea coach in the immediate post @-@ war period was Frank Barson , a notoriously aggressive character who was known as " the centre @-@ forward 's graveyard " in his playing days . Barson instructed Paul in the art of tackling during lengthy practise sessions , and made him aware of the tricks that a wily opponent could use to gain the upper hand in a physical battle . Paul went on to make 159 league appearances for Swansea in a four @-@ year period , winning the Third Division South championship in 1948 ? 49 . An impressive appearance against top @-@ flight club Arsenal in a 1950 FA Cup match resulted in the Londoners making an offer for the player , but Swansea turned it down .

Later that year , Paul received an offer of a trial with Colombian club Millonarios . Colombian clubs , who were not required to pay transfer fees as their governing body was not affiliated with FIFA , made similar offers to several British players . Paul was one of seven to make the trip to South America . Millonarios offered him a £ 3 @,@ 000 signing on fee and £ 150 per month , far in excess of the £ 12 per week maximum wage in British football . Once in Colombia , Paul found himself unimpressed by the conditions . He remarked in his autobiography that seeing football pitches surrounded by barbed wire put him in mind of " a concentration camp , or maybe the monkey @-@ house in the zoo " . Paul stayed in Bogota for only ten days , without playing a single match . Swansea were angered by Paul 's trip , and transfer @-@ listed him upon his return . As a result , he transferred to Manchester City for £ 19 @,@ 500 , a British record for a half @-@ back . Ken

Barnes joined the club on the same day . The two became close friends ; Paul was best man at Barnes ' wedding .

= = Manchester City = =

Paul joined a Manchester City side which had just been relegated to the Second Division , and were thus playing at the same level as Swansea . Paul made his debut for the club on the opening day of the 1950 ? 51 season , a 4 ? 2 victory against a Preston North End side featuring Tom Finney . Manchester City went ten matches unbeaten at the start of the season , until a 4 ? 3 defeat at Doncaster Rovers , where City blew a 3 ? 0 half @-@ time lead . Paul played in all but one match that season , becoming club captain and helping his club win promotion , as runners @-@ up behind champions Preston . Writer HD Davies , under his pen name Old International , attributed much of City 's cohesive play over the season to the addition of Paul to the side .

Promotion meant Paul was playing club football at the highest level for the first time . For the next three seasons , his club languished in the lower reaches of the league table . During one spell of particularly poor form in 1953 , newspapers wrote of a feud between Paul and his team @-@ mate Ivor Broadis . Paul was critical of Broadis , a talented inside @-@ forward , but one who in Paul 's view did not exert sufficient effort when defending . In the 1954 ? 55 pre @-@ season a new tactic was introduced which would change the direction of the club . Inspired by the Hungary team which had beaten England 6 ? 3 the previous year , the club 's reserves had used a tactical system in which Johnny Williamson was used as a deep @-@ lying centre @-@ forward , resulting in a lengthy unbeaten run . Manchester City manager Les McDowall decided to try the system at first team level , using Don Revie in the centre @-@ forward role . Henceforth the system became known as The Revie Plan . The opening match of the season resulted in a 5 ? 0 defeat at the hands of Preston North End . The following match the system was tweaked with Ken Barnes picked in place of John McTavish . City beat Sheffield United 5 ? 2 , and the system was retained for the remainder of the season . Paul 's tactical role was relatively unchanged compared to that of some of his team @-@ mates , but as captain he was responsible for retaining the cohesion of his players . The Manchester Guardian regarded Paul to be well suited to the system , calling it " a strategy which shows off to perfection the strength and maturity of Paul among his younger defenders " .

Using the new system , results improved . In September 1954 City beat Arsenal to go top of the league , though not without personal cost for Paul , as an elbow from Arsenal 's Tommy Lawton resulted in the loss of four teeth . City could not sustain their title challenge , finishing seventh , but Paul 's team enjoyed a successful run in the FA Cup , reaching the final , where they faced Newcastle United . An early goal by Jackie Milburn and an unfortunate injury to Jimmy Meadows on 18 minutes left City playing with 10 men and gave them an uphill task . Paul took the responsibility of changing tactics : " Like certain generals I believe that in dire emergency it is often better to attack . I clapped my hands and yelled " Let 's show these Geordies the stuff that 's taken us to Wembley " " . The performance in the remainder of the first half was improved , resulting in an equalising goal by Bobby Johnstone , but in the second half Newcastle scored twice to win 3 ? 1 . Publicly , Paul vowed to take his team to Wembley again , but privately he blamed himself for the defeat , questioning whether he had failed as captain .

The following season the club surpassed the achievements of the previous season , finishing fourth in the league and again reaching the FA Cup final , this time facing Birmingham City . Conscious that early nerves had affected his team in 1955 , in the dressing room he focussed on instilling each member of his team with confidence . This time it was Manchester City who scored an early goal , and with City leading in the second half Paul told his men to keep the ball in play as much as possible in order to tire out the Birmingham players . Then German goalkeeper Bert Trautmann badly hurt his neck in a collision with Peter Murphy . Paul instructed Roy Little to take Trautmann 's place , but Trautmann insisted that he would keep playing . Then Manchester City held on for the victory , and Paul collected the trophy from Queen Elizabeth II . X @-@ rays later revealed that Trautmann had played on with a broken neck . Paul took the match ball from the final as a souvenir , and gave it to his son .

After the cup win Paul played one more season for Manchester City . In the summer of 1957 he was offered a new contract , but instead retired from the professional game aged 37 , citing loss of pace due to age as the deciding factor . His final appearance for the club came on 22 April 1957 against Everton . In total he made 293 appearances for Manchester City , scoring 9 goals .

Upon finishing his professional career , Paul returned to the Rhondda Valley , and settled in Gelli . He continued to play at semi @-@ professional level , joining Worcester City , who paid him £ 20 a week and loaned him a car . Paul made 124 appearances for Worcester between 1957 and 1960 , including a three @-@ month spell as player @-@ manager . In 1959 he was part of the Worcester side which knocked Liverpool out of the FA Cup . He then moved to Brecon Corinthians , and later Garw Athletic , where he ended his career . After the end of his football career , he became a lorry driver . He died in May 2002 aged 82 , following a long illness with Alzheimer 's disease , leaving a wife , Beryl , and two children , Robert and Christine . He is buried in Treorchy Cemetery .

= = International career = =

Paul gained 33 caps for Wales . He did not gain any under @-@ age caps , as in his era Wales did not field an under @-@ 23 team . He received his first cap in October 1948 , in a 3 ? 1 defeat against Scotland . His only international goal came in a 5 ? 1 win against Belgium in November 1949 . In October 1955 Paul was part of the Wales team that beat England 2 ? 1 , the first Welsh victory against England in 18 years . Six months later Wales faced Ireland in their final match of that season 's British Home Championship . Wales were leading 1 ? 0 when a handball by Danny Blanchflower gave Wales a penalty . Paul took the kick , but it was saved by Norman Uprichard . Paul 's failure cost Wales victory , as Jimmy Jones equalised in the second half and the match finished 1 ? 1 . A draw in the remaining fixture between Scotland and England meant that the miss also denied Wales victory in the tournament . Instead , for the first and only time there was a four @-@ way tie . Paul did not play for Wales again .

= = Playing style = =

Roy Paul played as a half @-@ back , with the exact position varying during his career . At Swansea he was primarily used as a right @-@ half , but when he joined Manchester City manager Les McDowall switched him to the left , a position which Paul preferred despite being right @-@ footed . Internationally , he represented Wales in all three half @-@ back positions over the course of his career .

Paul had a reputation as a physically tough player and inspirational captain . Team @-@ mate Ken Barnes described him as a player who was " more about power than guile " , and called him a " born leader " who was " brilliant in the air " . Paul 's approach to captaincy was to ensure that every player gave as much effort as possible , mixing the respect of his colleagues with the occasional attempt to frighten them into action ; in the tunnel prior to the 1956 FA Cup Final his last action before leading out his team was to hold up his fist and shout " If we don 't fucking win , you 'll get some of this " .

At Manchester City he was occasional penalty taker , but his success rate was not high and he was relieved when Don Revie joined the club and took the responsibility for penalties , commenting that " the only reason I took them was because no @-@ one else fancied it " .

= = Honours = =

Manchester City F.C.
FA Cup : 1956