



WITH BLUES IN RUSSIA

**The Story of
Southend United's
Tour in Russia**

July-August 1971

BY MARTIN DAVIES
OF THE

Evening Echo

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TWO KINDS OF PREPARATION

Southend United's 11-day tour of Russia, in July and August, was the most ambitious in the club's history.

It was also the first made by a British team for many years. So the players really were ambassadors for their country.

The members of the party and their families first assembled at the Boston Hall Hotel, Westcliff, the day before departure, where at a reception the Mayor of Southend, Ald. Hector Hill, bade them bon voyage.

The next day it was a six o'clock start by coach from Roots Hall in order to catch BEA's morning flight from Heathrow to Moscow.

Losing a couple of hours on the way, Blues touched down at Sheremetyevo Airport, 30 miles north of Moscow, in the early afternoon, having enjoyed a satisfying and compact lunch on board their Trident.

They were met by officials of the Russian Football Association, and here too they picked up their guide and interpreter, thereafter to be addressed as Serge.

His first words to the visitors in the Russian coach were: "In the rack above you are bottles. And here is an opener." He had a knack of saying the right thing at the right moment.

RIGHT: Joe Jacques, captain in the tour games, receives an anti-cholera injection a month before departure. **BELOW:** Peter Taylor and Bernard Lewis loosen up at a traditional Russian sport at the farewell reception in Westcliff.

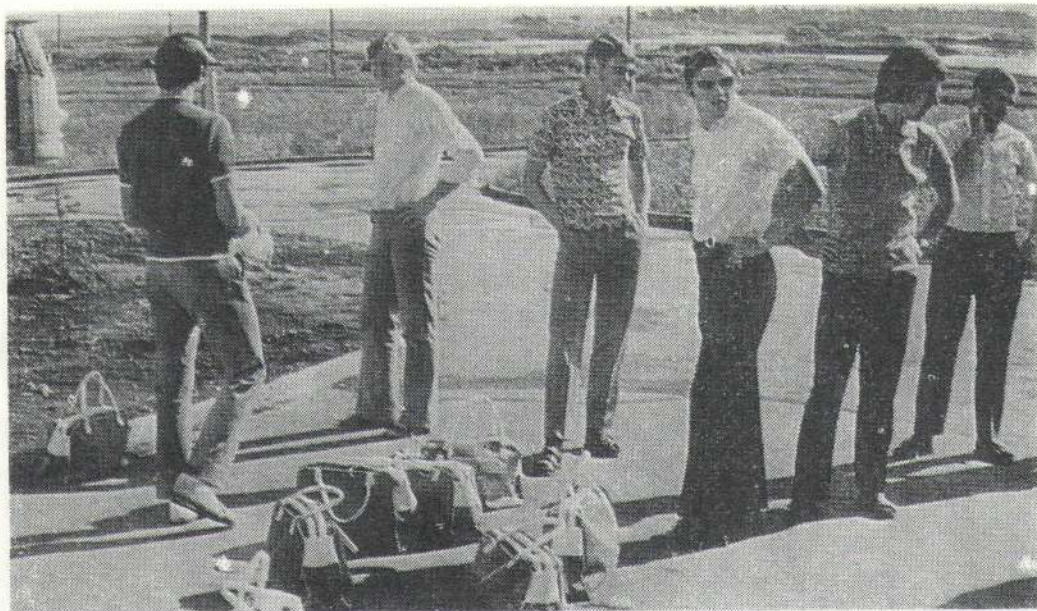




ABOVE: Manager Arthur Rowley leads members of the squad out to the coach at Roots Hall. They aren't all in the picture. Some were picked up along the route.

BELOW: A farewell wave before boarding BEA's Trident Two at Heathrow.





FIRST STOP — KALININ

On arrival in Moscow the party found there had been a change in their schedule.

The original plan to spend the first night in Moscow, then travel 100 miles north for the first game in Kalinin, had been scrapped.

A film festival in Moscow meant the hotels were packed. So instead United drove north towards Kalinin, a city on the banks of the Volga.

They stayed eight miles south at a hostel run by the sports club of which their opponents, Kalinin Volga, are affiliated.

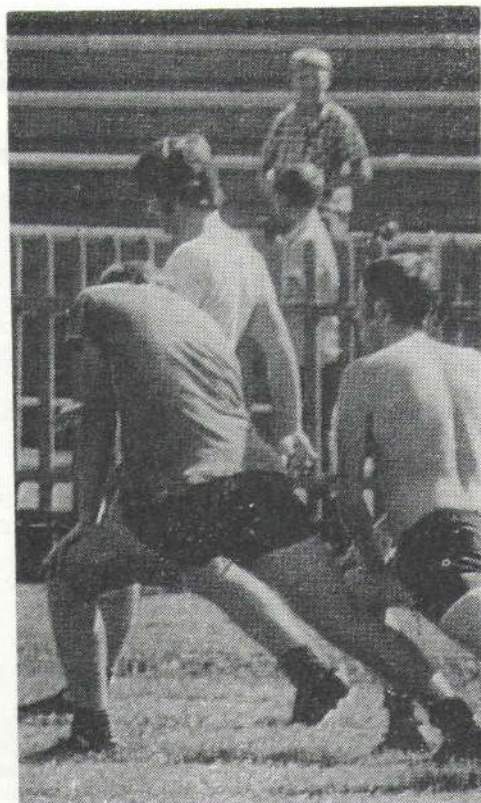
The sports club in turn is associated with the city's huge chemical works.

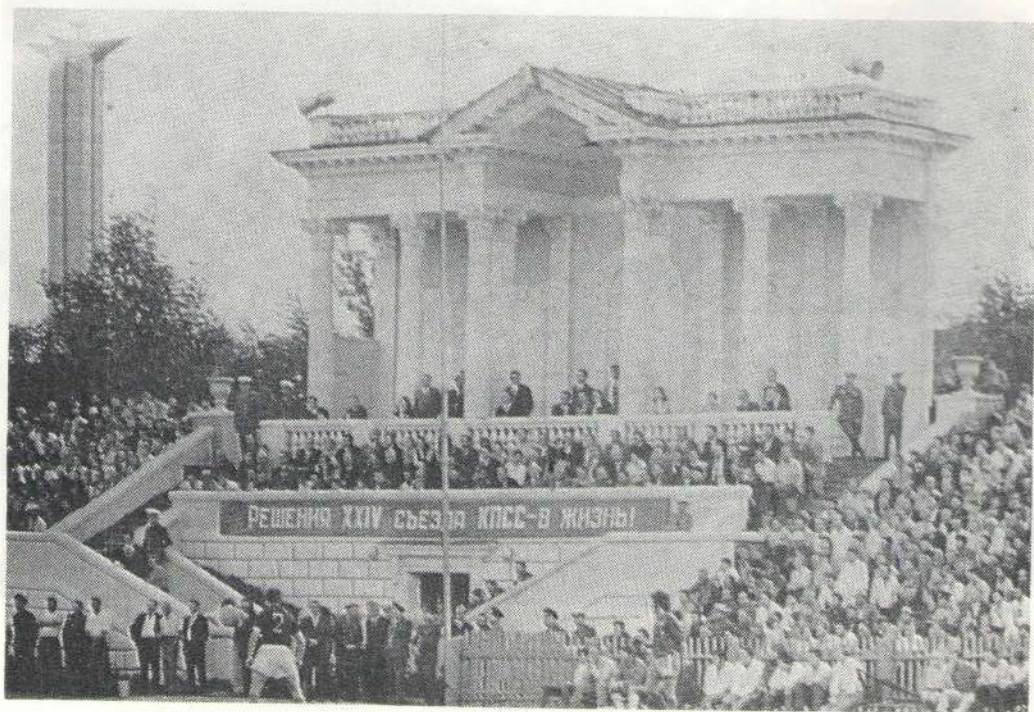
The hostel was in peaceful, flat countryside flanked by pinewoods. Here some of the fiercest fighting of the second World War had taken place when the Germans tried to cross the Volga.

Next morning the party left for the city where Arther Rowley and Lawrie Leslie staged a training session at their opponent's ground.

Above: Alex Smith, Gary Moore, George Duck, Ray Ternent, Terry Johnson and Peter Hunt wait for the coach to take them training.

RIGHT: Interested Russians watch the first work-out.





The Kalinin pitch, like all those played on by the visitors, had longer grass than in England. So Arthur Rowley asked for it to be cut before the match.

Blues were beaten by a single goal, scored by the Russian striker Mosalenkov in the fifth minute before they had got into their stride.

He took advantage of an error of marking in the United defence.

Otherwise Blues played well, putting up a splendid second half performance, and were unfortunate to lose. Kalinin were probably the best Russian side they would meet.

Blues were obliged to leave out Gary Moore (virus infection), Bill Garner (stomach upset) and Brian Albeson (ankle injury). So the team read:

Roberts, Lindsey, Smith, Elliott, Piekalniets, Jacques, Johnson, Best, Duck, Ternent, Lewis.

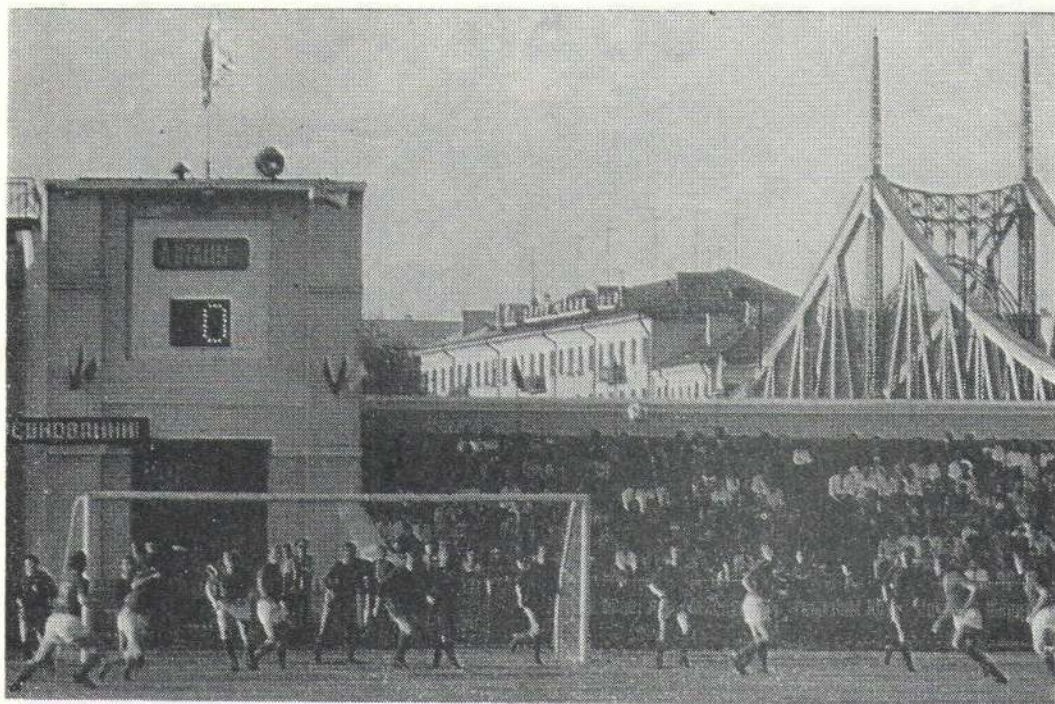
George Duck used his height effectively in this, his first match for Blues; and both he and Ternent, another new boy, showed that they have much to contribute to the Roots Hall programme.

Blues really turned on the pressure midway through the second half, and three successive well-taken corners by Dave Elliott had the Russians reeling.

RIGHT: Joe Jacques leads Blues out for the match. Under his left arm some of the gifts of programmes and club souvenirs distributed by the visitors.

ABOVE: The impressive arch, built on classic lines, that dominates one side of the Kalinin ground.





ABOVE: Southend United's defence stands firm during first half pressure by Kalinin. In the background is the suspension bridge that crosses the majestic River Volga just outside the ground.

BELOW: Terry Johnson menaces the Russian goal during the first half.



ON THE ROAD TO TULA

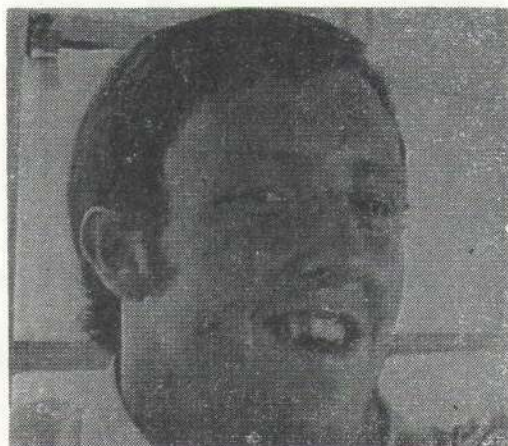
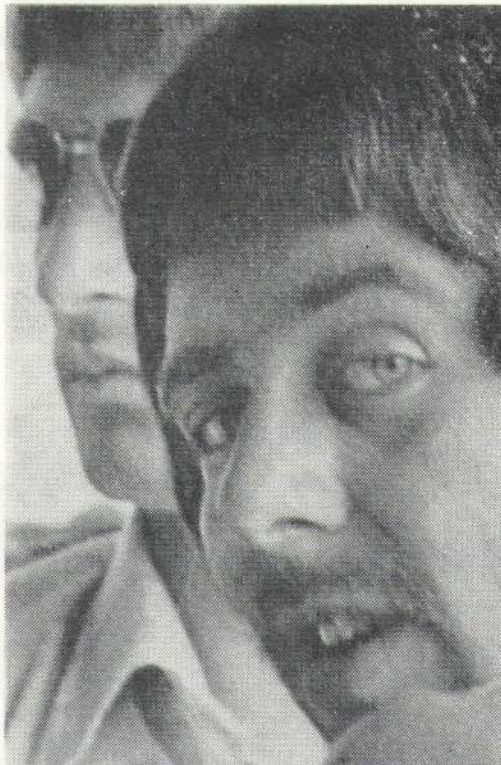


The next stop was to be Tula, 100 miles south of Moscow and a full day's travel by road from Kalinin.

ABOVE: Members of the party, including manager Arthur Rowley and chairman Bill Rubin, buy postcards at a motel near Moscow where the party lunched.

BELOW: An afternoon rest in the shade. The weather grew warmer as United moved further south.





FOUR AWAY, ONE HOME

Some portraits of Blues players on the journey to Tula.

TOP: Peter Hunt, Joe Jacques and Terry Johnson.

ABOVE: Dave Barnett.

Meanwhile, Garry Moore had been flown home with a virus infection after being seen by a Russian doctor in Kalinin.

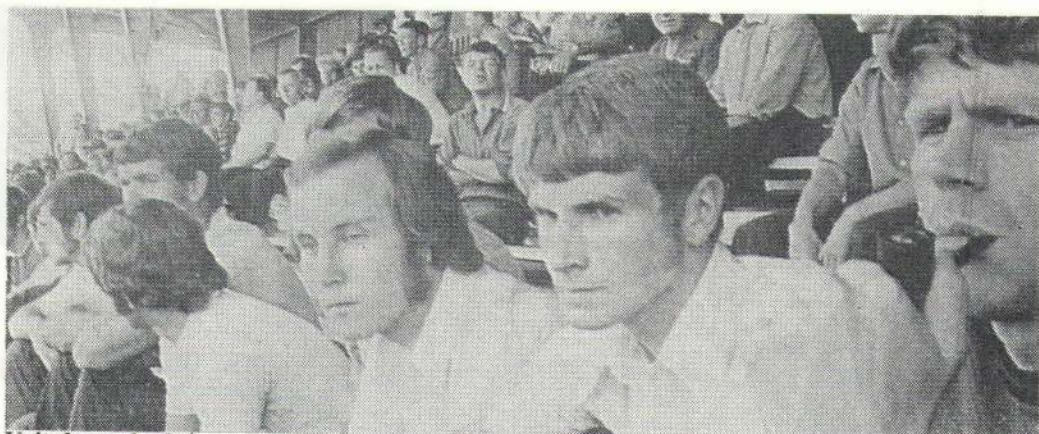
LEFT: His wife Vera doles out the medicine in Southend.



RUSSIAN DOLLS

One of the interesting things about Russian football clubs is that they are often sections of sports clubs sponsored by industry and trade unions.

Consequently a football team at a morning training session will be watched by other athletes — like these girls at Tula. The picture of the girl cyclist in training was taken on the club's adjacent track.



United watch their opponents in action during a League game on the eve of the match in Tula.



Director John Foster takes a turn in goal during training. Notice the water-sprinkler behind him, a common sight on Russian grounds.



Manager Arthur Rowley and Chairman Bill Rubin don special shoes before entering the former home of Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, preserved as a museum just outside Tula.



Billy Best, at lunch in Tula, demonstrates that he is something of a gourmet.





UNITED SHOW THEIR METTLE

Tula Metallist draw their names from the city's chief industry.

Their team against Blues included three former internationals.

Arthur Rowley made three changes in the Southend side, with George Duck, Bernard Lewis and John Piekalnetis replaced by Bill Garner, Peter Taylor and Dave Barnett.

So the line-up was: Roberts, Lindsey, Smith, Elliott, Barnett, Jacques, Johnson, Best, Garner, Ternent, Taylor.

Again Mr. Rowley requested that the pitch be cut. The Russian-style long grass can transform a game, making the ball move much more slowly than in England.

Although Blues lost 2-1 they played well enough to have won. And the crowd of 14,000 (5,000 fewer than at Kalinin) saw some excellent football.

Tula went ahead through Mishustin in the 12th minute, but United played the rest of the half with cool doggedness and their defence looked firm.

In fact, just on the half-hour, Peter Taylor sent home the rebound from a Garner shot to equalise. United now dominated, and another Garner attempt was tipped over for a corner.

During half-time the crowd was entertained by a cycle race round the perimeter cinder-track.

Two minutes after the restart Tula regained the lead through a surprise dropping shot by full-back Mastrukov.

But Blues continued to fight back and, playing some attractive football, built up many promising attacks. The game ended with two successive corners and an opportunity with which Billy Best might so easily have made it a draw.



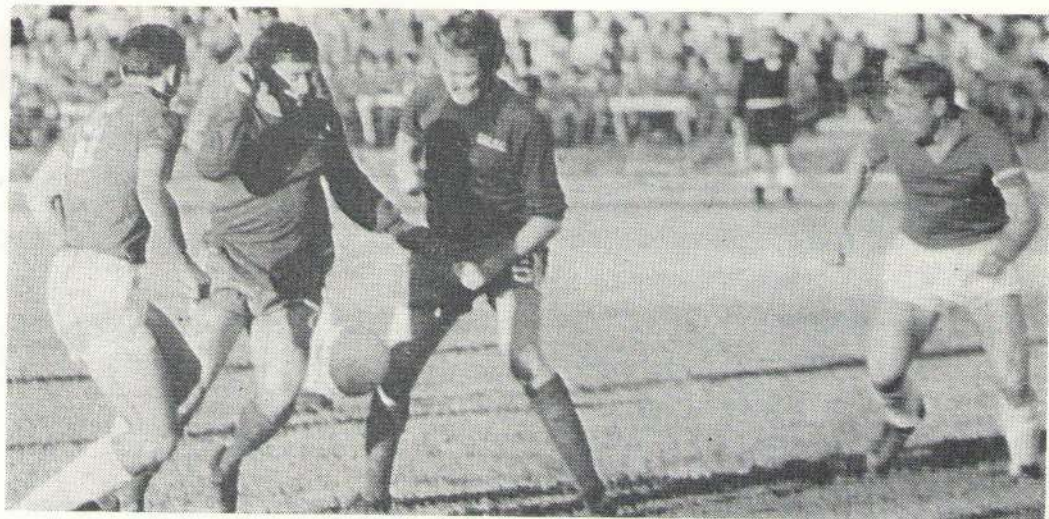
TOP: A wave from the teams before the match.

LEFT: Blues players collapse in a heap of joy after Taylor's goal. And the Tula defence sorts out the muddle in which it has found itself.

ABOVE: Billy Best, supported by Peter Taylor, on the attack.

BELOW: Blues team picture at Tula. Standing — Piekalnetis, Duck, Jacques, Elliott, Roberts, Lawrie Leslie (trainer), Smith, Barnett, Lewis, Hunt. Squatting — Lindsey, Garner, Taylor, Johnson, Ternent.





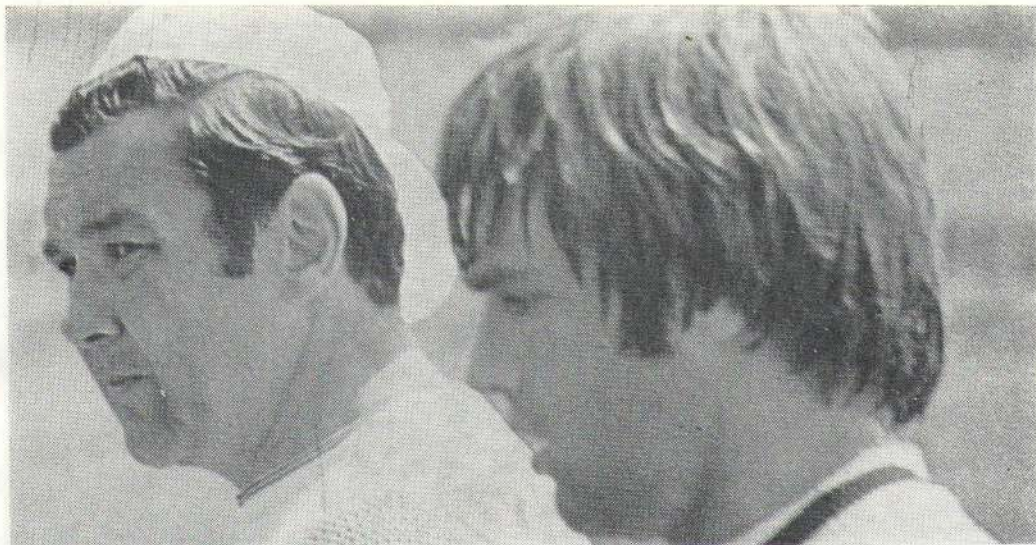
RIGHT: Director John Foster and Chairman Bill Rubin watching the Tula match. Between them is Mr. Henry Laurence, a Southend businessman and supporter, who had accompanied the party.



ABOVE: Terry Johnson breaks through the Tula defence on another occasion.

BELOW: Peter Hunt shows he is quick on the camera as Blues study a vendor's wares outside their Tula hotel. Notice the counting beads by which all Russian trades people tot up the bill.





From Tula the party flew 800 miles south to the beautiful Black Sea resort of Sochi. It is sub-tropical and temperatures reached 90 degrees.

ABOVE: Manager Arthur Rowley, accompanied by Bill Garner, dons suitable headgear for morning training.

RIGHT: The dress of girl athletes watching the session is equally appropriate. And **BELOW** nothing could have been more welcome afterwards than a dip in the Black Sea.



THEY WERE WITH THE TEAM AT THE BEACH



A SCORCHER IN SOCHI

In Sochi, United met a Select XI drawn from clubs in the Black Sea area.

This team probably contained more individual skill than any other encountered on the tour, though they had not had the opportunity to blend into a really good team.

Nevertheless two shock goals in the 10th and 11th minutes sent United to defeat, the visitors failing to reply.

Arthur Rowley had made six changes for this game. These included the switching of new boy Ray Ternent to full-back in place of Keith Lindsey who had broken down under the cruel sun that morning at training.

Keith was soon back in circulation again and did not need medical attention.

The Blues line-up was: Roberts, Smith, Ternent, Elliott (Barnett), Albeson, Jacques, Lewis (Duck), Hunt, Garner, Best, Taylor, (Johnson).

Although the visitors were never able to produce quite the fight-back of their two earlier games they did pin their opponents in their own half for much of the game.

Indeed, the second half, United had a pronounced territorial advantage. Fortunately the temperature had fallen considerably since the morning, but humidity was still high.

Mid-way through the second half Southend lost Bill Garner, sent off with a Russian defender. It seemed a severe decision after a comparatively minor incident in which Bill appeared the innocent party.

In the second half, too, Duck and Johnson came on as substitutes; and George again promised good things when he hit the bar and an upright.

Quarter-of-an-hour from the end a further substitution brought on Dave Barnett in place of Dave Elliott, who had received a knock in the first half.

Brian Albeson, playing his first match, showed that he is likely to become a valuable member of Blues' squad.

TOP: The Sochi goalkeeper saves during a Blues attack.

LOWER: An injured Sochi player receives attention... from a lady doctor.

BOTTOM: Blues' John Roberts dives to bring off a great save.





ABOVE: Bill Garner rises above the Sochi defence to get in a good header.

LEFT: The Sochi goalkeeper saves from Billy Best.

BELOW: Peter Taylor slips past a Sochi defender to get Southend's attack moving.



THE COMRADES REACH MOSCOW



After Sochi the next stage of the tour was a night flight back to Moscow, with two days in the luxurious Hotel Sputnik.

Here the Chairman and the Manager met officials of Profsport, the Russian organisation through which the tour had been arranged.

They had waited until they had the opportunity to meet face to face before discussing the question of a fourth and final tour match.

The scheduled game against Moscow Locomotive had been cancelled, because of the Russian side's heavy fixture pile-up.

Profsport wanted Blues to play at Yaroslavl, the motor car industry city with Europe's biggest tyre plant, 180 miles to the north-east.

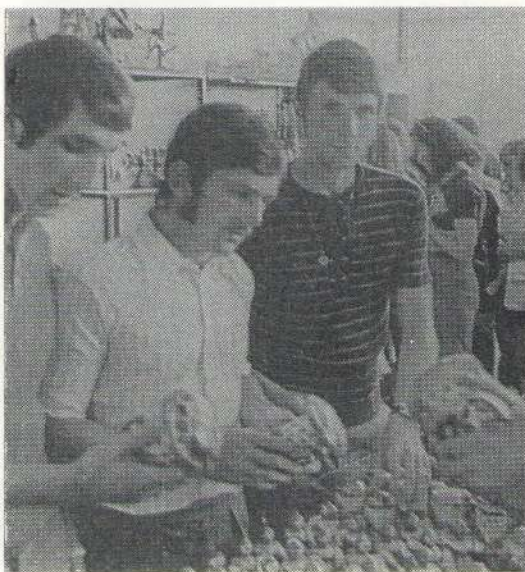
United were concerned about the long journey this involved on their last day.

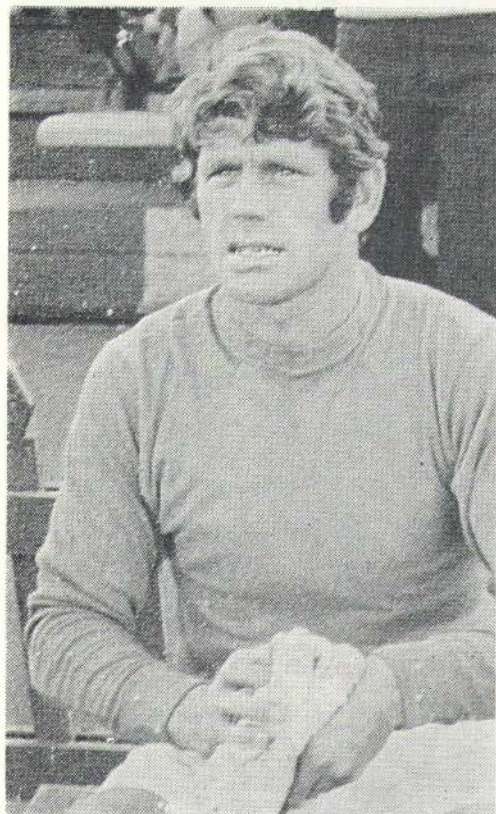
To preserve the goodwill which the tour had undoubtedly fostered it was agreed to travel to Yaroslavl by luxury coach, play the match that evening and travel back through the night to catch the plane home from Moscow Airport next morning.

Meanwhile, two days were spent in Moscow sightseeing and buying souvenirs.

TOP: Garner, Smith, Roberts, Ternent, Best, Johnson, Albesson, Lewis, Taylor and Jacques rest during a shopping session on a wall above the Moskva River.

RIGHT: Alex Smith, Peter Hunt and George Duck buying souvenirs in the Beriozka (tourist souvenir) shop.





ENCOUNTER WITH THE TYRE MEN

The football team in Yaroslavl is called Tyrer, after the big tyre plant to which it is affiliated.

Like Kalinin and Tula they are members of Russia's equivalent to our Second Division.

On this occasion United's team was: Roberts, Lindsey, Smith, Elliott, Albesson, Jacques, Johnson (Taylor), Best, Garner, Duck, Ternent.

This was the first time that Garner and Duck had lined up together at the start of a match, and the two big men often caused concern in the home defence.

A crowd of 12,000 saw Yaroslavl go ahead by the only goal of the match in the 12th minute. It was a goal with a strong element of chance in it.

Roberts and Lindsey misjudged the speed of a loose ball through the inevitably long Russian grass. They collided — both requiring attention — and the Russian's forward, Raingold, nipped in to score from 12 yards.

Both Blues players required brief attention from trainer Lawrie Leslie.

Nevertheless Blues came back with tremendous determination and once more played well enough to have won the game. Ternent, returning to the forward line, hit an upright.

Duck and Garner both went near to scoring on several occasions. And in the back line Jacques, Albesson and Lindsey built up good attacking moves from depth.

One person absent from the match was John Piekalnetis. He was suffering from the after-effects of the Sochi sun and had remained at the Moscow hotel.

He rejoined the party at the airport next morning.

LEFT: Trainer Lawrie Leslie was always ready, if needed, to return to his former goalkeeping role.

BELOW: Lawrie gives attention to John Roberts after the collision that led to the Russian goal. No. 2 is Keith Lindsey, also hurt.





ABOVE: The Yaroslavl goalkeeper takes a high ball from Billy Best (left). No. 7 is Terry Johnson.

BELOW: Yaroslavl defenders fail to cut off a cross which George Duck heads over the bar.





LEFT: A young Russian supporter leans forward for a glimpse of the English visitors after part of the fence had collapsed under the crush at Yaroslavl. In the foreground is Bernard Lewis.

ABOVE: Yaroslavl goalkeeper rises above the heads of Best and Garner to cut out a high ball.

BELOW: A trio of substitutes — Peter Hunt, Dave Barnett and Peter Taylor, at Yaroslavl.



FLYING HOME



ABOVE: Director John Foster, manager Arthur Rowley and trainer Lawrie Leslie relaxing on the flight back to England.

BELOW: Home again — members of the United party leaving the Russian jet at Heathrow.



Eleven days after their departure the party flew back into London Airport by Russian jet.

With them they brought a contract which means there is a good chance of a top Moscow side playing at Roots Hall towards the end of this year.

If that comes off, the fans will be in for a treat, because the Russians play an attractive, methodical type of football.

Playing against it was a valuable experience for Southend United. As Arthur Rowley said on their return:

"Though the results were disappointing the tour has been of great benefit to us.

"We have worked hard and trained hard and I hope we have managed to sort out one or two problems."

Skipper Joe Jacques said: "They play a different type of game with more possession, but are very impressive. I think we have learnt a lot."

And chairman Bill Rubin: "The hospitality was very good, particularly that of the ordinary people and supporters. They were all delighted to see us and will be happy for any English club to visit their country."

But perhaps the greatest value of the tour was the splendid team spirit which it created in the United side. There were a number of minor difficulties, and all were taken in their stride with a good spirit.

The Russians have invited Blues back next summer to play matches in the Black Sea area. So they made an impression.

But the immediate objective is 1971-72 — and Division III.

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