

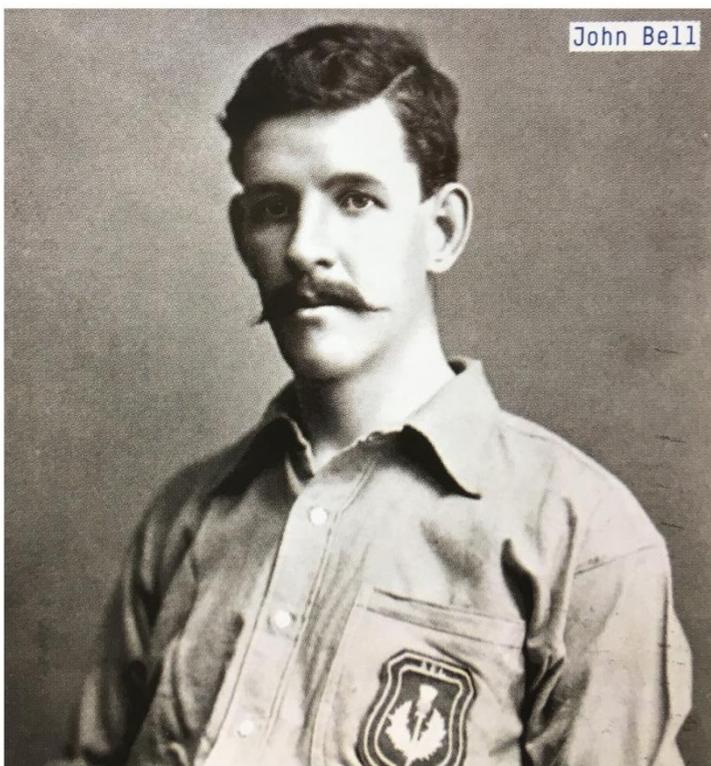
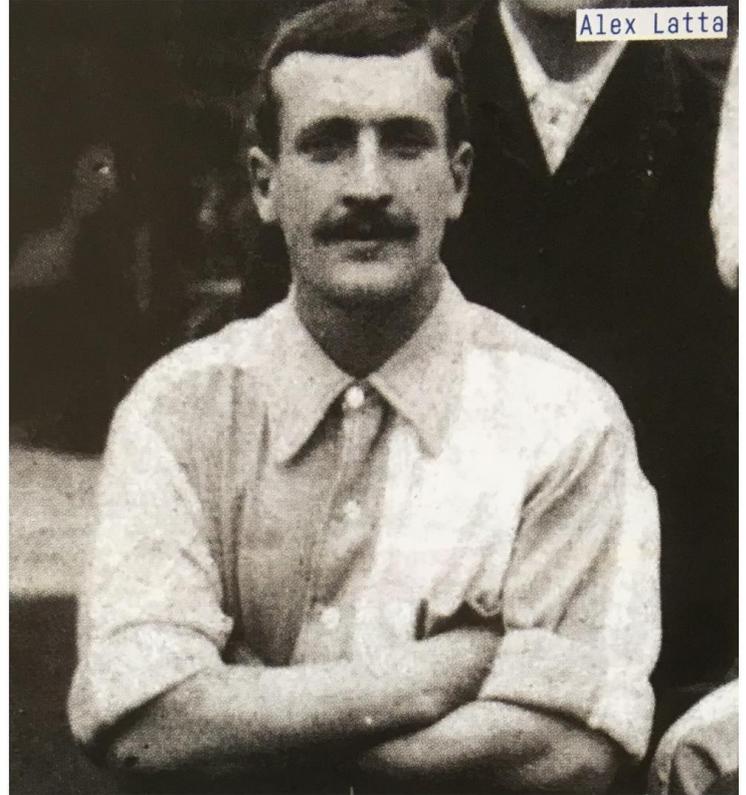
## The First Ever Derby Match

After the historic split of 1892, the city had to wait until 13 October 1894 before the first meeting of the two clubs – the first ever Merseyside Derby. Attendances at Goodison had averaged 30,000 by then, but this eagerly anticipated fixture attracted an estimated 44,000 fans.

Local pundits viewed Liverpool's rise as remarkable. In their first year they won the Lancashire League Championship, on the strength of which they were admitted to the Second Division of the Football League. They again took the honours as champions, and after a victory in a test match against Newton Heath (whatever happened to them?), Liverpool qualified for a position in the First Division.

Everton were still the clear favourites though, being regarded as the richest club in the country and coming into the game on the back of a seven-match winning streak including a 5-0 defeat of Small Heath (Birmingham) and a 6-1 thumping of Nottingham Forest.

Liverpool were still winless in the top flight after four draws and four losses. But even from this first encounter, pundits were convinced form meant little in the white heat of the Derby.



Much was made of the local dignitaries invited to the game, which included the Mayors of Liverpool and Bootle, a host of Aldermen from the Town Hall, and even the city coroner, just in case it got too violent.

A new experience was the thousands crowding both the streets and transport heading for the ground, which moved one observer to remark, 'Such was the throng of traffic that paying 3s 6d for a cab brought one no quicker to the scene of battle than threepence paid for a ride on a tramcar.'

There was a distinct 'north of the border' feel to the line-ups, with Everton fielding seven Scotsmen, and Liverpool ten with just one Englishman. The game was

played at a frantic pace with Liverpool easily matching their superior neighbours, but let down by dreadful finishing. The home side took their opportunities and ran out 3-0 winners with goals from Bell, Latta, and McInnes.

John Humphreys reporting in the *North Wales Chronicle* on 20 October 1894, summed the game up remarking,

‘Everton is a better team than Liverpool, and I can hardly believe that at any following match the Anfielders will, or can ever again, develop such a tremendous amount of steam as they did last Saturday, and unless they do, they stand no chance against their mighty rivals.’

**Mike Royden, Everton F.C. Heritage Society**

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