



Danny Kedwell

Born in Gillingham, Danny Kedwell has never strayed far from home in a playing career that began in the Chatham Town youth system and took him to 10 clubs in his home county. The bustling forward was still pulling his boots on – and getting among

the goals – earlier this season at the age of 41 while managing Ashford United.

Short spells at Tonbridge Angels, Fisher Athletic, Lordswood, Maidstone United and Herne Bay (where he finished 2004/05 with 28 goals) led to his first major move – to Welling United in 2005,

where he scored 38 times in 70 games in Conference South. After two years, he stepped up another level to the Blue Square Premier, when Grays Athletic paid a club record £12,000 for his services. Scoring 13 goals in his one-season stay, AFC Wimbledon signed him for £10,000 in 2008 and with the Dons he found some of the best all-round form of his career. But even 66 goals in 140 matches in all competitions don't tell the full story of the contribution he made to the Club.

Teaming up with another Kent-based striker Jon Main, the pair gelled on and off the field in fine style, even sharing goalscoring bonuses. The duo helped AFC Wimbledon to the Conference South title and then establish themselves in the division above. But it was 2010/11 where Danny rose to prominence and eventually into Dons folklore. Finishing in second place behind a heavily-moneyed Crawley Town – who had earlier made a bid for 'Keds' in the hope of unsettling him – Danny finished the season on 25 goals and the Dons entered the play-offs to chase a place in the Football League. They demolished Fleetwood Town 6-1 on aggregate in the two-legged semi-finals and faced Luton Town in the final at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium. Locked at 0-0 and still goalless after extra time, the tie went to a penalty shoot-out. It was real 'Boy's Own' stuff as captain Kedwell strode up from the halfway line for the decisive spot kick and smashed it beyond the Hatters goalkeeper Mark Tyler to send the Dons into the EFL, just nine years after they were forced to reform.

But it would also be a bittersweet moment to reflect on weeks later as it turned out to be Danny's last touch of the ball as a Wimbledon



player. The lure of a chance at his home town club Gillingham couldn't be resisted and he returned to Kent for a £60,000 fee. The goals continued to flow as he was the Gills' top scorer in his first two seasons, the second of which saw them win the League Two title. In January 2015, he made the short journey to Ebbsfleet United and in five seasons with the 'Fleet he scored 66 times in 206 games. Stints at Havant & Waterlooville, Hollands & Blair and Chatham Town preceded a move into coaching/management and Danny already has spells in charge of Cray Wanderers and Ashford United before taking charge of AFC Croydon Athletic in February.

"It's what dreams are made of", said Keds, looking back on his time with the Dons. "My favourite goal was a free-kick routine of Terry Brown's that only worked once – against Tamworth. Sam Hatton dinked the ball over the wall for me to spin and volley it. It sticks in my mind now. If it was scored in the Premier League, everyone would be raving about it! The irony

is I used to be a midfielder. When I was an Under-15 at Chatham I got 50 goals from midfield and Herne Bay tried me up front in pre-season. I scored a hat-trick.

The rest is history!"

Welcome back Danny and enjoy your day with us.

