



DAVE MACKAY
Tottenham and
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No one lured me — I WANTED to go South

**MY
STORY**

A LOT has been said recently about Scottish football folk getting upset over the number of English managers and scouts seeking to lure away home-grown talent.

The term 'persuasion' has been used. But, believe me, not all Scottish players need to be persuaded to try their luck south of the border.

I know, because I was quite willing to go south, although I was a well-established player in Scottish football, and an international.

The fact was that, having won Scottish League, Scottish League Cup and Scottish Cup medals with Hearts, and all the honours open to a player in Scotland, I felt I would like fresh experience in England.

So I went to Spurs, and I have had no reason to regret it.

I have found the Spurs 'cosmopolitan' mixture—we have two Scots (myself and goalkeeper Bill Brown), three Welshmen, an Irishman and five Englishmen in the first team—a first-rate blend.

Like other Scots who move into English football, I found things a little strange at first.

The pace is quicker, yet although I am not particularly fast for a wing-half, I have been surprised at the ease with which I have settled down to the First Division tempo.

I know my tackling has been criticised, but I insist that I am a fair, if strong, tackler. I have always played that way, for I believe that the main job of a wing-half is to GET the ball.

That was the way in which I was brought up to play when I began my early football at Carrick Vale school, in Edinburgh.

I was a wing-half in those days, too, and won Scottish schoolboy honours against Ireland at Kilmarnock. I also had a trip to Wembley and went on as a substitute in the big schools international against England.

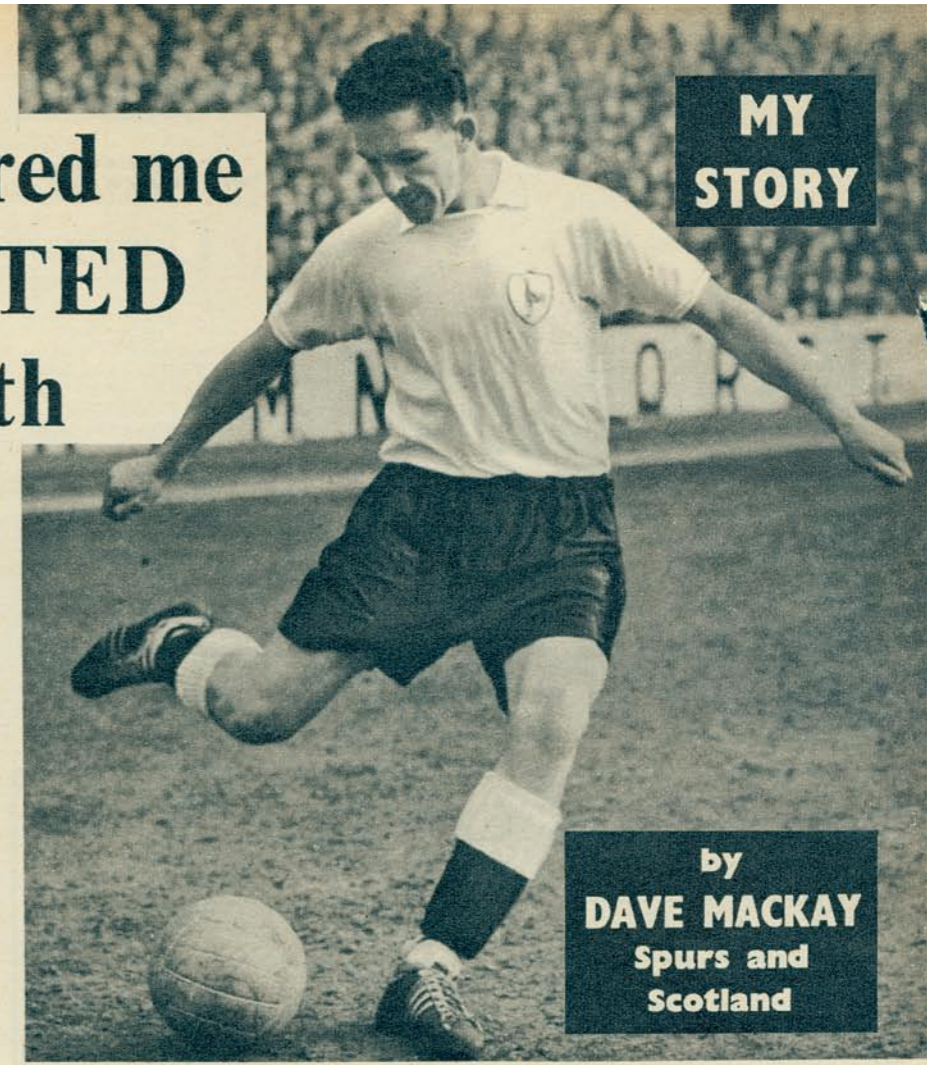
In those days most of the Edinburgh schoolboys team trained at Tynecastle Park, and that was my first playing connection with Hearts — although, of course, I had always been a supporter of Tommy Walker's club.

When I left school I signed juvenile forms for Slateford Athletic, and then I moved into junior circles with another well-known Edinburgh club, Newton Grange Star, with whom I had two happy seasons.

At 17 I signed for Hearts. Twelve months later I made my League debut against Clyde at left-half. I didn't do much in that game.

That was during the 1953-54 season, and later that winter I was given another chance in the first team—at right-half.

After that, I held my place and missed only occasional games, through injury or



by
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international calls, right up to the time of my move to Tottenham last spring.

I shan't readily forget my first full Scottish cap. It was against Spain, in Madrid, during the close season of 1956-57. What a tousing we got!

We went down 4-1 to the brilliant Spaniards who had Kopa, Di Stefano, Laddie Kubala and left-winger Gento in their star-studded line-up.

I was lucky enough to retain my international place after that downfall, and since then I have always been in the Scottish international squad, either in the team or as a reserve.

Last year, when Bobby Evans, of Celtic, was out through injury, I took over the captaincy for the game against Wales, at Cardiff—and marked the occasion by missing a penalty in the first minute!

We won 3-0, but I recall this game for reasons other than my penalty bloomer and first international as Scotland's captain.

All the Scottish forwards were drawn from English League clubs, and our inside-left, Dennis Law, of Huddersfield, was the youngest player ever to appear for Scotland.

Five Arsenal players were in the combined teams.

Wales had Terry Medwin—now a Spurs clubmate of mine—at centre-forward, although he did not like playing in this position and had, I believe, asked for a move from Swansea Town because they insisted on playing him there.

Phil Woosnam, of West Ham, also made his full international debut in that game — at outside-left — and he

and Mel Charles were the outstanding players for Wales.

I was again appointed captain for the match with Ireland at Hampden Park the following month. We were held to a 2-2 draw after leading 2-0 soon after the start of the second half.

I had been right-half in those two games, with Tommy Docherty, of Arsenal, on the left-flank. For the game against England, at Wembley, however, Bobby Evans resumed as centre-half and captain. Docherty and I switched places.

I made my Spurs debut against Manchester City, at White Hart Lane last March, and shared in a 3-1 win, watched by one of the biggest League crowds I had played before since my 'golden days' with Hearts.

As you know, Spurs got off to a great start this season, and by the end of September were top of the League. Our best performances seem to have been saved for away games, and we had fine wins at West Bromwich, Manchester United and Newcastle and Manchester City.

We also won well at West Ham, but after breaking our winning 'duck' at White Hart Lane against Preston, we were well below form at Leicester the following week, and were lucky to get away with a draw.

This was one of my hardest games for Spurs, because in the second half I got a crack on the nose and played the rest of the game with blood staining the front of my white shirt.

There is a long way to go yet, but I'm hoping to collect an English League championship medal to add to the Scottish one I gained with Hearts.