

DANIEL, WILLIAM RAYMOND (RAY) (1928-1997), association football player

Name: William Raymond Daniel
Date of birth: 1928
Date of death: 1997
Spouse: Lilian Joyce Daniel (née Roberts)
Child: Karen Joyce Daniel
Parent: Cissie Daniel (née Norman)
Parent: William Daniel
Gender: Male
Occupation: association football player
Area of activity: Sports and Leisure Pursuits
Author: Richard E. Huws

Ray Daniel was born 2 November 1928 at Plasmarl, Swansea, the youngest of William and Cissie Daniel's (née Norman) three children. The family lived in a part of the director's house at the British Mannesmann Tube Co., Ltd, steelworks where the father was a storeman. The Liberty Stadium, home of Swansea City FC, is located on the site of the works. Ray Daniel began his career as an amateur with Swansea Town, and in October 1946 signed professional forms with Arsenal, with whom his elder brother 'Bobby' Robert Norman Victor Daniel (1922-1943), had also played before he was tragically killed in action with the Royal Air Force in the Second World War. Ray Daniel completed his national service between 1947 and 1949, and made his first team debut for Arsenal on 7 May 1949 in the final game of the season against London rivals Charlton Athletic.

Daniel was an accomplished and, rather unusually for the period, a somewhat adventurous centre half, who enjoyed bringing the ball out of defence in a continental manner. He was also a versatile player and could, if required, perform equally effectively as a centre forward. He spent much of his early career at Arsenal as an understudy to Leslie Compton (1912-1983) and during his first three seasons played in only 13 League matches. Whilst still a reserve, he made his international debut for Wales in a 1-1 draw against England, in a game played at Roker Park, Sunderland on 20 October 1951. He was eventually to win 21 caps for his country.

When Compton retired in 1951, Daniel became an Arsenal regular playing at Wembley in the FA Cup final loss to Newcastle United in 1952, and during Arsenal's subsequent 1952-53 title-winning season he missed only one game. During his time at Highbury, Daniel played 99 matches for Arsenal, scoring 5 goals. Acknowledged as one of the best defenders in the country, he signed for Sunderland on 17 June 1953 for a reputed sum of £27,500, which at the time was a record transfer fee for a defender. At Sunderland he teamed up with his compatriot Trevor Ford (1923-2003), who was instrumental in encouraging him to move north. Daniel remained at Sunderland for four seasons, and eventually became club captain. He played 136 League games for the Wearsiders, before joining Cardiff City in October 1957, where he played only six League games before returning to his first club Swansea in March 1958 where he made a further 44 League and 2 Welsh Cup appearances, scoring 16 goals. He did not feature in Wales' gallant World Cup campaign of 1958 in Sweden having lost his international place to the younger Mel Charles (born 1935).

Daniel joined Southern League club Hereford United in July 1960 on a free transfer and later became the club's player-manager for a brief period between 1962 and 1963, during which his international colleague John Charles (1931-2004) also played for the club. He was released by Hereford in May 1967 after making a total of 317 appearances for the club, many as centre forward, and scoring 66 goals.

After retiring from the game he was appointed an area manager for Courvoisier Brandy. He also worked as a sub-postmaster at Cockett, Swansea. He later retired to Clevedon, north Somerset living at 43, Prince's Road, close to the bowling club where he was a popular social member.

Daniel married Lillian Joyce Roberts (born 1927, Cwmbwrla, Swansea) at Tabernacle English Baptist Chapel, Waun Wen, Swansea in July 1951. They subsequently had one daughter Karen Joyce Daniel (born 1954 Sunderland) who became a journalist with *South Wales Evening Post* and *Daily Mirror*, before moving into healthcare management.

After a short illness, Ray Daniel died on 7 November 1997. His funeral was held at Linden Road Methodist Church, Clevedon on 14 November 1997, followed by cremation at Weston-super-Mare.

Author

Richard E. Huws

Sources

John Burgum: 'Ray Daniel - a generation ahead of his time', *South Wales Evening Post*, 8 November 1997, p. 35

Bob Graham, *A history of Sunderland AFC* (Houghton-le-Spring 1995)

Jeff Harris, *Arsenal who's who* (1996)

Colin Jones, *Swansea Town / City: the first comprehensive player A-Y* (2005)

Ivan Ponting, *Arsenal player by player* (1996)

Western Mail, 8 November 1997, p. 19

information provided by his widow Mrs Joyce Daniel, Clevedon and Mr John Momber, Secretary, Clevedon Bowling Club

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Ray Daniel](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q2898051](#)

Published date: 2013-02-22

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