

# CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFF FINAL

## Antique Rhodes show

'OLD OUT HOPE, JORD!

**JORDAN RHODES** rejoined Huddersfield last summer to recreate happy memories – but never thought he could help fire them into the Premier League.

The striker is in his second spell with the Terriers having scored 87 goals from 129 starts during his previous stint – which saw him win promotion from League One.

And after scoring a spectacular winner against Luton to set up tomorrow's £200million winner-takes-all final with Nottingham Forest, he told SunSport: "Getting into the Premier League with Huddersfield would be a fairytale."

The Scot returned after being released by Sheffield Wednesday following their relegation from the Championship.

Asked if he thought then the team were going to mount a promotion challenge, Rhodes said: "No one set going up as a target but it was something that became more probable."

"We've ended third in the league and are now in the play-

By **JUSTIN ALLEN**

off final." Rhodes, 32, was already a Terriers legend for his previous exploits. They included scoring an eight-minute hat-trick of headers against Exeter in 2010 – beating Dixie Dean's record at Everton from the 1930s.

He became the first Huddersfield player to net back-to-back hat-tricks since the 1920s in 2011. The striker was top scorer three seasons in a row and won League One player of the season in 2012.

And he said: "I returned because of the great memories – being able to walk out on a pitch where I've scored goals, played well and had seasons where we'd been successful as a club."

"It was a desire to want to replicate the good old days – and it's great being back."

"It'll be fantastic for the whole club and town to get that win on Sunday."

Rhodes suffered a fractured back after two league games and sat out four months.

And he admitted: "I overdid it in the summer – trained hard to come back in the best physical



shape but I had this niggling injury in pre-season and couldn't shake it off.

"I had it scanned, got the bad news and had a few months doing nothing because there's not much you can do with a fractured back."

"But the body is now feeling nice and fresh because I had that good rest."

Rhodes has played a supporting role since returning – making 17 substitute appearances in the league and six starts.

But he is in form with three goals in his last five games.

He said: "I always strive to do my best – whether that be helping people out day to day, encouraging them, being enthusiastic. If there's a role to start then great but if it's coming off the bench to impact the game, whether it be to see out a match, score or create a chance, I'm happy to do that, too."

"Everything I do is geared to hopefully getting Huddersfield promotion."

Rhodes has certainly made an impact. In the 793 Championship minutes he has played, the team have scored 17 goals and conceded only six – and in all the time he has spent on the pitch since January the team have let in just one.

He laughed: "That makes me sound like a good defensive striker. But the one thing I've got better at and developed is being a

nuisance – throwing myself around and being annoying for the defenders.

"As I've gotten older, every ball matters when it's up there. Even when it's not in my favour, I can tip it our way."

"If I can't win the ball, hopefully it drops to someone else in the team."

Boss Carlos Corberan (below) has done a fantastic job this season after a difficult first year.

Rhodes admitted: "He doesn't get close to us on a human level but definitely does on a professional one."

"There are meetings every day before and after training. We have one-to-one time, too."

"It's always made clear exactly what the manager wants. There's never a day we don't interact with him."

But how does he cope as an older player with Corberan's gruelling training sessions?

The Terriers ace said: "It helps us older ones more because we're keeping our bodies moving and high speeds up."

"Every individual has his own target. I've never had that scenario but it keeps me in the best physical shape I've ever been."

Rhodes added: "Hopefully we can put in a performance that makes everyone from Huddersfield proud – and have even more reason to celebrate next week's wonderful bank holiday weekend."



Everything is geared towards promotion

### JORDAN AS A TERRIER

| SEASON  | GAMES | GOALS |
|---------|-------|-------|
| 2009-10 | 53    | 23    |
| 2010-11 | 48    | 22    |
| 2011-12 | 45    | 40    |
| 2012-13 | 2     | 2     |
| 2021-22 | 25    | 3     |

**5** JORDAN RHODES has scored three goals in his last five games to put Huddersfield on the brink of the Prem, after managing only one all season before that.

# JESS' THREESY WORK

**JESS LAWTON** was a reluctant coach – but now she is big on time management to fit it all in.

Lawton, 26, took over as interim Cork City manager three weeks ago following the resignation of Paul Farrell, which means she now oversees three teams.

City's Under-17s have a week-end off, but today she will be at Turner's Cross for the first-team meeting with champions Shelbourne, before the Under-19s host Galway tomorrow.

But there are still three teams to train every week, which she combines with a day job at South East Technological University in Waterford.

Lawton told SunSport: "Time now is of the essence I'd say! I live in Tramore as well so there is a lot of travelling over and back, a lot of time in the car."

"But it works out, the coaching is something I really enjoy, particularly seeing young players really progress." City are

By **OWEN COWZER**

currently recruiting a new first-team manager at which point Lawton will happily relinquish the role.

She said: "We've played 11 games at 17s and scored 57 goals, and conceded 12."

"They've been doing well, we've brought a few of them into the senior team."

"The 19s are doing well in and around mid-table, they are being helped with the senior players coming down under the new rules."

"Senior level is definitely more tactical, you need to understand the opposition well, as well as have your own style of play."

"I'd say I'm harsher as a manager as the demands are great in senior football."

"My philosophy stays the same, but maybe I'm a bit stricter as I go up the ages."

And performances have followed. City have had a tough year as they are in transition,

though a narrow defeat to Wexford Youths and Sligo Rovers pointed to progress.

Yet a few years ago, Lawton had zero interest in coaching.

A player with Cork City as a teen, she suffered an injury which led to her giving up WNL football to focus on college.

But a native of Youghal, she was convinced to get involved in her local club.

She said: "I set up the girls' academy. I was reluctant to go into coaching but there was no girls set-up in Youghal and I knew a few who were interested."

"And they asked me if I'd set one up and I felt I needed to give people the opportunity that I had when I was younger, especially at their local club."

"I went in there and soon realised that you find your love for the sport again, albeit in a different capacity."

Still when Cork came calling and offered a role as performance coach – her educational background is in sport science and sport and exercise psychol-

ogy – she initially refused. Lawton (right) explained: "I was reluctant at the start."

"I agreed to three months and that was three years ago. It's always the way."

She was sorry to see Farrell leave, but she is not interested in taking it full-time and becoming the only female manager in the WNL.

Lawton added: "There have been a few like Paula Heffernan who managed Wexford for a time. But it has been disappointing."

"Hopefully we'll see females managing at senior level in the National League, but not just the women's, on the men's side too."

"I'm only 26, a baby. It's that generation that is getting education though you need experience to go into the senior league. I think we'll see change in the coming years."



### Legal Notices

#### SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Darren and Fionn Corrigan are applying for Planning Permission for Single storey Extension to rear E side of existing dwelling at 35 Daletree View, Ballycullen, Dublin 24. D24 W7C6. This application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of South Dublin County Council during its public opening hours of 9am – 4pm, Mon-Fri, and a submission or observation may be made to South Dublin County Council in writing and on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by South Dublin County Council of the application.

#### DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

We, Wu Kee Ltd, Trading as East Wall Pizza Max would like to apply for permission for retention of ventilation flue, grill and all associated works to rear of property at 131 East Wall Road, East Wall, Dublin 3, D03 A337. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Dublin City Council during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application.