

## JACK ARMSTRONG



John Armstrong, known as 'Jack', was born 4 February 1884 on Old Lane (now Elm Avenue), close by the former home ground in Keyworth. He was the fifth child of seven, born to John and Hannah Armstrong. Jack was more famously known as an outstanding half back at football and was captain of the Division Two League championship Nottingham Forest FC winning team of the 1921/22 season but he was also a very accomplished cricketer for Keyworth CC (pictured below) between 1899 & 1933 and occasionally turned out for Notts Forest CC and had a short spell of coaching in Scotland. A very quick and athletic

sportsman, he could 100 yards in less the eleven seconds.

Jack's father, John Armstrong (born 1846, died 1927) was a fine all rounder for the club between 1866 & 1885 and Jack's son, Jack 'Junior' Armstrong (born 1915, died 1993) was a quality batsman between 1933 & 1953. Both Jack's father and son were also very good footballers - 'Junior' also had a short spell with Nottingham Forest FC.

Scoring over two thousand runs and taking over 250 wickets, Jack twice performed the 'double', with 77 not out and 7 wickets for 18 runs against Bunney Park CC on 25 June 1904 and 70 runs and 5 for 23 against Castle Gate CC in an away friendly on 25 May 1907. Nineteen times he took more than 5 wickets in an innings, with a best of 8 for 12 at home against Cotgrave CC on July 31<sup>st</sup> 1920.

During the 1910 season Jack was selected to represent Nottinghamshire Club & Ground on 12 occasions, scoring a total of 171 runs and taking 5 wickets for 135 runs. They were a selection of the best amateur players in the County and he had previously played for them in 1908. He played for Nottingham City Colts in 2007 and Jack was also a member of the Keyworth team that won the South Notts League championship title in 1922 in the company of brother Thomas.

Jack had three brothers who were all good sportsmen. Thomas (born 1872) played for Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and later was a club professional in both Somerset and Lancashire. William and Albert were also good cricketers but more noted for their footballing ability. William (born 1874) a goalscoring centre forward, was selected to play for the Notts Amateur League representative team in 1900 and Albert (born 1888) was a prolific goal scorer for Keyworth FC until losing his life in Flanders in 1917 during the First World War. Jack's brother in law Newman Bycroft Armstrong (born 1886, died 1978) was also a cricketer with Keyworth CC and later a long serving Bingham RDC Councillor and a JP.



## JACK ARMSTRONG continued

Jack's nephew Stanley 'Stocking' Armstrong (pictured right with his familiar pipe) was a wicket keeper/batsman with the club between 1925 and 1936 and a popular umpire up until 1981 - the picture of Trent Bridge which hung in the pavilion for many years, was placed there in Stan's honour - having been a gift from the club to him.



Jack first made his mark as a footballer when selected to represent the Notts Junior League at the City Ground against the Irish Junior League on 15 April 1905 and was signed from Keyworth FC by Nottingham Forest FC on professional terms in August of the same year and made his debut against Everton FC on 23 December 1905 and went on to play 535 competitive matches for them (432 in the Football League with 9 goals, plus 75 and 1 goal during the First World War, plus 28 FA Cup apps and 1 goal) - a record that stood for more than thirty years.

On 3 September 1910 in the Football League, Jack played for Forest in the first ever match played at the "Meadow Lane Ground" against Notts County FC in front of 27,000 people paying £755 in a 1-1 draw - the ground was then known as "The County Ground".

Jack was a loyal club man and resisted offers to move to bigger clubs and took over as Captain from 1919 and led Forest to triumph in the final of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War Victory Shield in that season. He picked up Division Two League championship winning medals for the 1906/07 and 1921/22 seasons and for the latter received a commemorative gold watch from the committee of the Forest club.

Forest provided him with a 'Benefit' Match on 10 December 1921 against South Shields FC (now Gateshead FC) and he played his last game at Burnley FC on 4 November 1922 aged 38. Slim, quick and neat on the ball, Jack could play in any position except goal but favoured right or left half back and finished his career at Sutton Town FC where he picked up a winners medal in the 1923/24 Notts FA Senior Cup final.

On retiring from playing cricket, Jack took up umpiring in the mid 1930's and was running a market garden business at New Corner (now Poplars Close) in Keyworth with pigs and poultry and became one the leading experts on chickens in England.

Jack died in Tollerton on 9 November 1963.

### Jack Armstrong's Keyworth career statistics...

	Mat	Inns	NO	HS	Runs	Ave	Ovrs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts	Ave	Ct
1 <sup>st</sup> XI	138	119	15	125*	2420	23.27	713.4	192	2053	265	7.75	44
2 <sup>nd</sup> XI	4	4	1	31	56	18.67						1
CAREER	142	123	16	125*	2476	23.14	713.4	192	2053	265	7.75	45