



# The GOAL MACHINE

Alan Shearer is one of the greatest strikers—ever. The ex-England and Newcastle United captain may have retired at the end of last season, but he still tops the EPL all-time top scorer list today with 260 league goals—some way ahead of Mr. T. Henry, thank you. And the 30 international goals he has tucked under his belt aren't to be sniffed at either. **90:00** caught up with Shearer to discuss why he turned down Manchester United, what was with those one-arm-salute celebrations and his thoughts on gardening. Really!

words: Andrew Royster

**Q: How has the game changed since you started playing at 23 years old?**  
**A: SHEARER** Massively. It's incredible. Finances are huge, the stadiums and pitches are a million times better and the play is a hell of a lot quicker!

**How is the difference for a young player in 2007 compared to 1987?**  
They get things quicker than they did when I was their age. It was hard doing an apprenticeship, but it taught you great values and great respect.

**What jobs did you have as an apprentice?**

Cleaning the toilets, cleaning the dressing rooms and sweeping the stands. Oh, and playing football! I don't think it was particularly nice at the time, but looking back it was great. It showed you a little bit of respect. You had to earn the right to get into the first team dressing room, which I think is the right thing to do. It was a good education. They don't do those kinds of things anymore. They have people in to clean the boots and clean the stadiums. If it were up to me, I would go back to the old-style apprenticeship because of what it taught me.

**Can you remember your first full appearance for Southampton FC?**

It was against Arsenal. I was 17. Danny White, who was the center forward at the time, faded a fitness test. The manager came to me three hours before kick-off and said, "You're playing." It was great for me, but being at the opposite end of the country to Newcastle, none of my family were able to get down and watch it. They were all following it on the radio.

**How did it go?**

I made it tough on myself scoring a hat-trick. People expected that of me every week, which I couldn't deliver at that age. It was a great start. To get in the side was great, but to score three against a club like Arsenal was fantastic.