*In conversation with the*

# Mighty Quinn

Micky Quinn is a legend on Tyneside. He was born and bred on Merseyside and is a massive fan of Liverpool, but Newcastle come a close second as being his favourite side.

He began his career at Derby County in 1978 after joining as a trainee straight from school, but he didn't last long and went home because he was homesick. His next move was closer to home at Wigan Athletic who were in the old fourth division at the time. On his 18th birthday he signed his first contract to be a professional footballer.

However, when he moved to Stockport County and then to Oldham Athletic, Micky's reputation as a prolific striker came to the attention of Portsmouth boss Alan Ball. The former England player paid £150,000 to take Micky to Fratton Park where he was incredibly successful and played a big part in helping Pompey back into the top flight.

In July 1989, Micky moved to Newcastle Utd. Jim Smith paid £680,000 and in his first game of the season at home to Leeds Utd, he scored 4 goals. He ended the season as top goal scorer in the entire football league with a tally of 34. He also got 5 in the cups.

Jim Smith left and Ossie Ardilles arrived, and then the Kevin Keegan era got underway, but Kevin and Micky didn't see eye to eye and Micky moved to Coventry. During his first six months at Highfield Road he scored 17 Premier League goals, 10 of which were in his first six games. He's still the only player to score in his first six Premier League matches.

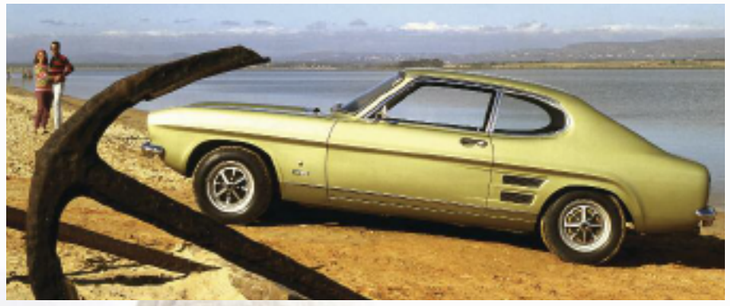
There were then loan moves to Plymouth and Watford and finally a spell in Greece.

In February 1996, Micky retired from professional football and turned his attention to horse racing. He now runs a racing stable at Newmarket, but his happiest days as a footballer were at Newcastle. Not bad for someone who, on the day he signed, was walking through Newcastle and spotted someone carrying a placard. It read..."Who the xxxx is Micky Quinn."

So, let's find out from Micky Quinn what he can remember of his life in cars.

## What is the first car you can remember?

It was my Dad's Ford Zephyr. I can't remember what colour it was, but I can vividly remember the interior. It seemed the size of a truck and it had leather bench seats. Every time he went around a corner we'd all slide along and end up in a heap next to the door. Seat belts...what were they?



## What was the first car you owned?

Later in my career I was lucky enough to get cars as part of my contract deals at various clubs, but in the early years at clubs like Wigan and Stockport, the younger players all had to buy or borrow their cars. The first car I bought was a Ford Capri Ghia, and yes it really did have furry dice in the window. I thought I was the dog's bollocks.

## What did you drive when you were at Newcastle Utd?

I thought I was flash....I got a BMW 5 series. Looking back, it wasn't the most stylish thing, but the fact that I'd actually been given a BMW as part of contract I felt as though I'd made it... .finally.

## Did you ever get a sponsored car at other clubs?

Yes, before I signed for Newcastle, I had got to the stage where a car was part of my contract. When I was at Portsmouth I got a Toyota Camry. I was like driving a matrass. The suspension was incredibly soft. People in the back got sea sick.

When I moved to Coventry we all had Peugeots because the cars were built just down the road from the ground. I got a white, sporty Peugeot 405. I thought it was really quick but, compared to today's cars, it was miserable.

## Smart car or a mobile skip?

It's worse than a mobile skip. I have to confess that I sometimes sleep in it. If I've been to a race meeting up north and I'm then working on the Breakfast Show at talkSPORT, I often drive south and just find a car park, climb into the back and have a kip.

## Any motoring embarrassments?

Even though I thought the Ford Capri was terrific....young kid, sporty looking car...I have to admit that it was useless. During the winter months I always had to park it on a hill. The starter motor had gone and I couldn't afford to repair it. Every morning was the same...release the handbrake, build up speed and then bump start it. In the afternoon after training, we used to push it to get it going or sometimes I'd use a set of jump leads.

## What's your favourite road trip?

Driving my horse box home from anywhere after having a winner at a racetrack. Seriously though, I used to love my journey home along the Tyne Valley through Corbridge and Hexham on the way back from training at Newcastle Utd.

## Steady Eddy or a bit of a speedster?

Oh oh. Bit of a speedster I'm afraid.

## Worst accident you have been involved in?

That damn Ford Capri again! The very first night I got it, I was driving back home after playing for Stockport County. It was bitterly cold and, as I drove home quite late, it rained and the roads became slippery. The Capri was really light at the back and before I knew it I spun round on the motorway and ended up hitting the barrier.

## What have been your favourite cars?

My current BMW X5 takes some beating

## Worst Car?

You guessed it....the Ford Capri.

## And finally....your dream car?

This is a bit boring, but I love my BMW X5. It's big enough for me to fit in it and it's great for carrying a load of stuff. However, I do have yearning for the fantastic new M50d model.