

## Life At The Top

MARK HODKINSON

(Queen Anne Press, £7.99)

Saturday, April 26, 1997, saw a Barnsley home win against Yorkshire rivals Bradford lift the Tykes into the top flight for the first time. Commissioned to cover their glory season for the *Times*, Hodkinson has extended his one-year affair with the club through this charming chronicle. What emerges is a picture of a tight-knit family business in which anecdotes are plentiful, including the passing round of mince pies during a Neil Redfearn photo-call, the constant ribbing given to Macedonian striker Georgi Hristov over his polo-necked sweaters, and the club's Xmas fancy dress party, which saw Neil Thompson dressed as Hitler and Lars Leese decked out in lederhosen and hiking boots. The meat of the book rests, however, with enigmatic gaffer Danny Wilson, who took a whole season's thrashings with complete and utter dignity. A great look at an unfashionable club which thoroughly enjoyed its day in the sun. (AW)

