

These days any self-respecting soccer buff has a truckload of replica shirts. Here former Manawatu captain Gordon Glen-Watson, the world's No 1 Maori-Scottish Rangers-All Whites fan, talks us through his replica shirt wardrobe hell in...

The Shirty Dozen

1983/84 Glasgow Rangers Home (Umbro): First ever replica kit, bought for me by my sister, in Scotland, 1983.

1986 Scotland Home (Umbro) World Cup Mexico '86: Again, another fine selection by my globetrotting sister. Strip arrived just in time for the 0-0 draw with Uruguay that spelt the end of yet another World Cup campaign for Scotland.

1987/88 Glasgow Rangers Home (Umbro): By now the purchase of a replica kit for birthday/Xmas was developing into a bit of a habit. This one came via a combined gift from my mother/sister.

1989 Napier City Home (Hi-Tec) Rovers (long sleeve): This one is curious. I was given it in 1998 by former Napier City Rovers defender, Tim Staines. He wore it during his time at Rovers and the players were given the old kit. He, in turn, gave it to me after a kick in the park we had one summer. Cool.

1990/91 Glasgow Rangers Home (Admiral): Ah, yes! The feeling of financial freedom. After saving up pocket money, sending away for a 'Gers catalogue, I quickly learned that that special "Ah!-new-kit!" feeling could be replicated over and over...

1990 Scotland Home (Umbro) World Cup Italia'90: ...although its always nice to see that family know when the World Cup reels around!

1990 PNBHS 1st XI Home (Le Coq Sportif): Played in this kit in my second year in the PNBHS 1st XI. Graeme Yule approached Rector Dave Syms and scored us a flash new Pony-sponsored kit. We got the old one. It actually still fits me - rather snugly!

1992/93 Glasgow Rangers Home (adidas): Still highly cool looking, except if you're a Celtic fan. Reminiscent of the France at Euro'92 kit, practically the same. Purchased

with my student allowance!

1992 PN Red Sox Home (Pony): Playing for PN Red Sox, we went on two decent Chatham Cup runs in the early 1990's. This prompted one of the committee to go out and run off some replica shirts. I bought one at the cost of \$40 - thanks to the student allowance. Again.

1992 Scotland Home (Umbro) Euro'92: Completely out the blue, if you'll excuse the pun! Scottish cousin, on a tide of patriotism after qualification for Euro'92, pops this intriguing little number in the post! Way to go, Harry!

1993 Australia Home (adidas): Left behind purchasing replica kit with Government hand-outs and elected to do some travelling instead. Ended up playing for a small club in NSW State League Division Three. After one season there and deciding to come home for a bit, the boys chipped in and buy me a Socceroo shirt with "Silly Kiwi Pussy" scrawled all over it in black felt pen. The players sign it and the shirt has my name and number on it. One of my prized possessions.

1994/95 Glasgow Rangers Home (adidas): Working in a printery, regular income, little wonder that in the drive for 7-in-a-row I purchase this kit. Unusually, this time I don't send overseas. NZ Sports stores are ordering them in by the dozen -- both kinds -- Rangers and Scotland. Oh, Celtic are there, too, but don't seem to be selling so well. No sign of an All Whites shirt.

1996/97 Glasgow Rangers Home (adidas): Rocked into Stirling Sports in Palmerston North and grabbed me a 9-in-a-row Rangers kit. Cha-ching! Pleasure doing business with you. Still no sign of an All Whites shirt.

1996 Scotland Home (Umbro) Euro'96: Probably the best Scotland shirt ever, replete in tartan. Outstanding. Suspiciously, NZ Sports stores tell me that Umbro don't make XL shirts, therefore I can't get an XL version of any Umbro Scotland gear. Scotland lose 2-0 to England and I spy an extremely obese Tartan Army foot-soldier wearing one on the telly. Not only have Scotland been beaten by 'them', but now I know what I'd known all along, Umbro do cater for sizes in the preggy factory range.

1997 Manawatu AFC Home (Hi-Tec): Left Palmerston North for the third time and constant begging and pleading to the committee yielded this little beauty. No All Whites

shirt, but if you know who to ask, you sure can find Kiwi club shirts easier to obtain.

1997-98 Glasgow Rangers Home (Nike): First visit to Ibrox Stadium. I get the grand tour with my two cousins and meet Colin Hendry, Gordon Durie and John Brown. Awesome. Also open up a can of “whoop-ass” on my Mastercard and get my FIRST Rangers replica kit, purchased at the Stadium Club shop. I even manage to leave the kit in a bag on the counter, necessitating a taxi trip back to Ibrox to search for it. Predictably, without my girlfriend to chaperone me and my wallet, I inadvertently buy almost every Rangers video ever put out. Awkward questions are asked after I return sporting THREE bags of stuff, when I only went to retrieve one. Still haven’t been forgiven for that one.

1997 Norway Home (Umbro): Okay, taking it to extremes. In England last year and it’s the January Sales. Norway for 10 quid! By crickey I’ll have some of that, sir! Mind you, it’s the ugliest piece of shit I’ve ever bought.

1998 Iran Home (symbol unknown): With a girlfriend who is Iranian its not difficult to see why this one came into my closet. With the letters I-R-A-N in bold, all over the front of the shirt, there can be no confusion over who the wearer of this garment follows. I have often wondered what any potential offspring of ours may choose to wear as their replica kit...maybe a tartan, All White, Iranian, Persian, Muslim, presbyterian number, daubed in limestone green. I dread the day Scotland, New Zealand, Iran and, say, the USA somehow all find themselves in the same group of some obscure tournament. Weirder things have happened in Zurich.

1998 Ajax Training Top (Umbro): On sale, JJB Sports, 5 quid. Its black, nifty, whocould resist?

1998 Glasgow Rangers Away (Nike): Took in Rangers vs. Celtic and Jorg Albertz scores a double. I buy an away strip - Albertz 11. I already had the home kit, didn’t I? Didn’t I? Yeah, okay, I know I’m pathetic.

1999/00 Glasgow Rangers Home (Nike): Having all but given up on ever weaning me off of my replica kit addiction, my long suffering good lady, buys me the latest Rangers home kit, not before mumbling something about hoping they get beat. She appears happy that I’m happy(which is real progress, believe me) and on we go!

1999 Scotland Home (Umbro): I’m off to Glasgow for Scotland vs. England. Another

2-0 loss, another shirt. We win 1-0 at Wembley, though, and so the purchase seems justified.

1999 New Zealand Home (adidas): ABOUT TIME! Okay, so I may not have looked to hard, or as hard as I should've looked, but at long last, with the advent of the Under-17 World Cup Finals being held in New Zealand, I purchase this fine peice of German precision sportswear for the crippling amount of \$40. Incredibly, the shirts don't sell all that well, and so Rebel Sport very kindly lower the price. At last, a replica kit monkey off my back.

1999 Chelsea Away (Umbro): There is something to be said about club shops at the stadium/sales and their timing with big games. Chelsea clinch a spot in the second round of the Champions League with a win over Hertha Berlin, and I buy the away kit on sale for 10 quid, at Stamford Bridge. Nice! The game was okay, but what affiliation do I have with Chelsea?!?! Not much, nothing. I live near Earls Court Station, that's something. Very tenuous. Weirdly, at the time, it seemed to make perfect sense. Haven't worn it since that night.

2000 Brazil Home (Nike): Despite Brazilian struggles to qualify for this World Cup, I find a Brazillian top too difficult to resist. Sale item at Rebel \$49. Romario, Muller, Pele, Rivelino, Tostao, Zico, Junior, Socrates, Glen-Watson.

2000 New Zealand Home (adidas): Jeremy Ruane sends out an email heads-up and the shirt arrives at my place even before the heart palpitations have a chance to settle down. The wrapping is off and it's into the wardrobe with the other kit. Ahhh! Accumulate! Accumulate! I MUST accumulate!**2000 Scotland Home (Fila):** Why stop the habit of a lifetime. I am so locked into the tractor-beam of replica-kit purchase. If replica kit were flotsam and jetsam floating about in space, then I am a budding Death Star sucking anything within range into a permanent orbit. Its weird. I only have one torso, yet the desire to be able to select any football jersey I like, at any given moment or whim, like some sort of Imelda Marcos, survives as I near my thirties.

** This list doesn't include strips that I have owned and subseuqently given away. This includes Rangers away strips.*