

Gordon Rosenthal, born on February 11th, 1920, in Anfield, Liverpool to Julius and Esther (nee Alexander) Rosenthal, the second child of five. The family lived in the Anfield area of Liverpool and they attended the Fairfield Synagogue. Julius was a sapper in the Royal Engineers in WW1.

Gordon and his siblings attended the local Anfield Road School where he was an excellent student and sportsman. He represented Liverpool in swimming whilst a student. In 1934 Gordon left school and worked as an insurance clerk. He had trials for Tranmere Rovers FC in January 1937 and turned professional in July 1939. He made several appearances for the first team, but only in friendlies. Gordon made his last appearance for Tranmere on 4 April 1942, in a match against New Brighton FC four months before he was killed.

Two of his brothers Abe and Leslie also played for the team. The Liverpool Echo of 25 January 1939 printed: *Tranmere Rovers have added two promising young players to their staff by signing Joe Millbank from Wolves and Abe Rosenthal from Liverpool. Rosenthal is the former schoolboy international, who has been on Liverpool's ground staff for the past three seasons. He has made several A team appearances, and latterly has been on loan to Prescott Cables, with whom Liverpool have a "nursery" arrangement. Rosenthal is an inside left, 17 years of age, standing 5ft. 8in., and weighing 11st. 6lb.*

Abe Rosenthal had three spells with Tranmere, and also spent three spells at Bradford City. He made a total of 225 appearances in the Football League, scoring 78 goals.



Abe is centre front with the ball.

Gordon and his brother Abe were sports obsessed, Abe representing Liverpool and Lancashire Schoolboys in Football and Gordon representing Liverpool in swimming. Abe signed for Liverpool and amateur terms firstly but frustrated by his lack of progress, he and Gordon moved across the Mersey and signed for Tranmere Rovers in January 1939 both managing a single 1st team appearance and three in the aborted 1939-40 season before war was declared and their immediate careers were put on hold. Abe and his brother Gordon both joined the RAF and another brother joined the Army. Courtesy Ian Hemmings

The paperwork held by Gordon's family show he was with the Territorial Army in 1939 but by 1940 he was an aviation cadet at the Air Corps Advanced Flying School in Selma, Alabama and the Lincoln Flying School in Lakeland, Florida.

His many letters home give a wonderful insight into life in early 1940's America and on his return, he was completing his training at RAF Hawarden, between Liverpool and Chester when he was killed. Sadly, on the day he died he had become engaged. At the time of Gordon's death, the family lived at 108 Anfield Road, Liverpool, a few houses up from Anfield football ground.

Gordon took off from RAF Hawarden where he was based with 57 O.T.U. on a training exercise in Spitfire N3276. The aircraft stalled and crashed into the River Dee. Gordon was knocked unconscious and drowned in shallow water.