

BOSSES Howard Kendall and Lou Macari would laugh in your face if you told them it was tough at the top.

The two men have been there and done that in playing and managerial careers with some of the biggest clubs in the land.

But they'll tell you the pressures of chasing championships and winning cups are nothing compared to the harsh realities of fighting a club's survival.

Macari lamented the shrinking pool of quality players available to managers — players snapped up by the wealthy Premiership clubs which grow richer by the day. But this game proved that the poor are getting poorer not only in monetary terms

MATT D'ARCY

Stoke C 2 Notts Co 1

— the quality of football at this level is getting pretty poor as well.

The exceptions were Stoke's Nigel Gleg-horn and County's Michael Emenalo and Paul Devlin. Graeme Hogg, defended manfully for County until Keith Scott knocked him dizzy with a blow to the temple.

The former Wycombe striker sums up life at this level. His pushing and shoving belligerence with flailing arms angers the opposition and puts them seriously out of their stride. He wound up Andrew Legg so much that Kendall dragged his player off after just 23 minutes, convinced he was about to be sent off.

This win only marginally eases Stoke's pressure.