

**DIVISION ONE 1953-54**

**THE SEASON WHEN...**

# WOLVES

**WERE CHAMPIONS**

Wolves are on their way back to the top division but they were once the best team in the country – possibly the world!



Wolves captain Billy Wright



Wolves boss Stan Cullis and his players admire the trophy

**DIVISION 1 1953/54**

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Wolverhampton W.	42	25	7	10	96	56	57
2 West Bromwich Albion	42	22	9	11	86	63	53
3 Huddersfield Town	42	20	11	11	78	61	51
4 Manchester United	42	18	12	12	73	58	48
5 Bolton Wanderers	42	18	12	12	75	60	48
6 Blackpool	42	19	10	13	80	69	48
7 Burnley	42	21	4	17	78	67	46
8 Chelsea	42	16	12	14	74	68	44
9 Charlton Athletic	42	19	6	17	75	77	44
10 Cardiff City	42	18	8	16	51	71	44
11 Preston North End	42	19	5	18	87	58	43
12 Arsenal	42	15	13	14	75	73	43
13 Aston Villa	42	16	9	17	70	68	41
14 Portsmouth	42	14	11	17	81	89	39
15 Newcastle United	42	14	10	18	72	77	38
16 Tottenham Hotspur	42	16	5	21	65	76	37
17 Manchester City	42	14	9	19	62	77	37
18 Sunderland	42	14	8	20	81	89	36
19 Sheffield Wednesday	42	15	6	21	70	91	36
20 Sheffield United	42	11	11	20	69	90	33
21 Middlesbrough	42	10	10	22	60	91	30
22 Liverpool	42	9	10	23	68	97	28

## WHY IT MATTERED

Wolverhampton Wanderers got lots of new fans around the country this year when they became Football League champions for the first time.

A look at the rest of the table shows how different football was then. West Bromwich Albion were second, with Huddersfield Town coming third.

Arsenal, Manchester City and Tottenham all finished in the bottom half – and Liverpool were relegated!

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Ten of these clubs are in the Premier League this season. Nine of the others play in the Championship while three – Blackpool, Charlton Athletic and Portsmouth – are in League One

# & LIVERPOOL WERE RELEGATED

## THE STORY OF THE SEASON

Wolves lost their first game 4-1 at Burnley but soon went on a run of 18 games unbeaten. That streak included an 8-1 win over Chelsea.

However, West Brom also had a great start and were top for most of the season. Wolves went level with their rivals after beating them 1-0 in April. It was Wolves' second derby victory of the season and those points – you only got two for a win – made the difference.

On the final day, Wolves led by two points. West Brom needed to win, but they lost at Portsmouth while Wolves beat Spurs 2-0!

A week later, West Brom did at least win a trophy, by beating Preston 3-2 in the FA Cup final.

Elsewhere Liverpool lost 6-0 to Charlton, and 5-1 to each of Manchester United, Portsmouth and Preston as they finished bottom!



Ooof! Wolves in action at Charlton

PA PHOTOS, GETTY IMAGES (4), COLORSPORT (4)



## WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

Liverpool spent the next eight years in Division Two, coming close to promotion almost every year before going up in 1962.

Wolves' captain and centre-half, **Billy Wright**, was an England regular for over ten years. In 1959, he became the first English player to win **100 international caps** – he ended up with 105.

Since they last won the League, in 1958-59, Wolves have played in all four divisions of the League – including two years in **Division Four** (now called League Two) from 1986 to 1988. They sealed their return to the Premier League for the first time since 2012 with promotion from the **Championship** this season.



Billy Wright of Wolves and legendary Hungarian striker Ferenc Puskas of Honved before their floodlit match

## THE BIRTH OF THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE!

Wolves played a famous match against **Honved**, champions of Hungary, in December 1954. The game was a series of "floodlight friendlies" played at Wolves' ground, **Molineux**, which was one of the first in England to have floodlights.

Most of the Honved team had played for Hungary when they shocked the world by thrashing England

twice in the previous year: 6-3 at Wembley, then 7-1 in Hungary.

Wolves won an exciting game 3-2. Afterwards some English

newspapers said they were "champions of the world". These matches were

so popular they helped to create the European Cup (now the Champions League) the following year.



## TOP FACT

Although they only finished 12th, Arsenal were the best-supported team. They were watched by an average crowd of 50,278 at their old stadium, Highbury



# GATED!

Liverpool in white shorts, which they wore until 1965



## 1954 WINNERS

League Wolves  
FA Cup West Brom  
Top scorer Jimmy Glazzard, Huddersfield Town (29)  
Player of the year Tom Finney, Preston North End



West Brom keeper Jim Sanders can't bear to watch an FA Cup final penalty



It worked out OK though! Captain Len Millard lifts the Cup

