



Wolverhampton Wanderers

LONDON SUPPORTERS CLUB

founded 1966

“CAMPEÕES”



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FROM THE CHAIR



WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS LONDON SUPPORTERS CLUB

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Hi and Greetings to Everybody,

Everton at home. Now there's something we could not have expected a few years ago!

Many congratulations to Nuno and the boys for what was a remarkable achievement. Promotion to The Premier League, and along the way, playing some really wonderful football with some wonderful goals, for which there are no unused expletives to describe them.

I'm sure that we all hope the moguls at Sky are kind to the travellers amongst us, with not too many Saturday evening kick-offs, as I can foresee overnight stays and heavy expenses on the horizon when they announce their selections for broadcasting.

On the club front everything ticked along smoothly, with Dave and Peter beavering away at the Secretary and Travel Secretary posts, Peter keeping us well informed on our website, and Carol keeping an eye on the rest of the Committee.

Our club magazine has gone to new heights under the enthusiastic control of Steve, and is highly regarded by all who read it.

We are hoping for a better turn out for our Annual General Meeting than was achieved last summer. Don't forget, it is your club and your opinion matters, so come along and have your say. (There may be a glass or two involved as well).

I do hope you enjoyed the World Cup, and the performances of some of next season's new signings, including Mexican Raul Jimenez, Portugal's national keeper Rui Patricio and fellow countryman Joao Moutinho, a highly experienced midfielder,

I was deeply saddened of the news that Ernie Hunt had passed away at the age of 75. Ernie was a long-time friend of myself and London Wolves, was a bundle of fun, and famously went AWOL from one of our functions to find a drink (As if we did not have enough!), and I received a phone call from his wife, who was wondering where he was the following afternoon. Thankfully, he turned up later in the evening minus his jacket.

Just as this newsletter was going to print I received even more sad news that my great friend Terry Peachey, our former Travel Secretary had also passed away. I would like to pass my deepest condolences to all of his family. We will pay full tribute to Terry in our next newsletter.

Enjoy the new season as The Wolves go, hopefully onwards and upwards.

Stuart

WOLVES' NEWS



Champions Celebrations

It could be argued when the party actually started... During a season where Wolves fans were treated to some of the best football they've ever witnessed, there were moments when you could say that was it, that was when the party started, that was the defining moment when we knew we would be back in the Promised Land.

Some might say it was Halloween 2017, a Tuesday night 2-0 victory away at Norwich when Wolves went back to the top of the Championship, and then stayed there until the season had finished. Then moving on towards the end of the season, Good Friday 2018, a 2-1 victory away at Middlesbrough where Wolves hung on for the win despite ending the game without Ruben Neves and Matt Doherty who were both sent-off in a fiery second-half.

Edging nearer towards promotion came the unforgettable game at Cardiff, when Nuno's Boys won against all adversity. Neves scored with a magical free-kick from outside the area, and then Wolves survived two injury time penalties, the first brilliantly saved by John Ruddy and then Hoilett smashing the second against the crossbar.

Five days later that man Ruben Neves then scored one of the best goals ever seen scored at Molineux when helping Wolves ease past promotion rivals Derby. From the occasions just mentioned, or one that's not been included, many will have their own views as to when they thought "After that game I knew it was going to be our season".

Three days after the Derby game came the magical moment and promotion, and it came without Wolves having to kick a ball. In the Saturday night Sky Sports live game Neal Maupay scored a last-gasp equaliser for Brentford against Fulham to promote Wolves back to the Promised Land.

The following afternoon the Promotion Party was in full flow as fans celebrated prior to kick-off, and then all the way through the game against Birmingham. Nuno's Boys put in another champagne performance and outplayed their local rivals as they cruised to a 2-0 victory, and at the final whistle the party moved up a level as the players and fans enjoyed the occasion.



With promotion in the bag a point at Bolton was all that was needed to secure the Championship title. And what a day that was, 5,000 fans made their way to the Macron and Wolves did a 4-0 demolition job on Bolton. On another mega party day the icing was put on the cake with the score at 3-0, Captain Conor Coady, the only outfield Wolves player on the pitch who hadn't scored during the season, was summoned to take a penalty. To the delight of every Wolves supporter in the ground the popular Scouser placed the ball on the spot and thumped it into the bottom right-hand corner.



WOLVES' NEWS



After the memorable day at Bolton came the final home game against Sheffield Wednesday where Wolves collected the Championship Trophy. Prior to the kick-off Sheffield Wednesday granted Wolves a guard of honour with supporters each waving their flags, and creating a mosaic in the Steve Bull stand. The players entered the arena to a deafening noise which continued throughout the game, and after the final whistle the Championship Trophy was presented to the team, which was then paraded around the ground and shown to the supporters.



Champions Parade

After the glorious record breaking season had finished Nuno and his players were granted a Civic Reception, and the trophy was paraded through Wolverhampton on two open top buses. The City was submerged by a sea of gold and black as thousands of supporters lined the streets, it was the first time for 15 years that their beloved football team had given them something to really celebrate.

It was a glorious sunny Bank Holiday Monday, it would have been a special day whatever the weather, but the gorgeous sunshine and soaring temperatures made it perfect. The open top bus parade was to conclude at West Park where 30,000 people were waiting to greet the team, cramming into a mini festival area complete with stage, big screens, bars and a fun fair.



Having slowly made its way through the city centre the bus reached its final destination at West Park where all the players were introduced onto the stage one by one. Finally Nuno was introduced, and boy did he receive an ovation, he sent the 30,000 fans into a frenzy, leading the chants including his own ditty 'Nuno had a dream'. After the West Park extravaganza the team were off to Starworks to carry on the party, which continued long into the night.



A glorious end to a magnificent season, let's hope there are many more to come without having to wait for another 15 years.

WOLVES' NEWS



Wolves' Transfer News

Since the Championship winning climax of the 2017-2018 season Wolves have already been busy in the transfer market preparing for our first spell in the Premier League for seven years. Owners Fosun have made a massive investment in the playing side of things, and all the plans and ambitions of the owners seem to be moving along at a rapid pace as Nuno's Boys get ready to make their mark in the top tier with the so called elite.

All the details of the major additions and departures are detailed below.

New Signings



Raul Jimenez

June 2018

Jimenez was Nuno's first major signing of the summer. The 27-year-old Mexican centre-forward has joined the club on a season long loan from Benfica, and it's believed Wolves have an option to buy him for around £30m next summer. Jimenez represented his native Mexico in the 2018 World Cup, the 6ft 1in forward has netted 14 goals in 64 games for his country.

Jimenez began his career for Club América, helping his boyhood side clinch two Liga MX titles, before securing a move to Atlético Madrid. After a season and 21 appearances in Spain, he moved to Benfica where he helped fire the Lisbon outfit to back-to-back Primeira Liga titles.

In 120 appearances for Benfica he scored 31 goals and created 15, and averaged a goal or assist every 75 minutes in last season's title winning campaign. Jimenez also has 22 Champions League appearances to his name, as well as Portuguese Cup, Portuguese League Cup and Portuguese Super Cup winners medals. The frontman also won gold whilst representing his country at the London 2012 Olympics.



Rui Patrício

June 2018

Rui Patrício became Wolves second new signing of the summer. The 30-year-old has signed a four-year contract and joins Wolves on a free transfer after terminating his own contract at Portuguese club Sporting, where he had spent his entire career to this point.

Patrício has been capped 70 times by Portugal and played in all his country's games in Russia for the World Cup. He was part of the team that won the European Championship in France two years ago and has been a regular for his country since 2011.

Sporting CP captured the signature of 12-year-old Patrício in 2000, and six years later he made his first team debut in the Primeira Liga. The six foot two inch star has made 460 appearances for Sporting CP, including 26 Champions League and 49 Europa League appearances, keeping 179 clean sheets in the process.



Joao Moutinho

July 2018

Joao Moutinho became the third new face to arrive at Molineux when he signed from Monaco for a fee of £5million. The Portuguese international had been linked with numerous top clubs in the last few years, but it was Wolves who finally persuaded the midfielder to join the Nuno revolution and pen a two-year deal.

Moutinho, who won Euro 2016 with Portugal, has spent the last five years at Monaco. He won Ligue 1 last year while also claimed three Primera Division titles with Porto, along with the 2011 Europa League.

The 5ft 7in central midfielder played three times at the recent World Cup, starting against Spain and Morocco and coming off the bench against Iran.

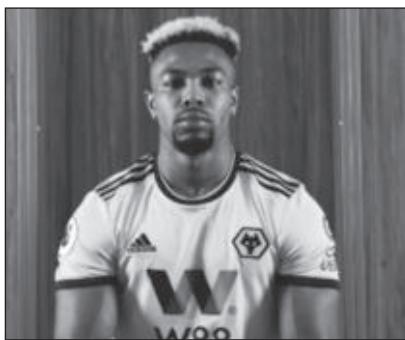
WOLVES' NEWS



Jonny Castro Otto

July 2018

Spanish wing-back Jonny Castro has joined Wolves on a season-long loan. The 24-year-old left Celta Vigo for Atletico Madrid on a permanent deal, and immediately moved to Molineux for the season. The 5ft 5in Spanish Under-21 international is right-footed but can play on either flank and is seen as ideal competition for Matt Doherty and the now departed Barry Douglas. He has come through the ranks at hometown club Celta and played 222 times in all competitions, scoring five goals.



Adama Traore

August 2018

The Spanish speed merchant Adama Traore became Wolves club record signing when he arrived from Middlesbrough on a five-year deal for a fee believed to be in the region of £18million. The 22-year-old joins after an impressive season at Middlesbrough, where he was voted the club's Player of the Year. The winger, who progressed through the Barcelona youth system as a youngster, made a handful of appearances at the Nou Camp before departing in 2015. Adama then moved to Villa Park before moving to Boro' after they were promoted.

Traore spent two seasons at the Riverside Stadium and last term netted five times, and laid on a further 10 for his team mates. Internationally, the winger has represented Spain at four different age groups, including the under-21s earlier this year.



Leander Dendoncker

August 2018

Belgian International Leander Dendoncker completed his move to Molineux on transfer deadline day. The 23-year old midfielder, who can also be used in defence, has signed an initial season-long loan, which will become a permanent move next summer for an estimated £12million.

Dendoncker was part of the Belgium squad which finished third at the World Cup this summer and is a product of the Anderlecht youth system for whom he made 190 senior appearances.

After making his debut in 2013, he played in the Champions League and Europa League with the Belgian side. Having previously won two Belgian Super Cups,

Dendoncker and Anderlecht claimed the Belgian First Division title in 2016-17.

Last season he was again a regular, playing 42 times and scoring once in a 3-1 victory over Charleroi in April. On the international stage, the midfielder made his Belgium debut in 2015 and played against England in the group stages of this summer's World Cup, one of six caps to date.

Loan Deals Made Permanent

Benik Afobe

1st June

Wolves' fans were elated when Benik Afobe signed permanently in a deal reportedly to be £10 million following his five month loan spell from Bournemouth. Unfortunately the joy was short lived, and he was only a Wolves player for about ten minutes. The popular striker did a transfer Hokey Cokey, only he was in and out before he had time to shake it all about.

Just days after signing on the dotted line for Wolves he was on his way to Stoke City in a £12 million deal. The striker has officially joined Stoke on loan until January as a player cannot sign permanently for two clubs during the same transfer window.



WOLVES' NEWS



Willy Boly

1st June

Willy Boly's loan deal at Wolves was made permanent at the same time as Benik Afobe, it is understood the fee involved to acquire the services of the popular defender was £10million. Frenchman Boly signed for the club on a season long loan from FC Porto in July 2017, and proved to be a key player in the Championship title triumph. Boly went onto make 37 appearances and chipped in with three important goals.

Despite a serious hamstring injury keeping him out for two months in the early part of the season, Boly took to the demanding nature of the Championship effortlessly and ended the campaign in the PFA Championship Team of the Year.

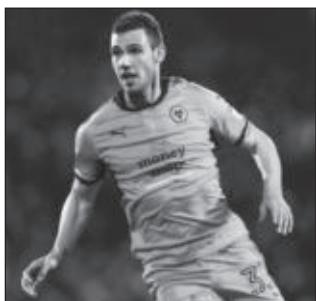


Diogo Jota

June 2018

As reported in the last newsletter the Portuguese "Magician" Diogo Jota was signed on a permanent contract. The fee was reported to be £13 million following his very successful loan spell from Athletico Madrid.

Diogo finished the top scorer for the club last season, netting 17 times in 44 league games.



Leo Bonatini

July 1st 2018

Bonatini has penned a four-year-deal, the young Brazilian netted 12 times in 43 Championship appearances, with a prolific spell in the first half of the campaign firing Wolves into an early league lead which proved unassailable.

The 24-year-old's goal-scoring exploits saw him scoop the Sky Bet Championship Player of the Month award in October, and he signs from Saudi Professional League side Al-Hilal for an undisclosed fee.



Ruben Vinagre

July 1st 2018

Portuguese defender Vinagre, 19, who played nine Championship games, netting once in the 4-0 win at Burton Albion. The outstanding youngster also made four further appearances in cup competitions. Ruben has joined from Monaco on a five-year deal.

All the new signings, including those joining permanent following loan deals, have been real statements of intent by owners Fosun, and will take our club to the next level. It can only help with our Premiership aspirations, where Wolves can be a formidable force rather than a team struggling week in week out. A few years ago this "Project" as it's referred to by Fosun and Nuno is way beyond our dreams.

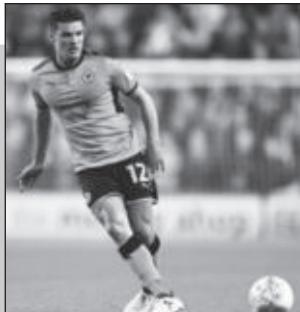
All of us at WWLSC wish all our new signings a massive welcome to our club.

WOLVES' NEWS



2 - DOHERTY 5 - BENNETT 6 - BATTH 7 - I. CAVALEIRO 8 - R. NEVES 9 – RAÚL 10 - COSTA 11 - R. PATRÍCIO 14 – ENOBAKHARE 15 – BOLY 16 - COADY 17 - GIBBS-WHITE 18 - DIOGO J. 19 - J.OTTO 21 - RUDDY 27 - SAISS 28 - J. MOUTINHO 29 - VINAGRE 30 - HAUSE 31 - NORRIS 32 - DENDONCKER 33 - L. BONATINI 37 - ADAMA

Departures



Ben Marshall

1st July 2017

The midfielder made the switch to Norwich City after spending 17 months with Wolves following his arrival at Molineux in January 2017.

Marshall signed for the club from Blackburn Rovers and went on to make 25 appearances, scoring 2 goals in the process. He played a pivotal role in helping Wolves secure their Sky Bet Championship status towards the end of the 2016-17 campaign.

Nine of the midfielder's Wolves appearances came under Nuno Espírito Santo at the beginning of the 2017-18 season. Marshall then spent the second half of the campaign on loan with Millwall, making 16 appearances and scoring on three occasions.



Barry Douglas

28th July 2018

Barry Douglas left Wolves after being sold to Leeds United, this followed the arrival of wing-back Jonny Castro Otto who was brought in on loan from Athletico Madrid.

The fans favourite left in a shock exit after an excellent season in the old gold helped Wolves clinch the Championship title. The left-wing back contributed 15 assists and 5 goals in 42 appearances, with his fine displays also helping to secure his first senior Scotland cap at the age of 28.

Douglas' dead ball heroics were lauded throughout the Championship, with perhaps his finest contribution coming in the last weekend of December 2018 at Ashton Gate, where a direct free-kick and injury time assist for Ryan Bennett helped Wolves to an unbelievable comeback.

Barry will be fondly remembered by all who follow the boys in Gold and Black, and everyone at WWLSC wishes the likeable Scotsman the greatest of success at his new club.

Other Players who did not figure in the first team who have also left the club are:

Released: Jordan Allan, Dan Armstrong, Anthony Breslin, Nicu Carnat, Ross Finnie, Jon Flatt, Conor Levingston Tomas Nogueira, Hakeem Odoffin, Adam Osbourne, Ryan Rainey and Jose Xavier

Loan: Christian Herc (Dunajska Streda)

WOLVES' NEWS



London Wolves Player of the Season 2017-2018

Conor Coady



London Wolves Members have voted Conor Coady as their "Player of the Season" for 2017-2018. In Wolves Championship winning season, in which the team have played some of the best football seen for many a year, all the players throughout the team deserve a special mention for some outstanding performances. However, it was Conor who polled 47% of the votes from the members and our congratulations go to the defensive stalwart for an outstanding season. Ruben Neves was runner up with 36% of the vote.

For the record Conor signed from Liverpool in July 2015 for an undisclosed fee, believed to be around £2 million. He scored his first goal for Wolves in a 2-1 EFL Cup win against Crawley Town in August 2016. In the title winning run-in this year, during his 120th league appearance for the club, he scored a 66th minute penalty in that unforgettable 4-0 win against Bolton to get his first league goal.

Sir Jack Hayward Statue

The legendary Sir Jack Hayward was honoured outside Molineux on 14th June when his statue was unveiled, the 10ft statue which took two years to make overlooks the stand that bears his name. The Unveiling came on what would have been his 95th birthday, and on the same day when the dawn of an exciting new era for Wolves began, with the release of the Premier League fixtures.

The bronze sculpture shows the former Wolves owner in his iconic 'thumbs up' pose and was derived from what he regarded his greatest day in football, when he watched his beloved Wolves earn promotion to the Premier League via the Play-Offs at Cardiff in 2003.

Sir Jack was a long-time friend and an Honorary Member of London Wolves, he often travelled with London Wolves members on the train from Euston on match days, and on one occasion even won the train competition.

Sir Jack gave millions to Wolves and owned the club for more than 15 years, helping return our club which was on the verge of insolvency to the top flight. His statue stands as a fitting tribute to the great man outside his beloved Molineux, and as Wolves fans call it "The house that Sir Jack built".



Wolves fans fly banner over The Hawthorns

It was a long wait but some Wolves fans took great delight in repaying the gesture made by Albion fans when Wolves were relegated from the Premier League in the 2011-12 season.



A banner with the message 'BOING BOING BYE BYE #WOLVESAYWE' was flown behind a small plane that circled around the Sandwell sky. The gesture lasted for around five minutes, and it came during the first-half of their last home game of the season against Spurs.

The flying of the banner was funded by a campaign of Wolves fans who donated more than £1,000 on the Crowdfunder website launched by Matt Baugh.

Albion fans including Frank Skinner and Adrian Chiles were seen on TV celebrating on the Albion pitch after Wolves were last relegated from the Premier League. Not so funny now is it chaps, enjoy the Championship, you may be there for quite a while.....
A few days after the fly-by an estimated 80,000 Wolves fans were celebrating their return to the Premier League with an open-top bus parade and park party. How the tables have turned !!!

WOLVES' NEWS



Carl Ikeme

It was with great sadness to all of us at WWLSC that Carl Ikeme has announced his retirement from football following his year-long battle with acute leukaemia. He recently revealed that after prolonged treatment he was in remission, and with it came messages of support from fans and footballers from across the globe. However, shortly after he announced his decision to retire on medical advice.

Kemes made the announcement saying 'I spoke with the doctor and he suggested I should retire, because of the toll the treatment has taken on my body,' he told the club's official website. 'He thinks it's what is best for me and I can't really risk trying to come back, my health is the priority. I want to be here for my children, family and friends. In the grand scheme of things with my life in danger, it's the minimum price I have to pay to spend the rest of my time with my family.'



Kemes began life with Wolves aged just 14, progressing through the club's academy. He made his Wolves debut in August 2005 in a League Cup tie against Chester, which Wolves won 5-1. Kemes spent the next few seasons on loan at various clubs from all divisions. His big chance came in the 2008-2009 Championship winning side that won promotion to the Premier League, in which he played 13 games.

Kemes spent the next few seasons as understudy to Wayne Hennessey and then Dorus De Vries before finally becoming first choice keeper at the start of the 2012-2013 season. He missed the run-in at the end of the season when his passion got the better of him, and he broke his fist punching a tactics board at half-time in a home game against Bristol City.

The following season saw Kemes play a crucial role at Wolves as they won the League One title with a record points total under Kenny Jackett. He continued in goal for the next two seasons in the Championship before being diagnosed with leukaemia in July last year. In total he played 207 times for Wolves and made a further 67 appearances for eight loan clubs.

Kemes also earned international recognition with Nigeria. After winning a first call-up in 2015 he helped the team qualify for the recent World Cup in Russia. Ikeme was named as the '24th man' of a 23-man World Cup squad with boss Gernot Rohr calling Ikeme's forced absence from his team 'his biggest regret'. He was also remembered when the Nigerian flag was unfurled at the friendly international between England and Nigeria at Wembley.



Wolves fans' support for Carl Ikeme helped "Cure Leukaemia" achieve a record-breaking year smashing the £2 million mark for the first time. Cash raised for the charity allowed an expansion of a haematology centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham to go ahead. The charity easily reached its expansion target of raising an extra £1 million, around 10 per cent of which was raised through the Carl Ikeme appeal.

Several fund raising events have been organised since, bringing in thousands of pounds for the charity. A 24-hour penalty shoot-out was held at Molineux in August in support of Ikeme, and the charity. A bucket collection accumulated £8,000 before the first home game of the season against Middlesbrough.

On behalf of every single member at London Wolves we wish Carl all the very best for the future, he has always been a son of Wolves and will forever remain one.

AGM



London Wolves AGM 2017-2018

Saturday 21st July, The Paternoster near St Paul's Cathedral



This season's AGM was held at The Paternoster near St Paul's Cathedral, opposite Greyfriars Church. Unfortunately, our Chairman Stuart Earl was unable to attend due to illness. Following a series of tests he was admitted to hospital for emergency surgery. The good news is that since the meeting he has been discharged from hospital and is on the slow road to recovery, he wishes to say a big "Thank You" to everyone for their good wishes, and hopes to be "Playing Again" in October.

Stefan chaired the meeting in Stuart's absence through illness. Stuart is undergoing treatment in St Thomas' Hospital having had a traumatic week. The meetings' best wishes were sent to him through Stefan and Dave Hodges.

We were very pleased to welcome Wolves' new Supporter Liaison Officer, Alan Perrins, who very generously had travelled up from Torquay. Alan works for Russell Jones and outlined plans for greater support to official supporters' clubs. He covered ambitious plans for Wolves goals for the future, for Molineux, and to support the fans. It looks like an exciting time ahead.

Meeting items: The meeting kicked off at 3:00pm. There were several apologies for absence including Stuart Earl, Alan Allsop, Carol Randall and Roy Eagles.

Chairman: Stefan, on Stuart's behalf thanked particularly Peter Woodifield and Dave Slape.

Secretary: Membership is currently 256 with members returning since the promotion to the Premier League. £3281 has been raised in subs and Dave Slape covered other income and outgoings, of which postage was a significant element.



Treasurer: Peter Woodifield presented Carol's report of the accounts which showed a small surplus. Later the Wolves Women payment was questioned. Almost all monies owed have been recovered.

Travel Secretary. Peter Woodifield ran travel to all 27 home matches and to 14 away, with special thanks to Morris and Matthew for driving some trips, 37 travellers was the peak (excluding "own way" members). Peter Woodifield takes into account travel cards. He has membership numbers for current travellers. Long away trips again had subsidy. Special thanks to Dave Widdall at WWFC.

Social: Roy managed to cram 40 into the Bluebrick (the limit) for the Christmas Lunch with Mel Eves and Colin Brazier. A separate lunch welcomed Wolves Ladies, and Sue and Terry Wharton graced the two additional events.

Newsletter: Steve said that he hoped to publish the summer edition before the season starts. He would welcome any thought ideas and contributions for the January edition. Costs were discussed, a printed copy costs £3.86 per copy – an extra 50 were required of the special 50th edition, but if you are happy with the pdf version instead please tell Dave Slape.

Website: Peter Bartlett said that we have again run at a surplus of £339 with some well-placed adverts more than covering the costs. The E&S newsfeed is again working on both the mobile (phone/tablet) sites and the desktop version. Peter Woodifield's travel information updates normally go to the Jack Leonard run Facebook page first. Hopefully there will be time for a website refresh after the summer.

Committee: Re-elected en masse.



AGM



Membership Fees: Dave Slape raised the question of whether retired member fees should be reduced, but the meeting strongly supported no change, with a review expected next year as the 55th comes into sight.

AOB: Wolves Women sponsorship was agreed to be renewed at the current rate; volunteers to take part in a new TV programme (Football Genius) were sought (A group is trying to form to take part); Wolves TV audio commentary will be free this season, so if you can't make a match you can listen to Andy Thompson and Mikey Burrows on the internet. Peter Abbott is on the Parliament sub-committee for match day experience, any ideas please contact him, as well as safe-standing. Club credit card has not yet been set up. There is a festival in West Park on the same day as the Everton match so be prepared for chaos in that area.

It was announced to a hefty round of applause that Conor Coady was our player of the season.

Meeting closed around 5:30pm.



Match Ticket Arrangements for Season 2018-2019

WWLSC has been advised by the Wolves Ticket Office that it is highly unlikely that match to match tickets, both home and away, will make general sale this year. They have advised that London Wolves members (who are not season ticket holders or already members at Wolves) wishing to get tickets should become My Wolves members. As well as priority they will also receive Wolves cash on all their club purchases (retail or ticketing). Membership is £25 to supporters aged 17 and over.

Peter Woodfield will still be able to apply for tickets on behalf of WWLSC members, but you will need to make sure he knows your Wolves Supporter Number (and numbers for anyone else you are applying for). Full details regarding My Wolves membership can be found at

<https://www.wolves.co.uk/tickets/membership/>

or by ringing the Wolves Ticket Office on 0371 222 1877

SOCIAL NEWS



Social Diary Season 2017-2018



London Wolves Entertainment Officer Roy Eagles has put together a diary of events since our last mid-season newsletter.

Members are treated to some fabulous social events. If you haven't attended any of these functions then just ask the members who have to hear about what you're missing. We have more and more special guests including former players who attend these events, and booking places at these occasions is like getting tickets to Glastonbury. Details of all functions are available on the London Wolves website at www.londonwolves.com and via the regular eNews emails sent by Webmaster Peter Bartlett.

In the previous newsletter I outlined the events that were well attended and enjoyed by the members of London Wolves, up to and including the Christmas period. There was our annual "It's Not the Christmas Party" knees-up prior to the Sunderland game in December, and then there was the Lunch with Wolves Women at the Bluebrick Pub in January.

Due to the outstanding success of our team last season a lot of our fixtures, especially those during that memorable Championship winning run-in, were changed for the benefit of Sky Sports subscribers. This makes organising social events and the invitation of special guests almost impossible, however there have been two events worthy of a mention:

Thames River Boat Trip (Saturday 24th February 2018)

Prior to the away game at Fulham, London Wolves member Mark Griffiths, who runs "On The Ball Travel", arranged for 200 Wolves supporters to invade Craven Cottage by boat, and I helped arrange places for members to join the cruise. The boat departed the Festival Pier for a three hour cruise upstream to Putney Bridge. On board was a DJ and two well stocked bars. On board were several members including representatives from the committee, these included Chairman Earl, Deputy Chairman Leonard and the Newsletter Editor to keep an eye on their behaviour.

Mark agreed a special price of £15 for London Wolves members only. Unfortunately I was on holiday at the time, but all who attended said what a fabulous time they had, so a big thank you to Mark for organising the event.



End of Season Lunch in the Bluebrick Pub (Saturday 28th April 2018)

As with previous years I didn't arrange for an overnight stay for the last home game of the season against Sheffield Wednesday. Geoff Castro had already organised an overnight trip for the previous home game against Birmingham, which was re-arranged due to a Sunday kick-off for Sky TV. And Sunderland, being the last game of the season, and another Sunday early kick-off, was also an overnight trip. Because the Bluebrick is now a pub designated for away supporters, and due to a big away support, I was only allowed to book 20 spaces prior

SOCIAL NEWS



to the last home game against Sheffield Wednesday. Our Promotion Winning Meal was a casual affair for our regular Bluebrick crowd, with Terry and Sue Wharton joining us for the meal as our special guests. There was also two lads from Germany who only called in for one beer, but liked our company so much they stayed for the duration, which was positive.



As Entertainments Officer it would have been impossible to organise any of these functions without the help of all my fellow Committee members, and the support they have given me throughout the season has been invaluable, my gratitude goes to everybody concerned.

I would also like to add that, without the constant support of all our members and our special friends there would be no functions, and I wouldn't have the privilege of working with such special supporters.

Finally, all the best to Wolves Women next season as they look to bounce back after the disappointment of relegation last year. And last but not least, here's wishing Nuno and the Boys even more success now that we're back in the Premier League for the first time in seven years, it's been a fantastic season and long may it continue.

Thanks Again and Up the Wolves

Roy Eagles
Entertainments Officer

Fans Flag Parade (Saturday 28th April 2018)



Prior to the last home game of the season against Sheffield Wednesday London Wolves participated in the end of season Flag Parade. As with last year some of our members joined the parade and guard of honour with other supporters clubs from around the country.



Ahead of the parade former London Wolves member Jacqui Oatley joined our flag bearers and then posed with Mark Feehan holding the new flag which was unveiled for the first time. A big "Thank You" to Peter Abbott for arranging our participation, and to all the members who took part.



SOCIAL NEWS



London Wolves Summer World Cup Walk

Saturday June 30th 2018



The itinerary for this year's Summer Walk was a South London Stroll taking in the favourite pubs across the plains of Tooting and Wandsworth. There was a small matter of a conflicting event taking part in Russia, this meant precision planning coming into action from legendary walk organiser Geoff Castro, who set the date to avoid clashes with Ingerland matches.

With the walk taking on the World Cup theme the extravaganza began in Tooting, made famous in the 70's by Wolfie Smith and the "Tooting Popular Front". Tooting is now acclaimed for its bring your own booze curry houses, diverse communities and shabby chic vibe, and is officially rated as one of the 10 coolest neighbourhoods in the world. Craft beer bars, sourdough pizza joints and trendy nightspots are popping up everywhere in this south-west London hotspot.

Last September the area appeared on Lonely Planet's list of top 10 coolest neighbourhoods in the world, alongside New York's Sunset Park and The Triangle in Lisbon, so where a better place to start our annual beano.

The starting point of this perennial pub crawl, sorry educational feast, was the JJ Moon's Wetherspoon pub in Tooting High Street. Members started arriving from 11:00am onwards for a midday start, and there were 29 in attendance by kick-off time. After a quick brief by Geoff "Time to Move on Chaps" Castro, we were on our way to our first watering hole, the Antelope, a huge pub on the Mitcham Road with a small frontage.



Captain Castro, our own walking almanac had done his homework, and with the theme of the day being the World Cup he rattled off all kinds of facts. He enlightened us by telling us who Pickles was, he was a black and white collie dog, known for his role in finding the stolen Jules Rimet Trophy in March 1966, four months before the 1966 FIFA World Cup was scheduled to kick off in England. The trophy was found under bushes in the grounds of St Valery, about three miles from the Antelope pub.

The attention to planning came to fruition as we watched the French finally win at Trafalgar (the pub that is), they beat the Argies 4-3 in the World Cup. It was a great pub with a very nice variety of ales, and even sold a black pudding pork pie. At half-time it was a quick hike to the Sultan where we watched the second-half.

Following the game it was another hike through Collier's Wood, and over the Wandle via a 219 bus to Wandsworth Common. Due to a tight itinerary we passed pubs as if they were going out of fashion, before finally arriving at a craft brewery in an industrial unit. The beer tasted good, but the environment was not to everyone's taste, and some splinter groups returned to civilisation North of the Thames, while Geoff planned to move on to the Eagle.

At the end of the day with legs flagging and numbers dwindling, members made their way home where they could rest and start looking at the back of their eyelids.

Thanks to Darch for bringing the Nuno flag all the way from Plymouth, while Charlie missed his first ever walk since being born, so we hope he enjoyed his barbecue. A massive Thank You to Geoff for another superb event, he adjusted the programme for World Cup matches, reduced walking distances to help the less agile members in attendance, and generally did a great job in organising our now infamous Summer Walk.

We look forward to seeing even more members next year !!!

Wolves Women



Wolves Women

After the success of promotion to the FA Northern Premier League in 2016-2017 this season has been a disappointing one for the ladies. At the end of the season they finished second from bottom of the table on goal difference. Following the league restructuring meeting it was decided that Wolves Women would play in the FA Women's Northern League Division 1 Midlands next season. In the end the bottom two Premier League clubs were relegated, so we narrowly missed out on staying up by just a couple of goals, and were joined by the WBA Women.

However, London Wolves are proud to continue our support Wolves Women FC, and it was agreed at the AGM that we would continue sponsorship of Wolves Women, including Captain Anna Price for the 2018-19 season.



After playing over 200 games for her beloved Wolves, long-serving right back Claire Hakeman, sponsored by Mark Feehan, has decided to hang up her boots. Claire also served as WWWFC's communications officer, and we were delighted that she attended several of Roy's famous lunches.

Her impressive career includes a spell in the top flight with Birmingham City Ladies, as well as taking time out to have her Wolves-supporting children, Harry and Gracie. She has spent the last few years fitting her training and match day schedule around family life.

After playing football at primary school, Claire joined Wolves at the age of 14, showing talent early on, and making her senior debut at the age of 17. She has seen the women's game go from strength to strength, and in recent years has inspired and encouraged the younger players coming through.

Claire said: "It's so tough to leave after a long association with such a fantastic club, but I feel it's the right time to go. Juggling being a mom of two kids has been a test, along with lots of niggles and injuries over my playing career, and the wear and tear of the last couple of seasons has definitely taken its toll playing at this standard. I'm safe in the knowledge that the club has so much talent coming through, they will definitely be a team to watch in the coming seasons."



"It's been an absolute privilege to represent Wolves Women both on and off the pitch. I've been lucky to have played with some fantastic players, top managers and staff throughout my time at the club. The last few seasons, in particular the integration with the men's club has been amazing and that is down to all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes, but not unnoticed.

"As a Wolves fan, being part of last season's kit launch was a fantastic experience. Plenty of highlights, but in particular my only ever senior trophy - winning the League title in 2017. I wish Dan and the squad all the best for next season. I'll be keeping in touch and watching their progress closely. Exciting times ahead."

London Wolves wish Claire a happy retirement and every success in the future.

Wolves Women



Wolves Women Fixtures – Season 2018-2019

Midlands Division 1

August

Sun 19	Steel City Wanderers F.C.	A
Sun 26	Solihull Moors FC	H

September

Sun 9	Birmingham & West Mids	A
Wed 12	Sporting Khalsa	H
Sun 16	Burton Albion	A
Sun 30	Nettleham FC	H

October

Wed 3	The New Saints LFC	H
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November

Sun 4	Bedworth United FC	A
Sun 18	Long Eaton United	H

December

Sun 16	WBA Womens	A
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January

Sun 13	Steel City Wanderers	H
Sun 20	Solihull Moors FC Women	A

February

Sun 3	Birmingham & W Midlands	H
Wed 13	Sporting Khalsa Women	A
Sun 17	Burton Albion	H

March

Sun 10	Nettleham FC	A
Wed 13	The New Saints LFC	A
Sun 31	Bedworth United FC	H

Home fixtures are played at Bilston Town FC, 62 Queen St, Bilston, WV14 7EX (just off the Black Country Route, A463)

FEEDBACK

Please do write to us on all, or any, aspects which you feel would be of any interest or benefit to the Club from a supporter's perspective.

address: Flat 11, 100 Fairthorn Road, London, SE7 7SE

e-mail: WWLSC@post.com

contacts: Stuart Earl 0203 620 7901

Dave Slape 0208 764 8023 Peter Woodifield 01634 363704

MATCH REPORTS



BLACK CAT, YELLOW CAT, RED CATT'

WOLVES 0-0 SUNDERLAND

Saturday 9th December 2017

Wolves' six-game winning run came to an end in a game where they had 71% of the play but failed to penetrate the defence of a Sunderland team whose game plan was to not get beat. Even though the Black Cats were reduced to ten men when Lee Cattermole was sent off in the 62nd minute, Wolves never looked like breaking the visitor's stronghold. Sunderland now join Brentford and Sheffield United as the only clubs in the Championship to have stopped Wolves from scoring this season.

Right from the kick-off the Black Cats set their stall, there was nothing to warm the old cockles in the icy conditions, and half of our members who went to the Christmas Lunch in the Bluebrick prior to the game probably wished they had stayed in the warm bar. It was interesting to see our Portuguese imports glove and snood free and wearing short sleeve shirts, whereas Doherty and Douglas were both modelling gloves and thermals.

The Black Cats continued to defend in numbers, they were playing so deep it was a wonder they weren't all wearing diving boots. Entertainment was not on the agenda, and for all their possession Wolves struggled to make any impact in the final third, and when Neves chipped the ball over the defensive wall the usually deadly Jota pulled it wide. The forgettable first-half was summed up when Cavaleiro made a run down the left and pulled the ball back to Bonatini eight yards out, but the striker sliced the ball horribly wide.

Wolves tried to up the tempo at the start of the second period, a 20-yard free kick from Douglas clipped the top of the bar, and a close range shot by Bonatini was blocked. However the game took a turn for the worse just after the hour mark when Cattermole was sent off for a crude lunge on Jota, just 60 seconds after being booked.

Following the sending off the Black Cats strategy was to go to plan B, that was play with ten men at the back instead of eleven. With three central defenders and effectively five players across the midfield area the Black Cats message to Wolves was break us down if you can. Wolves piled forward but it was always going to one of those



days, and they failed to breach the defence of a team that lies second to bottom of the league.

Opinion: Jose Mourinho that's how you park a bus.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 5/10

Attendance: 28,488

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas (Costa 75), Coady (capt), Boly, Bennett, Cavaleiro, Saiss, (N'Diaye 68), Bonatini, Neves, Jota

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Price, Enobakhare, Vinagre

Bookings: Douglas (65 – foul)

Referee: Jeremy Simpson

moments later another Wednesday attack ended with Ruddy making a simple save from a glancing header by Joost van Aken. However that was a false dawn for Wednesday as Wolves opened the scoring in the 34th minute with a piece of sheer class from Ruben Neves. Willy Boly inadvertently turned Ivan Cavaleiro's free-kick out of the area, but the Portuguese Maestro, as quick as you like swooped onto the loose ball and delivered it into the corner of the Wednesday net like a laser guided missile.



Wolves should have taken charge thereafter, but even at half pace they were still too good for a Wednesday side that have won only one of their last 18 home matches against Wolves in all competitions. They did occasionally venture forward, but Neves was in the right place to deny Wallace after Hooper's knockdown in a rare attack.

The game was over as a contest with five minutes of normal time remaining, substitute Helder Costa turned Fox inside out, and with the midfielder through on goal he gave the Wednesday defender no option but to bring him down to earn a second yellow card and his marching orders. Thereafter it became a stroll in the park for Wolves who saw out the remaining minutes with ease.

Opinion: We've already won as many games (16) as we managed in the whole of last season.

Man of the match: Coady

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 23,809

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Vinagre (Bath 67), Coady (capt), Boly, Bennett, Cavaleiro (N'Diaye 90+1), Saiss, Bonatini (Costa 72), Neves, Jota

Unused Subs: Norris, Gibbs-White, Miranda, Enobakhare

Bookings: Jota (33 – foul), Bennett (43 – retaliation), Neves (82 – foul)

Referee: Darren Bond

MATCH REPORTS



JUMP-START NEEDED AGAINST THE TRACTOR BOYS

WOLVES 1-0 IPSWICH

Saturday 23rd December 2017

That's now eight wins in their last nine games for Wolves, giving them a ten point cushion over third placed Derby at the top of the Championship. The football may not have been as free flowing as some of that already seen this season, but this win was a lot easier than the 1-0 scoreline suggests. Ipswich came to Molineux with a game plan that seemed to be based on damage limitation, and being managed by Mick McCarthy they had the perfect mentor to execute that plan.

Overall Wolves dominated against a well organised Ipswich defence, and despite all their possession clear cut chances were far and few between, and they only managed the one goal despite umpteen attempts. However for the third time in the last four games the one goal proved enough.

It was an unusually slow start by Wolves and Ruddy was the saviour in the 19th minute when he produced a piece of control Ruben Neves would have been proud of. The ex-England keeper rolled a short goal kick out to Coady, but when the captain over-hit his back pass, Ruddy produced a lovely bit of skill to clear his lines. It was the only time Ruddy would be troubled all game.

After the slow start by Nuno's Boys It needed a mix-up in the Ipswich defence to present them with their first opportunity after 26 minutes of the match, Jota latched on to a loose ball and his half volley was saved by Bialkowski diving to his left. Otherwise things were desperately subdued, with Ipswich content to sit deep, while Wolves worked to find an opening.

Eight minutes later Jota had an even better chance when he chested down a superb through-ball from Boly that caught the Ipswich backline flat-footed, the Portuguese Maestro looked certain to score at the near post only to be denied by a last-gasp challenge from Kenlock, who made up ground and dived in to block the shot.

The mounting pressure by Wolves finally paid off five minutes before the half-time break and Jota was again involved, this time as the creator. His right-wing cross flew across the face of the area, Webster missed the chance to clear the ball, and it was collected by Cavaleiro who cut inside



before curling a beauty into the bottom corner of Bialkowski's net.

Cavaleiro came close to adding a second goal five minutes after the break, but Webster redeemed himself somewhat by making a superb block to deny Cavaleiro after he had raced on to a perfectly weighted through ball by Jota. That escape sparked Ipswich into their first real attacking burst of the game, Waghorn saw his low shot flash wide in the 58th minute, before Bru curled a long-range effort straight into the arms of Ruddy.

But it was Wolves who carried the constant threat, and they were inches away from making the game same in the 83rd minute when Costa's spectacular volley flew narrowly over the bar, Douglas then saw his free-kick drift agonisingly wide, as Wolves finished the game easily without any more scares and securing the three points.

Opinion: Not always pretty, but another three points increasing the gap at the top.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 7/10

Attendance: 30,218

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Coady (capt), Boly, Bennett, Cavaleiro (Enobakhare 66), Saiss, Bonatini (Costa 78), Neves, Jota (N'Diaye 87)

Unused Subs: Norris, Batth, Gibbs-White, Vinagre

Bookings: Neves (71 – foul)

Referee: David Coote



following the Christmas fayre and booze consumed at home during the two day public holiday.

This year Santa treated our beloved team to a Boxing Day trip to that "Rat Hole" usually referred to as the New Den, and Nuno's Boys came away with a point following an action packed 90 minutes where the game swung backwards and forwards like a pendulum. Unfortunately Millwall are not the best supported team in the world, and only 13,121 (including Wolves supporters) were on hand to watch the game.

A point on the day proved priceless as Cardiff slipped up for the second game running, and that allowed Wolves to go eight points clear of Colin's second placed team. Nuno's men came from an early goal down to fight back and then take the lead, only to surrender it again with some uncharacteristic defending from a corner.

It was a bright start to the game with Millwall diving into tackles at every opportunity, whereas Wolves preferred the more skillful approach, with Neves again the master puppeteer as he pulled all the strings in midfield. Wolves nearly opened the scoring when a superb ball by Neves played in Doherty, but his shot was kept out by Archer at his near post.

Disaster struck from the resulting corner, Millwall cleared the ball to the edge of their own box where it was collected by ex Wolves player Jed Wallace. He broke at a speed of knots, like a man with a point to prove, and raced to the edge of the Wolves area where he threaded the ball into the path of Gregory, who had the time and space to slide the ball beyond Ruddy and open the scoring.

Even though Millwall continued their get in your faces approach, it was Wolves who controlled events with their silky ball skills and precision passing game, and Costa had a glorious chance to level the scores in the 25th minute, but he was denied by Archer's legs after he had been put through by another sublime pass by Neves.

A POINT PROVED IN THE LIONS DEN

MILLWALL 2-2 WOLVES

Tuesday 26th December 2017

Whatever happened to those local derbies that were always saved for the Christmas period? It now seems the Football League try and place teams as far away from home as possible during a period that usually consists of hardly any to zero public transport, and supporters usually subdued

MATCH REPORTS



However, just as it looked like Wolves would go in a goal down at half-time, another neat passing move provided an injury time equaliser. Neves played the ball to Costa on the right, who cut inside the defender before laying the ball back across the area where Jota was waiting to flick it into the net for his tenth goal of the season.



The timing of the goal was crucial, and despite Millwall enjoying the Lion's share of the play at the start of the second half, Wolves would soon exert their authority and take the lead in the 56th minute. Costa picked up the ball in the Millwall area and held off a defender before laying back to Saiss who smashed it into the back of the net from 25 yards. That was the cue for 10 minutes of overdue control from Wolves, who finally slowed down the pace of the game.

Unfortunately for Wolves the impressive Boly was replaced by Miranda in the 68th minute after he struggled to overcome an earlier knock, and this opened the door for Millwall's equaliser just four minutes later. The absence of the big Frenchman became apparent when a corner from the left was nodded back across the area, and Cooper rose above an array of gold shirts around him to head the ball home from a yard out.

Opinion: A draw probably a fair result.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 6/10

Attendance: 13,121

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Coady, Bennett, Boly (Miranda 68), Costa (N'Diaye 80), Saiss, Jota, Neves, Cavaleiro (Bonatini 45)

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Enobakhare, Vinagre

Bookings: Cavaleiro (6 – foul), Saiss (55 – foul), Coady (69 – foul)

Referee: Tim Robinson

SMASHTON GATE

BRISTOL CITY 1-2 WOLVES

Saturday 30th December 2017

All those who questioned the would be commitment of our foreign contingent during the dark nights and winter months were given their answer in no uncertain terms as Wolves pulled off an incredible win. They overcome adversity to beat Bristol City on their home turf and go ten points clear at the top of the Championship table.

This game had everything, and this superb Wolves team dug deep as their captain Danny Bath was harshly sent off early in the game, he was then followed by our manager Nuno who was sent to the stands for contesting another poor decision by the referee. They then fell behind early in the second-half before mustering up a stunning comeback, and against all odds score a dramatic winner deep into injury time.

After a bright start Wolves suffered a major setback in the 14th minute. Danny Bath took a heavy touch as he tried to intercept a pass and lunged in to Magnusson, and even though he played the ball the referee deemed it a red card offence and sent the skipper off. Nuno followed him to the stands three minutes later when contesting another questionable referee decision, Jota had deemed to have been fouled outside the box rather than in it. The resulting free-kick saw Douglas smash his shot against the post.

Playing one man short Wolves changed their formation and tactics accordingly, and made the game more compact allowing City no space for their extra man to benefit. However, within eight minutes of the second half getting underway, City capitalised on their one-man advantage and took the lead, a break on the right finished when Reid tucked Paterson's low cross under Ruddy.

With nothing to lose and just under half an hour remaining Nuno sent on Cavaleiro for Costa, and the impact was instantaneous. The Portuguese wingman sent Doherty through on goal with a peach of a pass, the Irishman sold Fielding in the Bristol goal a dummy as he charged out, and that left him the task of running the ball into the net, but the keeper wiped him out giving the referee no option but to send him off.

Paterson became the sacrificial lamb as he made way for reserve keeper Steele. It

mattered not, as the first thing that the substitute keeper had to do was fetch the ball out of the net. After a lengthy stoppage following the sending-off Barry Douglas stepped up and bent a wicked free-kick through the wall and past the hapless Steele.



With the game deep into injury time a draw looked on the cards. However, Wolves don't hang on for the draw these days and in the 94th minute they won a dangerous free-kick on the right-hand edge of the area after a tussle between Saiss and Pack. Over came Douglas with that magical left foot of his and delivered the free-kick to the far post, and Bennett rose above Baker to nod a thumping header past Steele and sent the 3,500 travelling supporters into ecstasy.

Opinion: Unbelievable, what a way to end 2017.

Man of the match: Doherty

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 25,540

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Coady, Bath (capt), Boly, Costa (Cavaleiro 62), Neves, Bonatini (Bennett 17), Jota (Enobakhare 88), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, N'Diaye, Gibbs-White, Hause

Bookings: Neves (49 – foul)

Sending's Off: Bath (14 – foul)

Referee: Peter Banks

NEVES FINALLY PASSES THE BENTLEY

WOLVES 3-0 BRENTFORD

Tuesday 2nd January 2018

After the spectacular finish to 2017 with the last gasp win at Smashton Gate, Wolves started 2018 with a stroll in the park victory against Brentford. At the end of August Wolves went to Griffin Park and played out an entertaining goalless draw. Since then Brentford have shot up the table accumulating 33 points from 17 matches, but they were totally outclassed by Nuno's Wolves in this reverse fixture.

MATCH REPORTS



Wolves are now 12 points clear of second place Derby and promotion looks nailed on, and as the doubters will keep saying it's not over until the fat lady sings, looks like that fat lady is Susan Boyle and just listen to her. This was Wolves 10th win in the last 12 matches and the three goals here against Brentford has taken them over the 50 mark for the season.

Nuno's boys got stuck into Brentford from the off, and went within a whisker of taking the lead in the 2nd minute when Bonatini smashed the ball against the post following a cross by Costa. As Wolves mounted attack after attack Jota saw his goal bound header cleared off the line, and this was followed up by a superb save by Brentford keeper Danial Bentley to deny Doherty.

Costa then latched onto a low through ball but Bentley raced out to block his chip, and then just before half time Douglas directed a cross-field ball across goal to Jota whose bullet shot from 15 yards was superbly tipped past the post by, yes you guessed it that man Bentley. Wolves could have been five up at half-time, but somehow the teams went for their half-time cup of tea with the score at 0-0.

Bentley's heroics continued at the beginning of the second half when, barely 20 seconds after the re-start, he saved from Bonatini. It only looked to be a matter of time before Wolves' pressure paid off, and it finally did when Jota was fouled by Woods, and Bentley was left clutching fresh air when a stunning 20 yard free-kick by Neves gave the heroic keeper absolutely no chance.



Having waited so long to make their pressure pay, Wolves quickly added a second a couple of minutes later when Cavaleiro pulled a pass from the by-line back across the area where Douglas was waiting, and his left footed shot from 16 yards nearly took the back of the net out to make it 2-0.

The game became a footballing exhibition with Brentford running around like headless chickens, and the ball moving between Wolves players at the speed of sound.

More chances went begging before the scoreline was given a more emphatic look with ten minutes left as Jota scrambled the ball home from close range following a corner by Cavaleiro.

Opinion: The Wolves Juggernaut keeps rolling over everything in its path.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 28,475

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Neves, Boly (Hause 83), Coady (capt), Costa (Cavaleiro 53), Jota (Enobakhare 81), Saiss, Bonatini

Unused Subs: Norris, N'Diaye, Gibbs-White, Vinagre

Bookings: Neves (65 – foul), Boly (77 – foul)

Referee: Andrew Madley



shot wide. Despite Wolves' dominance, it was Swansea who came closest to scoring before the break when Olsson smashed a free-kick against the crossbar from the edge of the penalty area.

Five minutes before half-time Wolves were reduced to ten men. Vinagre went in hard on Dyer, but there was bewilderment when referee Taylor produced a red card. The youngster was undoubtedly over-zealous, but there seemed to be no malice involved. Despite all the protests from Nuno and the other Wolves players the defender had to go. The home fans voiced their displeasure in Taylor's direction as he made his way off at half-time.

Despite the extra man advantage Swansea still struggled to create chances after the restart. Bony couldn't get a header on target early in the second half, and it was not until the hour mark that Norris was forced into making a save, diving to his left to push away a fiercely-struck shot by Bony.

Swansea's numerical advantage come to a halt in the 67th minute when the referee made another controversial decision, this time it was Fer who was shown a red card for a trip on Costa on the halfway line. again the decision seemed harsh. Wolves almost immediately took advantage when Hause sent a header narrowly over the crossbar from a Douglas free-kick. Substitute Rafa Mir, on his Wolves debut, then had a late chance but saw his goal bound effort blocked.

Opinion: Yet another clown dressed in black trying to gain attention.

Man of the match: N'Diaye

Team Rating: 6/10

Attendance: 22,976

Team: Norris, Doherty, N'Diaye, Bennett, Coady, Costa, Gibbs-White (Douglas 45), Enobakhare (Cavaleiro 64), Vinagre, Hause, Bonatini (Mir 77)

Unused Subs: Burgoyne, Miranda, Rasmussen, Goncalves

Bookings: None

Sending's Off: Vinagre (40 – foul)

Referee: Anthony Taylor

MATCH REPORTS



BARN DOORS STAY SHUT

BARNSLEY 0-0 WOLVES

Saturday 13th January 2018



Barnsley became the latest of a line of plunderers to put on the tin hats and round the wagons as Nuno's Army entered deepest Yorkshire in their quest for entry to the Promised Land. The familiar rear-guard action in a damage limitation exercise worked a treat as Barnsley defended as if their lives depended on it.

In the process Barnsley became just the fourth team to keep a clean sheet against Wolves all season, and the first to deny Nuno's men a single shot on target. The game finished goalless and let's hope they don't need one more point at the end of the season to avoid relegation. On the bright side Wolves are now 13 games unbeaten, have kept yet another clean sheet and are 10 points clear of second place.

The first-half performance was similar to watching paint dry, Barnsley lined up behind the ball, shut down Ruben Neves and made a point of making Wolves work for every second and every inch. A turgid first half passed by with barely any goal-mouth action, other than Costa's strike which was ruled offside.

Wolves for once struggled to create anything, lacking imagination and missing the high tempo that has become a hallmark of their play this season. Throughout the first-half chances were at a premium, the best of which fell to Saiss who hammered high over the bar from 18 yards.

Thereafter, a golden wave surged forward and the stand-off ensued, and the 4,700 supporters who had travelled from the Black Country also found it difficult to drum up any enthusiasm. Then came Costa's half decent finish that was ruled offside, before Bonatini shot wide from outside the box.

Things marginally improved at the start of the second half with an increased sense of

purpose about Wolves' play, but the Barnsley keeper again remained untested. Wolves did have the ball in the net again on the hour mark from Jota, but Costa was flagged for offside, while a teasing inswinging Douglas corner just evaded Saiss and Bennett.

Wolves' at last opened up in the final quarter of the game. Doherty made a surging run forward, but saw his shot brilliantly blocked by Yiadom, Jota then nearly broke the crossbar with a sizzling shot from 20 yards, but it bounced to safety.

The final 10 minutes saw chances go begging for both sides. Jota first spurned a wonderful chance when he blazed over from a yard out, before Moncur's shot went wide for Barnsley as the game fizzled out into a goalless draw.

Opinion: One of those days where you could see it was never going to happen.

Man of the match: Jota

Team Rating: 6/10

Attendance: 16,050

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Neves (N'Diaye; 90), Boly, Coady ©, Costa (Cavaleiro; 65), Jota, Saiss, Bonatini (Mir; 73)

Unused Subs: Norris, Gibbs-White, Enobakhare, Hause

Bookings: Saiss (29 – foul), Jota (40 – foul)

Referee: Keith Stroud



It was unusually poor defending by Wolves, in fact it was a disappointing all-round performance, and midfielder Mesa came close to making it 2-0, firing a volley just wide as Swansea dominated in all areas. However, Wolves finally woke up in the latter stages of the half when N'Diaye had a shot blocked at point-blank range by Mawson.

Wolves supporters has to wait until the 44th minute before their team produced their best move of the game with Costa, Morgan Gibbs-White and Doherty involved, the latter played a low cross across goal, Enobakhare picked it up and shaped to shoot, but it was well blocked. With the driving rain still pouring down, Wolves still turned around a goal down and Nuno's frustrated touchline demeanour summed up his team's first-half performance.

The wet weather continued when the game resumed, the Liberty Stadium pitch cutting up and not helping the entertainment, as both sides struggled to retain possession. However, some nice hold up play from Mir played in Costa, and his lovely effort on the turn from 20 yards flashed just over. Just a few seconds later Costa then appealed in vain for a penalty after falling in the box.

Just after the hour mark Nuno had seen enough, and introduced Diogo Jota and Leo Bonatini from the bench with immediate dividends. Within two minutes a Wolves breakaway fell to the little maestro Jota, he escaped down the left and put three Swansea defenders on the floor before executing a sublime finish for the equaliser.

It was all Wolves, they had the bit between their teeth and there only looked like one winner. Jota curled inches wide from 20 yards and there was a spring in everyone's step. But instead taking stock and continuing to do the simple stuff correctly, all the hard work of getting back into the game was undone just 3 minutes later following a horrendous error by Hause. A regulation cross bounced off the young defender,

DOWN THE SWANNY

SWANSEA 2-1 WOLVES

Wednesday 17th January 2018
(FA Cup 3rd Round Replay)

There was to be no repeat of last year's FA Cup heroics when Championship strugglers Wolves went to Premier League teams Stoke and Liverpool and came away with victories that will remain with those who attended with lifetime memories. However, on a foul night in Swansea a run stretching to 14 matches in all competitions finally came to a wet and windy end for Wolves.

It was a low-key opening in front of a poor crowd, and Hause's slip saw Narsingh waste a good chance when through on goal. However, it mattered little as Swansea opened the scoring in the 11th minute. Wolves defenders stood and watched as Ayew picked up the ball and skipped past several challenges before sidefooting past Norris.

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who couldn't react in time to prevent Bony from sliding it home from six yards.

It proved to be the game's vital goal as Wolves pushed for an equaliser late on, and despite a close effort from Jota Swansea held on for a win that will give them an away tie at Notts County in the next round.

Opinion: You can't win them all, run had to come to an end sometime.

Man of the match: Jota

Team Rating: 4/10

Attendance: 8,294

Team: Norris, Doherty, N'Diaye, Batt (C), Miranda, Costa (Saiss; 73), Gibbs-White, Enobakhare (Jota; 64), Douglas, Hause, Mir (Bonatini; 64)

Unused Subs: Burgoyne, Coady, Bennett, Neves

Bookings: N'Diaye (33 – Foul), Douglas – (72 – Foul), Saiss (90 – Dissent)

Referee: Chris Kavanagh



booking, and Forest their second yellow card following an earlier caution for Danny Fox after his foul on Ivan Cavaleiro. Liam Bridcutt became the third Forest player to be booked after he blocked the run of Ruben Neves.

It all started going pear-shaped in the 40th minute, Dowell drilled in a low 25 yard effort that took a wicked deflection that wrong-footed Ruddy for Forest's opener. There was no hint of fortune about the second as Cash sent in a low cross from the right flank that enabled the unmarked Osborn to pick his spot and smash the ball into the roof of the net from 15 yards.

In a bid to get back into the game, Nuno took off full-backs Matt Doherty and Barry Douglas at half-time and replaced them with the attacking duo of Helder Costa and Morgan Gibbs-White. Initially the impact was minimal with Forest actually going close again when Fox's header was tipped over by Ruddy.

The effort and endeavour was there, and Wolves began to push Forest deeper, but their final ball was lacking. Costa sent successive crosses into the South Bank and Cavaleiro's aim was also off. It didn't get any better and Forest coasted to victory, with Wolves failing to force Smith into one meaningful save in a second-half, which was probably their worst 45 minutes of football all season.

Opinion: Need to start banging the goals in again after just one strike in last four games.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 2/10

Attendance: 29,050

Team: Ruddy, Doherty (Gibbs-White 46), Douglas (Costa 46), Bennett, Cavaleiro, Neves (Mir 77), Boly, Coady ©, Jota, Saiss, Bonatini

Unused Subs: Norris, N'Diaye, Batt, Miranda

Bookings: Coady 38, Jota 64, Bennett 90

Referee: Robert Madley

SPANISH SUN ENDS WINLESS RUN

IPSWICH 0-1 WOLVES

Saturday 27th January 2018

Following four games without a win, and supporters having to watch sub-par performances, all our rivals were hoping that the Nuno bubble had burst. Dream on, this was Wolves back to their very best, playing the silky football that's had the fans drooling at times this season. A week in Marbella seems to have recharged the batteries, and restored the hunger and desire missing over that four game barren run.

Although the 1-0 scoreline suggests a close game, this was anything but it. Wolves outplayed Ipswich from start to finish, and the Tractor Boys had keeper Bartosz Bialkowski to thank for his man of the match performance. Although, a series of missed chances nearly cost Wolves when a couple of late scares almost let Ipswich off the hook.

Conditions were horrible at Portman Road, torrential rain was making an already soft pitch more difficult to play on, and the fears were that this would suit Mick McCarthy's robust approach, rather than Nuno's creative passing game. The first few minutes showed that we needn't have worried, Wolves tore into Ipswich straight from the kick off.



Wolves made that early domination count as they opened the scoring in the 15th minute. A lightning quick break ended when Cavaleiro flicked the ball backwards into the path of Douglas, he chipped a precision cross to the far post, and Doherty was on hand to head the ball down into the ground and into the top right-hand corner of the net.

What followed was the Bartosz Bialkowski show, and the keeper showed just how important he was to the Tractor Boys. He made a great save from a Douglas

After a lacklustre start to the game where neither team covered themselves in glory Forest took the bull by the horns by netting two goals in the five minutes leading up to the interval. Even though Nuno threw on Costa, Mir and Gibbs-White after the break there was no way back, with Wolves making Smith in the Forest goal a virtual spectator.

Diogo Jota had threatened to give Wolves the perfect start in the ninth minute only to see his curling right-footed shot fly inches past Smith's far post. Forest new manager Karanka must have taken the bully boy tactics of teams like Cardiff and QPR into consideration to counter the silky skills now associated with Nuno's team.

Jota was upended in the 19th minute by Joe Worrall, earning the centre-half a

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free-kick after Neves was crudely chopped down, and then almost immediately saved the day again when he pushed away Jota's low shot after Wolves broke at speed.

In a rare period of attack Ipswich managed to create a half chance on the half-hour mark, but Celina's shot went high and wide. And then just before half-time Ruddy was called into the action for the first time, and did well to push McGoldricks dipping effort over the crossbar.

Jota's pace continually troubled the Ipswich defence, and it was Bialkowski to the rescue again when he raced to narrow the angle and push the maestro's ball across the box and away from those in a gold shirt waiting to pounce.

Wolves came within a whisker of doubling the lead when another flowing move released Jota down the left flank, but despite confidently driving into the box he decided to pass the ball back across goal rather than shooting, unfortunately it went behind Costa and another opportunity went begging.

Bialkowski was brought into action again in the 68th minute when he rushed out to save at the feet of Costa, and a few seconds later he made another stunning save to deny Bonatini. As full time approached McGoldrick curled an effort straight at Ruddy, but it would have been a total injustice had Ipswich nicked a late equaliser.

Opinion: Back to business, and with two home games coming up things looking rosy again.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 15,971

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Cavaleiro (Bonatini; 71), Neves, Boly, Coady, Jota, N'Diaye, Costa (Enobakhare; 78)

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Vinagre, Gibbs-White, Miranda

Bookings: N'Diaye (84 – foul)

Referee: Simon Hooper

JOTA THE BLADE RUNNER

WOLVES 3-0 SHEFFIELD UNITED

Saturday 3rd February 2018

Following their return to form against Ipswich in the previous game, Nuno's Boys took their performance up to another level as they did a demolition job on Sheffield United in front of the Sky TV

cameras. The Blades are only one of 4 teams to have beaten Wolves in the Championship this season, but there was never going to be a repeat in this return fixture at a packed Golden Palace.

Fireworks greeted the players as they entered the pitch, and continued by Nuno's Boys straight from the kick off. The intent was there for all to see, with Costa volleying wide from Cavaleiro's cross less than 90 seconds in, and in the fifth minute they were in front. Coady hit a superb cross-field pass which turned defence into attack, and when Cavaleiro was tackled, Neves collected the loose ball and curled an unstoppable strike into the net from 25 yards. His shot was so accurate you couldn't have put the ball closer to the top corner than if the ball had been calibrated.



And so the breath-taking football continued, and if you thought Neves's goal was a stunning strike then Wolves second on the half-hour mark was almost poetry in motion. It was a wondrous team move involving Costa, Jota, Cavaleiro and Doherty who sliced through the Blades defence, Jota then played a one-two with Cavaleiro before smashing the ball home to the goalkeeper's right.

It could have been worse for the Blades three minutes later when Costa turned Basham inside out on the goal line, and pulled the ball back for Cavaleiro, but he scuffed his shot and Moore made an easy save. That was that for what was probably Wolves best 45 minutes of the season, what a turnaround from the last home game where Forest plundered a 2-0 win here at Molineux.

Wolves continued to dominate in the second-half and went close to adding a third in the 70th minute. Cavaleiro fed Bonatini in the area, but the young striker, who hasn't scored since the beginning of December, showed a lack of confidence as he dragged his shot agonisingly wide after a good turn.

Wolves eventually did add a third in the 73rd minute. Blades keeper Moore raced out of his area and clattered Jota with a Kung-Fu kick, and deservedly got his marching orders as the referee showed him a straight red card. The Substitute keeper Eastwood was then brought on from the bench, and his first job was to pick the ball out of the net, as Cavaleiro's free-kick deflected off the wall and spun in.

The game became a procession, returning striker Benik Afobe twice went close to a goal on his second debut, and the result was never in doubt as Wolves saw out an impressive victory.

Opinion: Champagne football all the way to the Premier.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 29,311

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Bennett, Coady, Boly, Douglas, Neves, N'Diaye, Costa (Bonatini 65), Cavaleiro (Afobe 78), Jota (Gibbs-White 81)

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Enobakhare, Hause

Bookings: None

Referee: Darren Bond

N'DIAYE'S THIGH MAKES OLLY CRY

WOLVES 2-1 QPR

Saturday 10th February 2018

That's three wins on the spin now as Wolves inch closer to the Premier League. The performance didn't quite reach the heights of those against Ipswich and Sheffield United, but it was always going to be difficult against a QPR team managed by someone who prides himself on stopping the other team from playing, whatever the means.

As with Sheffield United last week, QPR were one of only four teams to have beaten Nuno's Boys this season, and the fact that QPR had won on their last three visits to Molineux meant that the visitors could not be underestimated. And that's how things panned out, a superb first-half by Wolves was followed by a shocking second-half, and in the end they scraped over the line for a narrow 2-1 win.

Most of this season it's been Wolves who have been quickest out of the blocks, but in this encounter they could have been two down in the first five minutes. Firstly

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Washington fired straight at Ruddy in the second minute, then the same player was set up by a through ball from Freeman only to see his shot deflected for a corner following a last-ditch block from Captain Coady.

These days you don't give Nuno's Boys too many lives, and they make QPR pay dearly for those misses in the 12th minute. Boly played a superb ball out to Cavaleiro on the left flank, and when the Portuguese Maestro sent the ball into the area, the on-rushing N'Diaye was on hand to bundle the ball over the line with his thigh from six yards.



That goal settled the Wolves nerves and they started playing the magical football that's been on show all season, with the passing and movement on a different level to that seen at Molineux over previous years. In the 21st minute they doubled their lead and Cavaleiro was again the creator, he exchanged passes with Jota and raced clear of the QPR defence, he looked set to score himself as he closed in on goal, but unselfishly fed Costa who had the simple task of turning the ball into an unguarded net at the far post.

That looked to have set the tone, and most of the supporters were hoping they would be witness to a cricket score. Further chances came, Jota flashed a shot across the face of goal, and then had a penalty appeal turned down after being released by Ruddy, another Jota effort was blocked after superb silky work from Costa, and then Costa couldn't connect properly from Cavaleiro's cross.

Those anticipating more of the same in the second-half were in for a rude awakening, it was as if Nuno's team had used their allocation of magical football skills in the first-half, and that was it for the day, and within six minutes of the restart QPR were back in it. Smith, who had come on at half-time, made an instant impact when his shot from a corner was parried by Ruddy into the path of Washington, who then spectacularly volleyed the ball home from six yards.

Wolves had opportunities to make the game safe, but Afobe failed to hit the target from two good openings, and Doherty also squandered a golden chance from close range. Wolves nearly paid the ultimate price in the dying moments, Ruddy made a fine save from Washington and the follow-up from Eze was cleared off the line by Coady.

Opinion: Too close for comfort after a great start.

Man of the match: Cavaleiro

Team Rating: 7/10

Attendance: 30,168

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Bennett, Coady, Boly, Douglas, Neves, N'Diaye, Costa (Gibbs-White 76), Cavaleiro (Afobe 64), Jota

Unused Subs: Norris, Batth, Mir, Miranda, Vinagre

Bookings: None

Referee: Geoff Eltringham

to the edge of the area where Neves hit back a first time volley that fizzed just over the crossbar.

Preston started the second-half on the attack and just three minutes after the break went within a whisker of scoring when Browne drove into the area and fired a right-footed effort which was superbly tipped onto the post by Ruddy. However, Preston did take the lead a few moments later, Robinson sent over a corner from the left-hand side to the far post where Browne nodded in from three yards.

The game suddenly swung in Wolves favour on the hour mark, Welsh received a second yellow card for a cynical pull-back on Cavaleiro, and although his manager Alex Reid defended the thuggery of his player, the defender should consider himself lucky the referee allowed him to play on after his first-half assault on Jota that itself was worthy of a red.



ANYTHING BUT LILY WHITE

PRESTON NORTH END 1-1 WOLVES

Saturday 17th February 2018

Wolves came away from Deepdale with a 1-1 draw. It wasn't the prettiest game you'll ever see, but it kept Wolves 11 points ahead of their nearest rivals. On a bobbly pitch Preston played the spoiling game and strangled the life out of Wolves, it was similar tactics to those used at Molineux in the corresponding game in October. On that occasion Preston spent so much time tugging at Wolves players shirts it was rumoured that their change strip is now gold and black.

This was one of those traditional blood and guts encounters, a typical Championship encounter where tackles were flying in and stud marks left on the shins, usually by the Preston players. When the teams last met at Molineux, Preston's Alan Browne was sent off for two shocking tackles, and here on their own patch they had John Welsh sent off for a similar offence.

There was little in the form of free flowing football and neither team created any chances in the early stages. In fact the first effort worthy of note came in the 25th minute when Jota played a through ball into the path of Costa, but he blasted the ball high over the bar from about 8 yards out. Wolves started to dominate play and came close to opening the scoring on the half-hour mark, a corner was headed out

It took just two minutes for Wolves to make their numerical advantage count, Cavaleiro went on a sizzling run from midfield, leaving three players in his slipstream, he then threaded the ball to Costa who slipped one tackle before slotting the ball into the net from six yards.

Wolves laid siege on the Preston goal, but for all the huffing and puffing the closest Wolves came to snatching a winner came in the closing stages when Doherty fed Afobe, who was in a great position but keeper Rudd came out to block his shot. And that was pretty much that as Wolves had to settle for a point.

Opinion: Shows we can also get stuck in when the needs be.

Man of the match: Coady

Team Rating: 7/10

Attendance: 18,570 (5,626 away supporters)

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Bennett, Coady, Boly, Douglas, Neves, N'Diaye (Afobe; 62'), Costa (Saiss; 81'), Cavaleiro (Bonatini; 88'), Jota

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Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Gibbs-White, Miranda

Bookings: None

Referee: Robert Jones

NELSON HAS LAST WORD

WOLVES 2-2 NORWICH

Wednesday 23rd February 2018

Wolves threw away a two goal lead in a game they should really have won by a country mile. History stated that Nelson's last words were "Kiss me Hardy". Here, another Nelson, one Nelson Oliveira of Norwich had the last word in the 94th minute when he hit a speculative shot from long range that crept under the body of Ruddy for a last gasp equaliser.

Wolves unusually got off to a slow start, and it was Norwich who had the first real chance in the 13th minute. Reed took full advantage of a mix up in the home defence and raced clear, but he fluffed his lines and blasted the ball over the bar.

You can't afford to waste chances against this superb Wolves team, and they punished Norwich just seconds later by taking the lead. Neves found Jota who beat his man, raced into the box and fired towards the corner, Gunn made a good save but could only push the ball onto Lewis who turned the rebound into his own net.



After the goal Wolves grew in confidence and began to dominate, and Douglas's long-range effort flew just inches wide in the 21st minute, and a few moments later the pressure finally paid off as Wolves extended their lead. With pinpoint precision, Douglas sent over an inswinging corner which N'Diaye met at the near post to send a powerful header past Gunn.

A rout looked on the cards, but some slack Wolves defending allowed Norwich back into the game just two minutes later. Zimmermann made amends for his earlier error by heading in a Maddison free-kick from

the left side of the area and halve the deficit, and rock Nuno's boys back on their heels.

It was a surprisingly subdued Wolves side that started the second-half, there was none of the crisp passing and silky skills, and this was reflected with a solemn crowd reflecting the mood of the players. The low-key display allowed Norwich more of the ball as Wolves defended deeper, and putting themselves under unnecessary pressure.

Nuno introduced Morgan Gibbs-White with 20 minutes remaining, and the young Englishman suddenly added a bit of determination into the equation with some speedy breaks from midfield. He had a glorious chance to seal all three points with seven minutes left when he raced through on goal after a mistake by Zimmermann, but he lingered over his shot and eventually lost the ball.

As the end of the game approached Wolves looked far from comfortable, particularly when Maddison was running at them, the midfielder looked to have spurned the last chance of the game when he raced into the box before drawing a fine low save from Ruddy. But with the clock showing 93 minutes, Oliveira let fly from well outside the box and the bouncing ball beat Ruddy at his near post to stun Molineux into silence.

Opinion: Need to up the ante at Fulham on Saturday.

Man of the match: N'Diaye

Team Rating: 5/10

Attendance: 29,100

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Bennett, Coady, Boly, Douglas, N'Diaye (Gibbs-White 69), Neves, Costa (Saiss 46), Cavaleiro (Afobe 59), Jota

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Miranda, Bonatini

Bookings: Neves (36), N'Diaye (52), Jota (75)

Referee: James Linington



also came from behind to beat Sheffield Wednesday and get within ten points of Nuno's boys. Should we be worried? I don't think so, we were always going to have a glitch during the run in and let's get it out the way now rather than at the death.

After the fabulous boat trip on the Thames which was dominated by Wolves supporters, and a dozen or so WWLSC members, the day ended on a bit of a downer as Fulham defeated Nuno's Boys by a 2-0 scoreline. Wolves without the suspended Ruben Neves created very little in a disappointing performance in this 5:30pm evening kick-off for Sky.

Fulham's form has been even better than Wolves' of late and it soon showed. The confident hosts took the game to Wolves, making life uncomfortable for them from the off with a high tempo, intense pressing and plenty of tough tackles, and they created the game's first chance when Ayite dragged a shot wide from 12 yards.

Chances were at a premium, particularly with Wolves missing the composure of suspended Neves, but Nuno's Boys looked to have weathered the early storm and created a few half chances with an N'Diaye piledriver which whistled just over, and a decent effort from Cavaleiro which was saved by Bettinelli.

But seven minutes before the break, Fulham took the lead following some sloppy defending from Wolves. A poor clearance by Bennett saw Fulham work the ball to Mitrovic who span Coady and fired low, Ruddy spilled the ball and it went straight to Sessegnon who slotted the ball into the unguarded net.

Wolves started the second-half as they finished the first, looking jaded and uninterested, and after a period of sustained pressure Fulham doubled their lead with 20 minutes to go. Mitrovic just about put the game beyond Wolves reach when he used his physicality to hold off Coady and fire past Ruddy at the near post from just outside the area.

WINTER BRAKE FINALLY ARRIVES

FULHAM 2-0 WOLVES

Saturday 24th February 2018

That's just two points from the last nine, and with Cardiff beating Bristol City on the Sunday with a late winner Colin's team closed the gap between his Welsh Cloggers and Wolves to six points. Villa

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With five minutes left the chance that Wolves were looking for duly arrived. Coady released Afobe whose shot was blocked, it came back to him and he teed up Jota who ballooned his shot over the bar with the goal at his mercy. That summed up Wolves' day and there was to be no late comeback.

Opinion: Poor show from start to finish.

Man of the match: Cavaleiro

Team Rating: 4/10

Attendance: 23,510

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Bennett, Coady, Boly, Douglas, Saiss (Afobe 77), N'Diaye (Gibbs-White 63), Cavaleiro, Costa (Jota 63), Bonatini

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Miranda, Hause

Bookings: Douglas (68), Boly (75)

Referee: Peter Banks

yards with only the keeper to beat.

However, the mounting pressure finally paid off in the 28th minute as Wolves went in front, and it was created by the precision of Barry Douglas's left foot. The trusty Mr Assist sent over a right wing corner, and Saiss was on the end of it as he put his head on the ball and directed it into the bottom right-hand corner, giving the young Peacock-Farrell in the Leeds goal no chance

An electrifying break started by Douglas in his own area, followed by some superb interplay ended with Bonatini spurning yet another golden opportunity, but such things do not affect the mentality of this new Wolves team under their human playmaster Nuno. The inevitable second goal came right on the stroke of half-time. Another perfect corner by Douglas was crashed onto the bar by the head of Bath, before Boly rose highest to nod home the rebound.

Coady ©, Jota (Costa; 74), N'Diaye, Bonatini (Afobe; 70)

Unused Subs: Norris, Bennett, Miranda, Hause

Bookings: None

Referee: Tim Robinson

VILLA'ARGH !

ASTON VILLA 4-1 WOLVES

Saturday 10th March 2018

It seems to be one step forward and two steps back at the moment for Wolves. After undoubtedly going through their worst run of results of the season they seemed to be back to their very best on Wednesday when beating Leeds on their own patch. After taking just two points from a possible nine, their lead over the second place team was cut from 13 to just 6 points. However, the superb display against Leeds seemed to indicate a return to form.

The old adage "It was a game of two halves" couldn't have been more apt at Villa Park. This was a game where Wolves got off to the worst possible start, played their way back into the game to be on the front foot by half-time, only to capitulate in the second-half as their defence committed suicide when playing like rabbits in headlights.



Wolves continued to push forward after the break and that man Douglas was close to adding a third when his shot was deflected wide, and then Bonatini had a header cleared off the line following a corner from, yes you guessed it, that man Douglas. Jota was even closer to extending the lead on the hour mark, but his shot crashed off the underside of the bar with the keeper rooted to the spot.

Wolves wrapped up the game in the 73rd minute, substitute Afobe sealed the victory with his first goal since returning to the club. Jota sent the ball over the top for the advancing striker, and Afobe got in behind the Leeds defence before dinking it over the onrushing Peacock-Farrell from the edge of the area, the perfect ending to a sublime attacking performance by Nuno's Boys.

Opinion: Superb display in front of the Sky cameras.

Man of the match: Douglas

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 26,434

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bath, Cavaleiro (Gibbs-White; 85'), Saiss, Boly,

It couldn't have got off to a worse start for Wolves, as they went behind in just the 8th minute to one of the scrappiest goals conceded this season. Adomah was the striker who turned the ball in on the goal line as Wolves made a total mess of clearing a Snodgrass corner. Unfortunately it was poor old Danny Bath whose wild swing at the ball led to the goal, and there will be nobody more disappointed than Bath who has waited patiently in the wings for his chance for a return to the first team.



Approaching this game Wolves had led the Championship for a total of 113 days, and they proved why they were top dogs as they played their way back into the game, and in the 20th minute parity was restored. Doherty made one of his trademark runs

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down the right flank, and in one movement he produced a superb nutmeg on Taylor and sent a peach of a low cross into the danger area for the onrushing Jota, Chester couldn't divert the ball away from the strikers feet and he squeezed the equaliser past keeper Johnstone for the equaliser.

Come half-time and Wolves were in control, and like all the other supporters I eagerly awaited the second-half. Unfortunately Wolves left their football boots back in the changing rooms as Villa went on the rampage. More poor defending from a fragile Wolves defence led to Villa's second goal in the 57th minute. Defending set pieces has been a problem of late for Nuno's boys, and the problem reared its ugly head again when a Snodgrass free-kick from the left was delivered down the channel behind the defenders, and the unmarked Chester stuck out a leg to guide it past Ruddy to make it 2-1.

Five minutes later and Villa were in total control, Grealish broke down the left and played in Adomah, and when the striker sent the ball to the near post Grabban was on hand to flick the ball past Ruddy. Wolves were denied a route back into the game following an appalling decision by referee David Coote, yes the same one who cheated us out of a win in the same fixture last year. A Neves free-kick on the left side of the Villa area was pushed away deliberately by the hand of Snodgrass, however the referee waved play on, and with it went Wolves chance of a fightback.

A miserable night was completed when Villa added a fourth goal with five minutes to go, Bjarnason picked up the ball in midfield and went past the Wolves midfield as if they were tailor's dummies, he beat Doherty, Saiss and Coady before toe poking a low shot past Ruddy from the edge of the box to complete the rout.

Opinion: Need to beat Reading and Burton in next two home games to get back on track.

Man of the match: Doherty

Team Rating: 2/10

Attendance: 37,836

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Batt (Saiss 68'), Cavaleiro (Afobe 68'), Neves, Boly, Coady, Jota (Costa 76'), N'Diaye, Bonatini

Unused Subs: Norris, Bennett, Gibbs-White, Miranda

Bookings: Batt (37 – Foul), Jota (39 – Foul), N'Diaye (55 – Foul), Coady (72 – Foul), Costa (80 – Foul)

Referee: David Coote

JUST WHAT THE DOC ORDERED

WOLVES 3-0 READING

Tuesday 13th March 2018

Following the Villa Park Horror Show Wolves desperately needed to get back to winning ways. A boost of confidence and the need to re-establish their dominance of the top spot was their number one priority after a return of just five points from the last five games. A return to Molineux following three away games against a Reading team with one victory in their previous 17 league games provided the ideal opponents as Wolves responded by completely outplaying their opponents and strolling to a 3-0 victory.

Wolves dictated the pace from the off and set about putting the Villa nightmare behind them. Although the tempo was lively and the passing was crisp, they failed to test Jaakhole in the Reading goal in the first quarter of an hour. However, the crowd came to life a few minutes later when a Costa piledriver from 25 yards was parried by the keeper into Jota's path, but the striker was unable to sort his feet out for a simple tap-in.

Midway through the half Wolves supporters held their breath after Jota stayed down following an innocuous tackle, he was then carried off by the medical staff and replaced by Cavaleiro. Hopefully the injury is not as bad as it looks and the maestro will be back for the Burton game. Despite the loss of Jota Wolves continued to push forward, and again went close when a corner by Cavaleiro was met by an Afobe header that Jaakhole parried away.

In the 41st minute all the apprehension was lifted as the pressure finally took its toll and Wolves went in front. Costa sent over an inch perfect pass to the back post from the right wing, and when Douglas headed the ball back across to the centre of the area it was powerfully headed home by the unmarked Doherty.

Wolves had a glorious chance to extend their lead just three minutes after the break. Doherty sent over an inch perfect pass which found Afobe unmarked ten yards out, but the on-loan striker seemed to snatch at it and the ball went wide of the post. Fortunately for Afobe he soon got the chance to make amends, and this time he made no mistake, a superb pass by Neves



released Costa on the right, and after the winger had turned Blackett inside out he passed to Afobe who made no mistake from ten yards.

Wolves really turned on the style and the impressive Doherty put the game to bed with 18 minutes left. A lightning break from their own half ended with Cavaleiro feeding the Irish defender on the edge of the box, and he confidently swept the ball into the bottom left-hand corner of the net to seal a 3-0 victory. Wolves again showed their ability to bounce back after defeat, and confirmed that the promotion chase is well and truly back on.

Opinion: Back to winning ways against a team struggling at the wrong end of the table.

Man of the match: Doherty

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 27,341

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Neves, Boly, Coady, Costa, Jota (Cavaleiro 25), Afobe (Bonatini 72), Saiss (N'Diaye 78)

Unused Subs: Norris, Batt, Gibbs-White, Miranda

Bookings: Bennett (85 – foul)

Referee: Robert Jones

ICEBREAKER NEVES CUTS THROUGH BURTON

WOLVES 3-1 BURTON ALBION

Saturday 17th March 2018

With temperatures more akin to those in the Antarctic, Wolves produced yet another stunning performance to completely outplay lowly Burton. As the promotion rivals still wait for our foreign entourage to get out the snoods and woolly gloves, the likes of Ruben Neves continue to wear short sleeve shirts and produce the magical skills that have perplexed opponents all season.

The gulf in class showed from the off with Wolves moving the ball around as if it was somehow programmed to find a gold shirt, and they opened the scoring in the 15th

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minute. The most improved player of the season Conor Coady split the Burton defence with a superb long ball and put it on a sixpence for Costa, the little wizard chested it down before slotting it in the corner.



Burton thought they should have had a penalty in a rare foray into Wolves territory, but it was brief respite as Costa shot just over as the assault on the Burton defence resumed. Bywater then saved Cavaleiro's shot three minutes later, before Saiss's shot from outside the area went inches wide with the keeper motionless.

The siege continued and the relentless pressure finally paid off four minutes before the break as Wolves increased their lead, and it was Neves who was the architect. A player described by E&S match reporter Tim Spiers as having "Better vision than the Hubble Telescope" threaded an inch perfect pass through to Afobe, and the on-loan striker smashed it past Bywater into the roof of the net.

Against the run of play, and with their first shot on target Burton pulled a goal back right on the stroke of half-time. Byer pounced when a corner was only half cleared, he shot through a crowd of players from the outside the area, and it seemed to go through the body of the unsighted Ruddy and into the net.

Wolves ended any hopes of a Burton comeback in the 56th minute. Costa released Cavaleiro on the right of the area, and though he slipped he was still able to work the ball inside to the unmarked Afobe, who as cool as a cucumber, side footed it into the net from ten yards.

There was no more goals to report as Wolves coasted to victory, but one magical moment to mention was a sublime Neves pass that showed why he is already being touted by the top premier clubs. He threaded a perfectly weighted ball from midfield that found Costa eight yards from goal, but Bywater managed to smother his shot.

So Wolves go six points clear at the top due to Cardiff not playing, and it got even better as Villa lost away at Bolton, and now lie 13 points below Wolves in the race to automatic promotion. That means just four wins from the last eight games will see Nuno's team back where we belong... in the Promised Land.

Opinion: Rúben Diogo da Silva Neves.... What a player!!!

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 29,977

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Cavaleiro (Gibbs-White 77), Neves (N'Diaye 90), Boly, Coady, Costa, Afobe (Bonatini 81), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, Batt, Mir, Miranda

Bookings: None

Referee: Geoff Eltringham

BATTLE AT THE RIVERSIDE

MIDDLESBROUGH 1-2 WOLVES

Friday 30th March 2018



Wolves edged closer to the Premiership with a victory in what can only be described as a roller coaster of a match. In a nutshell the hosts edged the play in the early stages, Wolves then scored two quick-fire goals and were in total control by half-time. Just after the break Wolves had Neves sent off, and he was then followed down the tunnel by Doherty with 20 minutes to go. After that it was backs to the wall and defend for your lives as Nuno's heroes hung on to take all three points.

Wolves had not won away at Middlesbrough since 1951 when the legendary Stan Cullis was the manager, that's a total of 67 years, however the voodoo was finally broken leaving Wolves needing three more victories from the last seven games to clinch promotion back to where we belong, in the Premier League!!!

It was a nervy start by Wolves, with the defence again looking suspect from set pieces. Saying that Ruddy never had a shot to save, although it was nail biting time every time Boro' had a corner. The defence were also on red alert every time pacy winger Adama Traore went into overdrive, he caused havoc down the right-hand side with his lightning pace, but at the end of the day his final ball didn't match up to what went before it.

Gradually Wolves started to take control, and inevitably the usual bully boy tactics came into play with the Boro' boot boys leaving their studs down the shins of the Wolves playmakers with a series of crude tackles. As usual another poor referee failed to punish the main offenders, Cavaleiro was on the end of a leg breaker from Leadbitter, and then Douglas was kicked off the ball by Hotton, neither offence deemed worthy of a card from referee Stuart Attwell. Wolves rose above the intimidating tactics and started to take control, and Neves forced Randolph into a fine save when he let fly from 25 yards.

It was that man Neves who was instrumental in Wolves taking the lead in the 32nd minute. The midfield playmaker gathered the ball from Boly and hit a 50 yard diagonal cross to Doherty that looked like it had been laser guided. The Irishman played inside to Costa who showed quick feet before firing a shot that Randolph palmed out, Cavaleiro wrestled the ball to Douglas who chipped to Costa at the back post, and the little magician volleyed the ball into the net.

It was that man Neves again a few minutes later when he let go with a thunderbolt that Randolph somehow managed to tip over the bar. From the resulting corner Wolves extended their lead, Douglas whipped a precision ball over from the right and straight onto Boly's head, and although Randolph made another good stop, the loose ball looped up to Cavaleiro who had the simple task of nodding the ball into the net at the far post.

With the nerves settled Wolves started to knock the ball about with confidence, and Boro' couldn't get anywhere near the ball in midfield where Neves was running the show. By half-time Wolves were in total control and nobody could imagine what was about to unfold in the second-half.

Over the years Wolves have been victims to some atrocious referring performances.

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Remember the name Stuart Attwell, he was the man in black in charge of this game, and another of the so called top referees, who like old friend Uriah Rennie was so full of self-importance he didn't even think his dressing room mirror was privileged to show his reflection back to him.

Shortly after half-time Attwell was responsible for the change in momentum to the game when he waved play-on after Costa was clearly clipped from behind by George Friend when he was through on goal. As the Wolves players held their heads in disbelief the arrogant Attwell quickly became the centre of attention as he booked the fuming Neves and Doherty straight afterwards for both taking swipes at Traore. Just a minute later, Neves was shown a second yellow for hacking down Friend outside Wolves' penalty area.

With 20 minutes left Wolves went from ten men down to nine as Doherty was given his marching orders for allegedly elbowing Friend in the side of the head. Much like Neves' first booking, it appeared slightly soft. With a two-player advantage, Middlesbrough laid siege on the Wolves goal. However with Boly and Coady at the heart of the defence you have two players you would want in the trenches with you, and they combined valiantly to limit the attempts Boro' had on goal.

Bamford clawed a goal back for Boro' in the third minute of stoppage time but any hopes of scrambling an undeserved draw and a point evaporated in the final seconds when Downing failed to hit the target from twelve yards with John Ruddy out of goal. That was Boro's last chance, and when the final whistle sounded Nuno charged onto the pitch to celebrate a massive win that moved Wolves six points clear of Cardiff at the top of the Championship



Opinion: Still can't be beaten, even when it's twelve against nine.

Man of the match: Boly
Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 27,658

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Cavaleiro (N'Diaye 56'), Neves, Bony, Coady, Costa (Gibbs-White 83'), Afobe (Bonatini 63'), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Vinagre, Hause

Bookings: Ruddy (41 - Time Wasting), Neves (55 – Foul), Doherty (55 – Foul), Saiss (65 – Foul), Bennett (73 – Foul)

Sending's Off:

Neves (56 – second bookable offence), Doherty (71 – second bookable offence)

Referee: Stuart Attwell

LATE NIGHT OSKAR AWARDS

WOLVES 2-2 HULL CITY

Tuesday 3rd April 2018

Wolves three game unbeaten run came to a stuttering end against lowly Hull at Molineux. The gap between themselves and second placed Cardiff is now just six points with Warnock's team having a game in hand. However after being 2-1 down Wolves fought back to take a point with a goal from rookie defender Oskar Buur Rasmussen, who scored the equaliser with just seven minutes left.

Early on there were no signs of fatigue from Wolves following the monumental effort required to overcome Middlesbrough on Good Friday, in a game that saw Wolves reduced to nine men in the second-half. They got off to a flying start, and in only the second minute they were denied a goal when Douglas whipped over a free-kick from the left and Hull goalkeeper Allan McGregor made a stunning save from a powerful Saiss header.

However, Hull showed they didn't intend to be whipping boys, and Meylor wasted a good chance when he volleyed his shot well over the bar from ten yards. Ten minutes later Wolves punished that mistake when they scored the opener. Jota was tripped in the area by Hector and the Portuguese striker got up, dusted himself down, and then sent the keeper the wrong way from the penalty spot for his 15th goal of the season.

Jota could have had a second in the 24th minute when he raced clear following a superb defence splitting pass by Saiss, but his first touch was poor and McGregor smothered his shot, the keeper then saved the follow-up from Costa with his legs. It

was Costa who was instrumental in Hull grabbing an equaliser eight minutes before the break, his shocking back pass put Miranda in all kinds of trouble and the defender carelessly pulled down Meylor, who then like Jota earlier sent Ruddy the wrong way from the penalty spot.

Miranda payed the price for giving away the penalty when Nuno subbed him at half-time, with Bennett moving to centre half and Cavaleiro to right back. However, it didn't make much difference, Hull's confidence was growing by the minute, and Wolves struggled to get back the momentum and suddenly found themselves unable to string two passes together.

With the defence struggling after the re-shuffle Nuno again changed the format with Cavaleiro moving back up front and the 20-year-old Danish right-back Rasmussen replacing the tiring Jota. Nuno's change of tactics seemed to have done the trick with Wolves again raising the tempo, but Hull stunned Molineux yet again with 12 minutes to go when a low cross by Grosicki into the six yard area was put into his own net by Bennett.



For all intents and purposes it looked curtains for Wolves, but this team under Nuno are made of stronger stuff these days, and with just seven minutes to go Nuno's tactical substitution paid dividends with an equaliser from the head of young Rasmussen. Mr Assist Barry Douglas broke down the left and sent over a pinpoint cross that the young Dane directed into the net from ten yards. Rasmussen had only been on the field for 13 minutes and was only on the bench because of Matt Doherty's one-match suspension, pure poetry.

Wolves went for the jugular and in the dying seconds Boly unleashed a 30-yard thunderbolt that would have lifted the roof off had McGregor not tipped it wide, but it wasn't to be and Wolves now travel to Cardiff in three days' time for a crucial game that could put one foot on the promotion ladder.

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Opinion: Now just three more wins from six games needed to return to the Promised Land.

Man of the match: Douglas

Team Rating: 5/10

Attendance: 29,718

Team: Ruddy, Douglas, N'Diaye (Gibbs-White 77), Bennett, Cavaleiro, Boly, Coady, Costa, Jota (Buur 70), Miranda (Afobe 46), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, Batth, Hause, Bonatini

Bookings: None

Referee: Darren England

RUDDY GOOD SHOW OLD CHAP

CARDIFF 0-1 WOLVES

Friday 6th April 2018



It was the biggest game of the season for both teams, Wolves in top spot since the end of October, and Cardiff in second on an unbeaten 13 game run since New Year's Day. This was a game that will be remembered for many a year by all those lucky enough to get a ticket. A world class goal from a free-kick defying the importance of the occasion, Wolves surviving two stoppage time penalties and our old mate Colin getting rather upset at the final whistle when Nuno ran onto the pitch to celebrate with the players and fans.

Wolves' biggest ever away win was a 9-1 victory at Cardiff in 1955. On that day Johnny Hancocks and Roy Swinbourne both scored hat-tricks. During this pulsating game 63 years on, Wolves won by a single goal, scored by one of the best players to wear the old gold shirt in many a year, the new Portuguese wonder kid Ruben Neves.

It was always going to be a tight affair due to the prize at stake, and in a goalless first-half Bamba headed wide for Cardiff from ten yards early on, that was followed by a

Neves's thirty yarder that was tipped wide by Etheridge. Wolves went close again when Jota forced the Cardiff keeper into another good save before Ruddy tipped Wildschut's free kick wide at the other end.

Wolves began to assert themselves more after the break, and Bonatini was within a whisker of opening the scoring when he hit the post from a very tight angle after rounding the keeper, however in the 67th minute the deadlock was finally broken. Diogo Jota was fouled just outside the area, and the midfield genius Neves stepped up and curled an absolute stunning free-kick into the top corner of the net.

In stoppage time the game reached an astonishing climax, in the third minute of time added on referee Mike Dean awarded a penalty after Coady bundled over Pilkington in the box. Madine stepped up and smashed the ball to Ruddy's left from the spot, but the keeper made an absolute brilliant save and pushed the ball around the post.



Cardiff came again and Cavaleiro lunged in recklessly at Gunnarsson on the edge of the area, and unbelievably Dean pointed to the spot again to give Cardiff a second chance to equalise. This time it was Hoilett who took over the spot kick duties, but the result was the same as the striker smashed the ball against the upright. The final whistle blew and the whole squad, staff and supporters celebrated, they knew this was the night they had all but clinched promotion.

Opinion: Unbelievable drama, never mind fingernails I've got no finger tips left.

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 29,317

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Neves, Boly, Coady ©, Jota (Cavaleiro 66), Afobe (N'Diaye 77), Saiss, Bonatini (Costa 58)

Unused Subs: Norris, Batth, Gibbs-White, Hause

Bookings: Saiss (74 – foul), Costa (89 – foul), Neves (90 – foul)

Referee: Mike Dean

NEVES IN ANOTHER WORLDY

WOLVES 2-0 DERBY COUNTY

Wednesday 11th April 2018

Anybody who watched this game will only remember it for one reason, not because it moved Wolves to within one win of gaining promotion to the Premier League, but for witnessing probably the best goal they will ever see at Molineux, or come to think about it the best goal they will ever see anywhere, by a player wearing the old gold shirt. That player was the Portuguese Wonderkid Rúben Diogo da Silva Neves.

After the monumental full blooded Friday night win at Cardiff, this game in comparison was a stroll in the park. Wolves looked at ease and confident from minute one, and it took them just six minutes to get their noses in front. Boly picked up the ball just inside the Derby half and sent an inch perfect pass in the direction of Jota who evaded the Derby offside trap. In one movement he trapped the ball on his thigh, swivelled, and as the ball bounced coolly lobbed it past Carson.

Wolves continued to dominate and let the ball do the work as Derby chased shadows. It was so one sided that unless you had looked at the table you would never have known that Derby were sitting in 5th place contesting a play-off place. At half-time Nuno would have been disappointed that the score was only 1-0, but little did he know what he was about to witness early in the second-half.



It was goal number six of the season for Neves, all from outside the area. We all thought that the first five, themselves contenders for goal of the season were a bit special, but Neves took his goal scoring exploits to a different level with an absolute wonder goal in the 51st minute. Neves picked up the ball in what appeared to be in a harmless position, he flicked the ball up and then sent an unstoppable 35-yard volley into the top corner of the net, it was a magical goal from a very special player.

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Even though Wolves continued to dominate and go for the jugular the Neves goal killed the game off, it was a bit like a snooker player scoring a 147 at the Crucible, or a dart player hitting a 9 dart finish off a 501 start in the World Darts Championship. It was as they say a hard act to follow, and Wolves strolled to the win that puts them within touching distance of promotion.

Opinion: Dare we dream of going up against the Brummies?

Man of the match: Neves

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 28,503

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Cavaleiro (Gibbs-White 82), Neves, Boly, Coady ©, Jota (Bonatini 73), Afobe (Costa 66), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, N'Diaye, Bath, Hause

Bookings: Bennett (61 – foul)

Referee: Tim Robinson

BLUE NOSES RUBBED IN IT

WOLVES 2-0 BIRMINGHAM

Sunday 15th April 2018



In the build up to this game Wolves supporters hoped promotion would be clinched against one of our arch enemies from down the road. Unfortunately for all those praying for that scenario it was not to be, the night before the game Brentford grabbed an injury time equaliser against Fulham which meant Wolves had already been promoted.

With promotion already guaranteed this really was a stroll in the park for Nuno's Boys. Wolves showed exactly why they are going to be rubbing shoulders with the big boys next season and Birmingham might be strutting their stuff in League 1. There was an absolute gulf between the two teams with Wolves in total control from start to finish.

The atmosphere in the ground before kick-off was electric and celebrations were well under way before a ball was even kicked. It was Blues who in fact had the first real effort on goal, Maxime Colin found himself through on goal, but Ruddy made a fine double save to deny the Frenchman. That was about it as far as Blues were concerned as Wolves took control.

Wolves suddenly stepped up a gear and in the 21st minute the party really started, Saiss picked out the overlapping Doherty on the right, and he delivered a peach of a ball across the six yard box where Diogo Jota was waiting to slide the ball home for the opening goal. That goal signalled time for Blues to stick the boot in, with Neves, Jota and Costa all on the end of some crude tackling.



Wolves played to the crowd and turned on the style as the fans cheered pass after pass with a series of "Ole's" to rub the Blues noses in it. The game was handed to Wolves on a plate in the 52nd minute, not as they needed any help, as Harlee Dean was sent off for fetching down Costa when he was through on goal, and with the Portuguese maestro being the last man Dean was on his way for an early bath.

The knees up continued and the icing was put well and truly on the cake with three minutes remaining, N'Diaye's through ball sent Afobe racing through on goal, and as Stockdale raced out to narrow the angle the on-loan striker produced a delicate chip over the keeper to finish off proceedings. Wolves now just need a draw at Bolton next Saturday to be crowned champions.

The majority of the Blues supporters left the game before the final whistle, those who did stay quickly slithered off at the end to avoid watching Nuno and his team, and every Wolves fan inside Molineux celebrate our return to the Premiership. Blues can only dream of such heights, in fact there's an outside chance we could have helped relegate them to League 1, we can only cross our fingers and hope so.

Opinion: Wait for an even bigger party next week at Bolton.

Man of the match: Costa

Team Rating: 8/10

Attendance: 29,536

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Bennett, Cavaleiro (Bonatini 16), Neves (N'Diaye 70), Boly, Coady, Jota (Afobe 74), Costa, Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, Bath, Gibbs-White, Hause

Bookings: None

Referee: Andy Davies

CAMPEÕES

BOLTON 0-4 WOLVES

Saturday 21st April 2018

With promotion already in the bag, Nuno's Boys needed just one more point to claim the Championship title, and with the best part of 5,000 supporters travelling to Bolton, expectations were high. Those who made the journey were treated to a superb display of free flowing football that showed why Wolves will be rubbing shoulders with the best of the best in the Premiership next season.

It was a magical display as Wolves demolished the home team in ruthless fashion, this gifted set of players showed why they had been sitting in top spot since the end of October, and there was never a chance that Bolton was going to spoil the party as Wolves gave their hosts a footballing lesson.

Earlier on in the season Wolves thrashed Bolton 5-1 at Molineux, and right from the start of this game set their sights on a repeat performance, they attacked with flair, pace and breath-taking ball skills, and the stall was set when Costa fired just wide inside the first minute. Bolton to be fair did threaten briefly when Morais drilled a shot just over the crossbar, but that was about it.

The demolition job started in the 16th minute as Jota fed Afobe from just inside the Bolton half, his shot from the edge of the area was parried away by Alnwick, but Douglas was in like a flash to drive home the rebound, and start the party. Up stepped Neves, who then started pulling the strings in midfield like Sir Henry Wood conducting his orchestra at the Last Night of the Proms.

It was champagne football all the way, Wolves fans lapped up every minute of the

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footballing exhibition as Bolton's defence led a charmed life, and right on cue Wolves extended their lead on the stroke of half-time. Coady showed the vision of Lionel Messi to pick out Afobe, who deftly rounded Alnwick before firing home from an angle.

There was no let-up after the break, Wolves attacking the end populated by their mass support, went for the jugular, and just seven minutes after the restart there was another touch of pure class as Nuno's Boys made it 3-0. The back to his brilliant best Costa made a surging run diagonally across midfield, he then played a perfectly weighted pass to Jota who executed a sublime dink over Alnwick into the net.



The party was now well and truly underway, the football was majestic and it became a matter of how many Wolves would score. Goal number four came in the 66th minute, Costa produced another superb pass to setup Afobe who was pulled down by Karl Henry. Coady, the only Wolves player on the pitch who hadn't scored this season was summoned to take the penalty, to the delight of every Wolves supporter the popular centre-back placed the ball on the spot and thumped it into the bottom right-hand corner.

Wolves continued to go for goals and Saiss curled one just over the bar before then sending over a cross that just eluded the sliding Gibbs-White. Wolves played out the last ten minutes as if it were a training game, and at the final whistle the players celebrated in front of the travelling army, who in turn saluted their magnificent team, the best in the Championship by a country mile.

Opinion: It doesn't get much better than this, what a glorious season.

Man of the match: Costa

Team Rating: 9/10

Attendance: 19,092

Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Batth ©, Neves, Boly, Coady, Costa, Jota (Gibbs-White 68'), Afobe (Bonatini 68'), Saiss (N'Diaye 81')

Unused Subs: Norris, Bennett, Miranda, Hause

Bookings: Batth (46 – foul)

Referee: Keith Stroud

NO SILVA SERVICE FOR THE PARTY TABLE

WOLVES 0-0 SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Saturday 28th April 2018



This last home game wasn't about the goalless scoreline but the celebrations prior to and after the match. Wolves supporters partied in style as Nuno and his team lifted the Championship trophy at the end of the game. The game itself was a bit of an anti-climax following the outstanding performance at Bolton the week before, but nobody really cared, there was nothing going to stop the Wolves fans from paying tribute to one of the best teams seen at Molineux for years.

Wolves were given a guard of honour by the Sheffield Wednesday players as they made their way onto the pitch before the game, unfortunately they put that guard in front of their goal for the next 90 minutes as they defended as if their lives depended on it. And when that guard was broken a 22 year old goalkeeper by the name of Cameron Dawson, who was making only the fourth Championship appearance of his career, stood up to everything that Wolves threw at him.

Wolves created a host of chances, the first coming in the 8th minute when Jota broke through the Owls defence, the danger was averted by a timely tackle from Pudil that warded off Costa who was waiting to pounce. It was Jota again on the 15 minute mark, this time he was denied by a block from Lees, as the Owls continued to defend in numbers.

Five minutes later Saiss let fly from the edge of the area, but his shot flew just



wide of the upright. The best chance of the half fell to Afobe in the 33rd minute, Pelupessy's backpass was intercepted by the on-loan striker who then went round Dawson, but the keeper forced him wide and he dragged his shot across the face of goal from a tight angle.

Dawson then denied the lively Jota again before making another fine save three minutes before the interval. Douglas floated over a right-wing corner and Saiss headed it towards goal from close range, but the young keeper somehow managed to parry the ball around the post. Despite their total domination Wolves went into the half-time break without making the breakthrough.

Dawson remained in the thick of the action at the start of the second half when he again blocked a shot from Jota after he was picked out by Costa, and within a minute Jota again went close, firing just wide as a series of chances ended when Batth jumped highest to nod a cross just past the post.

Jota then turned provider when he slipped in Costa, but Thorniley was on hand with a last ditch tackle. Enobakhare came on for Costa with 16 minutes left and had the perfect chance score the goal the crowd were craving for, he was played in by a superb ball from the Bonatini, but the youngster fluffed his lines and dragged a shot horribly wide from ten yards.

That was it, the game petered out and the referee blew the whistle to start the knees-up. Wolves now cannot beat the club record of 104 points for a season, however a draw in their final game of the campaign at relegated Sunderland will take them to the magic 100 points mark.

Opinion: Let's enjoy, being CHAMPIONS doesn't happen very often, so embrace the moment.

Man of the match: Jota

Team Rating: 5/10

Attendance: 29,794

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Team: Ruddy, Doherty, Douglas, Batt @, Neves, Boly, Coady, Jota (Gibbs-White 87), Costa (Enobakhare 74), Afobe (Bonatini 55), Saiss

Unused Subs: Norris, N'Diaye, Miranda, Hause

Bookings: Saiss (83 – foul)

Referee: Simon Hooper



team already relegated to League 1. However, it didn't really matter unless you were one of the 2,500 or so supporters who were supposedly privileged to get a match ticket.

You could tell from the first minute it was going to be one of those days, Wolves seem to be playing in slow motion, they were lethargic, the passing was poor and every player seemed to be having an off day. The stats showed that Sunderland had 19 shots to Wolves 7, and only 1 of those 7 shots was on target.

The rout started in the 19th minute, and it was Will Norris making his first appearance of the season who was at fault for the goal. McNair crossed from the right to Molyneux, and his weak shot was spilled by Norris into the path of Ejaria who rolled home the rebound.

Right on the stroke of half-time it was 2-0, and it was Norris who was found wanting again when he fled off his line chasing a bouncing through ball like a Kamikaze pilot, but he was nowhere near the ball and Fletcher got his boot in ahead of Batt and lobbed the ball into the empty net.

Wolves were slightly better after the break, and Steele had to push Jota's shot around the post after good work from Douglas. However, Sunderland soon regained control and extended their lead in the 66th minute, McNair waltzed past three defenders as if they were wax dummies and smashed his short past Norris to make it 3-0, and game over.

Opinion: Never mind, let's all go down to The Party in the Park for another knees up.

Man of the match: Jota

Team Rating: 1/10

Attendance: 28,452

Team: Norris (Burgoyne 71), Doherty, Douglas, Neves, Batt @, Coady, Costa (Bonatini 56), Jota, Gibbs-White (Enobakhare 56), Miranda, Saiss

Unused Subs: N'Diaye, Afobe, Vinagre, Hause

Bookings: None

Referee: Jeremy Simpson

Sky Bet Championship Table 2017-2018										
Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	
1	Wolves	46	30	9	7	82	39	43	99	
2	Cardiff City	46	27	9	10	69	39	30	90	
3	Fulham	46	25	13	8	79	46	33	88	
4	Aston Villa	46	24	11	11	72	42	30	83	
5	Middlesbrough	46	22	10	14	67	45	22	76	
6	Derby County	46	20	15	11	70	48	22	75	
7	Preston North End	46	19	16	11	57	46	11	73	
8	Millwall	46	19	15	12	56	45	11	72	
9	Brentford	46	18	15	13	62	52	10	69	
10	Sheffield United	46	20	9	17	62	55	7	69	
11	Bristol City	46	17	16	13	67	58	9	67	
12	Ipswich Town	46	17	9	20	57	60	-3	60	
13	Leeds United	46	17	9	20	59	64	-5	60	
14	Norwich City	46	15	15	16	49	60	-11	60	
15	Sheffield Wednesday	46	14	15	17	59	60	-1	57	
16	Queens Park Rangers	46	15	11	20	58	70	-12	56	
17	Nottingham Forest	46	15	8	23	51	65	-14	53	
18	Hull City	46	11	16	19	70	70	0	49	
19	Birmingham City	46	13	7	26	38	68	-30	46	
20	Reading	46	10	14	22	48	70	-22	44	
21	Bolton Wanderers	46	10	13	23	39	74	-35	43	
22	Barnsley	46	9	14	23	48	72	-24	41	
23	Burton Albion	46	10	11	25	38	81	-43	41	
24	Sunderland	46	7	16	23	52	80	-28	37	

TRAVEL DETAILS



Travel Arrangements for August 2018 to November 2018:-

Home Matches

Meeting place: Station concourse outside main ticket office, at least 20 minutes before train departure.

Fare : To be advised.

Sun 16/9/18 v Burnley (k/o 1:30pm)	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 08:50 Arrive Wolverhampton 11:11 - Depart Wolverhampton 16:45 Arrive Euston 18:36
Sat 29/9/18 v Southampton	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 09:43 Arrive Wolverhampton 11:37 - Depart Wolverhampton 18:45 Arrive Euston 20:53
Sat 20/10/18 v Watford	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 09:43 Arrive Wolverhampton 11:37 - Depart Wolverhampton 18:45 Arrive Euston 20:53
Sun 4/11/18 v Spurs (k/o 1:30pm) <i>(Match may revert back to Saturday 19:45 kick off)</i>	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 08:50 Arrive Wolverhampton 11:11 - Depart Wolverhampton 16:45 Arrive Euston 18:36
Sun 25/11/18 v Huddersfield (k/o 4:00pm)	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 10:50 Arrive Wolverhampton 13:10 - Depart Wolverhampton 19:45 Arrive Euston 21:46

Away Matches

Sat 22/9/18 v Man United	◆ Outward ◆ Return	- Depart Euston 09:40 Arrive Manchester Piccadilly 11:46 - Depart Manchester Piccadilly 18:35 Arrive Euston 20:57
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Sat 6/10/18 v Crystal Palace

The nearest railway stations are Selhurst, Thornton Heath or Norwood Junction, all of which are served by London Victoria mainline station. Thornton Heath and Norwood Junction are also served by trains from London Bridge. Journey time approx 30 minutes. It is then a 10-15 minute walk to Selhurst Park from each of these stations.

Sat 27/10/18 v Brighton

The nearest railway station is Falmer, which is situated right by the stadium. The quickest and easiest way to get to the stadium is by train. Falmer station is adjacent to the ground. Its three stops from Brighton Central station on the line to Lewes and Seaford. Alternatively, you can avoid Brighton completely by getting a train to Lewes and changing there for Falmer. There are four trains an hour in either direction. Brighton Central Station is over four miles away from the stadium. Bus No 25 can be caught from Cardinal Square stop G and operates a regular service (every 12 minutes) up to the stadium from Central Brighton, as do Bus Numbers 28 & 29. Journey time is around 20 minutes. On return the No 25 leaves from the stadium via a stop through the coach park, near to the away fans entrance.

Public transport within a geographical zone is free as it is included within the price of the match ticket. Valid on both buses and trains, the zone extends as far north as Haywards Heath station and east to Lewes. Anyone travelling from London only needs to buy a train ticket to Haywards Heath.

Sun 10/11/18 v Arsenal (k/o 4:30pm)

The nearest London Underground station to the Emirates Stadium is Holloway Road on the Piccadilly line. It is only a few minutes' walk to the stadium. The station is, however, closed after matches. On exiting the station turn right, cross over the road and then turn left for the stadium. Alternatively, it may be better to alight at Arsenal station, which is the next stop. Again it is only a few minutes' walk from here to the stadium. On exiting the station turn right and follow Drayton Park Road around to the left. Then take one of the large bridges over the railway line to the stadium. Other tube stations in walking distance of the stadium are Finsbury Park on the Piccadilly Line and Highbury & Islington on the Victoria Line.

Also, main line trains depart from Kings Cross to Finsbury Park. It is then about a 10 to 15 minute walk to the stadium. Drayton Park Station which is situated right by the stadium is closed at weekends.

TRAVEL SECRETARY - PETER WOODFIELD

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CHAMPIONS PARADE

