

*August 1998*

A black and white photograph of two wolves. The wolf on the left is howling with its mouth wide open, and the wolf on the right is looking towards it. The background is dark and textured.

# **London Wolves**

*London Wolves Official Club Magazine*

**Bury v Wolves**  
**27th January 1998**

# *It's simple for Simpson*



**P**aul Simpson found the Bury defence to his liking as he helped himself to a brace of goals. This secured a victory against the struggling Lancashire side, who have found life in the first division a different kettle of fish.

Wolves briefly flirted with dissatisfaction when they yielded a first-half equaliser, well out of keeping with their high defensive standards of late.

Wolves took the lead on 23 minutes. A superb move and deep cross by Froggatt on the left found KEANE, whose flighted header was out of reach of the Bury keeper, Kiely.

Wolves continued to play neat football and looked in total command, but were caught out in the 43rd minute. Ellis was left free on the left wing, and his cross found the unmarked BATTERSBY to head home from close range.

**Half-time: Bury 1 Wolves 1**

Bury, who played better than their lowly position suggests, were undone in the 56th and 62nd minutes to give Wolves a 3-1 cushion, and they needed it.

Their second was a total mis-kick by Lucketti

from Freedman's pass, and the ball fell for SIMPSON, who composed himself before striking a left-foot shot from the edge of the area. Wolves' third came when Robinson's pass and Freedman's sharp turn had caused havoc in the Bury defence, and SIMPSON hit home from almost on the line with his right thigh.

With more luck Wolves could have had more, but they became sloppy and Bury threw caution to the wind. Tony Battersby's shot was pushed on to the inside of the post by Mike Stowell, and then Peter Swan smashed a dubious penalty against the underside of the bar.

But, all things considered, Wolves were good value for the victory that gave them their second double in less than three weeks and strengthened the safety net between themselves and seventh place.

**Full-time: Bury 1 Wolves 3**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**  
**Paul Simpson. His small transfer fee looks a bargain.**

**Att:6,134**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, MUSCAT, FROGGATT, SEDGLEY, RICHARDS, CURLE, GOODMAN, ROBINSON, KEANE (ATKINS), FREEDMAN, SIMPSON.**  
**Subs not used: FERGUSON, PAATELAINEN.**

**Wolves v West Bromwich Albion**  
**31st January 1998**



# ***Baggies inflict rare win double***

Albion did what they couldn't manage last season. Not only did they win their home league match, but they managed to ruin Wolves' unbeaten home record with a 1-0 scoreline.

In a sell-out Molineux, Wolves, for a lot of the game, were wobbly and never really in control against a spirited Albion side, who moved nearer the play-off, closing the gap between Wolves and themselves to three points.

Wolves, unchanged from their victory in mid-week against Bury, nearly found themselves a goal down in the first two minutes. Hunt fed the ball inside for Butler, and his rising shot took a wicked deflection off Curle and over the bar with Stowell struggling.

Keane got Wolves moving for the first time with a right-wing centre that was headed out for a throw off Carbon. Again Carbon and Murphy were quick and decisive with further clearances as Wolves continued to probe in search of an opening.

Things were getting hotter as the temperature soared and Hamilton was shown the yellow card for a reckless tackle on Froggatt, and then Keane got Wolves moving again as he earned the Wanderers a corner. From the flag-kick, Steve Sedgley saw his header blocked.

Albion had been closest to a breakthrough and were presented with another opportunity when Richards aimed a headed back-pass without

realising that Hughes was behind him, but Stowell thwarted the danger.

Freedman showed nimble touches to find a couple of yards of space on the left of Albion's area following a fine pass down the right by Muscat. The Scot's dangerous run ended with a corner off Murphy, following which Goodman could not make room in a crowded goalmouth for a shot.

## **Half-time: Wolves 0 Albion 0**

Wolves started the second half with one change, Atkins replacing Steve Froggatt. As in the first half, Albion nearly got the breakthrough in the early seconds. Hunt again was involved as he strolled past the Wolves midfield and was suddenly on the edge of the area sliding around Richards to set up a clear shooting chance, but he blasted his effort too close to Stowell and the Wolves keeper beat it away with his feet. Hamilton followed up the rebound, hammered a second shot carelessly wide and Wolves breathed a sigh of relief.

After Wolves had an appeal for a penalty turned down when Freedman was tackled by Holmes, Albion set off on a counter attack, got a corner off Muscat, and, from the resulting kick from Hamilton, brought further alarm from the home side. Stowell was buffeted by Murphy as he went for the cross and a free kick was given in his favour before Hughes turned the loose ball over the bar from close range.

Albion were the more adventurous side, and it was no surprise when they went in front after 72 minutes. Wolves were caught short on the left side of their defence by a deep cross from Kilbane. Hamilton might well have scored, but his clear right-foot drive was blocked by the diving Stowell, leaving HUNT to apply the finishing touch from the loose ball seven yards out.

Wolves went quickly out of defence to attack searching for the equaliser, and had the ball in the net when Simpson's shot on the turn was saved by Miller and then diverted back past the keeper off one of his own defenders. But the whistle had already gone for an infringement. Miller moved safely to his left to hold a dipping volley after Simpson's cross had been cleared by him. Wolves chased everything, something they hadn't managed all afternoon, had a penalty

appeal turned down against Carbon, and then Goodman headed against the outside of the post following a corner on the left.

So Wolves' home record was breached for the first time this season, and, although it's difficult to go through the season unbeaten at home, it's worse when you play your local rivals, who are having their best season for a long time.

**Full-time: Wolves 0 Albion 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match: Mike Stowell. Got battered but was only beaten once, when Albion were at least one or two goals better.**

**Att:28,244**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, MUSCAT, FROGGATT (ATKINS), SEDGLEY, RICHARDS, CURLE, GOODMAN, ROBINSON, KEANE, FREEDMAN, SIMPSON.**  
**Subs not used: PAATELAINEN, FERGUSON.**



In a recent T.V. programme on BBC 2, baby Ollie-Mollie made her screen debut with parents Mike and Clare Ffello.

They were taking part in a programme about the stresses and strains of couples having their first child.

We can't go into any details as to what went on, but take it from me, Mike's face said it all as he changed his daughter's nappy!

Would he care to comment publically about how he managed to arrange his trips to Italy and Q.P.R.?

**Famous ? who are ya ?**

**Wolves v Charlton Athletic (F.A. Cup 4th round replay)**  
**3rd February 1998**

# ***Wolves march on in Cup***



“**B**ring on the Dons” roared the Molineux faithful, as Wolves reach the fifth round and, on this evidence, have nothing to fear, although it took a penalty to lead at halftime.

After their defeat against Albion on Saturday, Wolves showed that they have what it takes to get something out of this season.

Charlton, of all visiting sides, have one of the worst records against Wolves, and, as they found out, it was not going to change. This was not a vintage performance by a long chalk, but they got the breaks and took full advantage of a poor Charlton display.

Wolves made three changes from their Albion game. Naylor for the injured Froggatt, and Paatelainen on for Keane, who was demoted to the subs bench along with Simpson whose place went to Ferguson. For the first 15 minutes, Wolves were poor and Charlton the more enterprising. They were particularly good at set pieces.

The game was marred after 10 minutes when Holmes was carried off with a suspected broken leg, after a heavy challenge from Muscat. Saying that, the break might have been caused by the way Holmes fell and Muscat might not be guilty of anything other than a freak accident.

It took Wolves nearly half an hour to break down the Charlton rear guard, which came via a penalty. Charlton's keeper Petterson got into a

mess and dragged down Freedman, and up stepped CURLE to blast home the spot-kick.

**Half-time: Wolves 1 Charlton 0**

The second half was only two minutes old when Wolves increased their lead. A great run and superb cross by Goodman found NAYLOR, whose perfect header into the far corner was one of the best goals seen at Molineux this season. It took Charlton by surprise and really knocked the stuffing out of them, and there was no way back.

With Wolves striving forward looking for more and with Freedman causing havoc, they took the total to three after 65 minutes. A superb pass by Robinson found Freedman, whose cross found PAATELAINEN who converted at the far post.

A few minutes later, the nasty side of football reared its ugly head. In frustration, Mark Bright, for reasons only he knew, stamped on Stowell and was immediately shown the red card. Referee Graham Poll, who dishes out cards like confetti, was one of the best officials seen at Molineux this season, and we need more like him in the Nationwide League.

**Full-time: Wolves 3 Charlton 0**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**  
**Carl Robinson. Like Keane, what a prospect**

**Att: 20,429**

**WOLVES TEAM:** STOWELL, MUSCAT, NAYLOR, SEDGLEY, RICHARDS (ATKINS),  
CURLE, GOODMAN (SIMPSON), FERGUSON, PAATELAINEN,  
FREEDMAN, ROBINSON. **Subs not used:** KEANE, MURRAY, DALEY.

**Wolves v Sunderland**  
**7th February 1998**



# ***Wolves suffer second home defeat***

For the second league defeat in a row at home, Wolves' season seems to be going nowhere. Not that they deserved to lose. They had so many chances in the first half to have gone into the break in pole position.

Mark McGhee's side compiled a string of goal scoring opportunities, only to be denied by good goal-keeping and their own carelessness.

Wolves, who brought back Keane for Paatelainen in their one change to the side who had beaten Charlton in midweek, were sent on their way by a magnificent cross-field pass by Sedgley in the third minute. It defeated Sunderland's last line of cover and found Keane in a shooting position, his right-foot drive forcing Perez to concede the first corner of the game.

Again Perez denied Wolves, when Keane won a free-kick out on the right to give Ferguson the chance to cross. The Sunderland keeper collected the ball despite Goodman's pressure.

Next it was Freedman who, from midfield, eluded two defenders, and his shot whistled past the left-hand post.

Wolves were hungry for that opening goal and Naylor joined in the attack and tried his luck from 25 yards. The ball ballooned up off a Sunderland defender but dropped into the path of Keane as he arrived on the right-hand side of the area. Keane angled a powerful drive towards the opposite corner, but Perez saved the day for the visitors.

It was all Wolves, it was that one-sided. Curle floated his cross to the far post where Goodman sprang above everyone to head the ball across goal, and Richards volleyed over a decent opportunity at close range.

The half-hour mark approached with Wolves in total command, but they still remained goal-less. Robinson, then Naylor, were the next two players to test the Sunderland defence, but Perez in goal was equal to all that was thrown at him. He then made the save of the game so far when he leapt to his left to hold a Freedman chip that was bound for the top corner.

The only real chance Sunderland had in the entire half came near the end. Niall Quinn's aerial presence set up the chance for Johnston to have a crack from 15 yards. He beat Stowell

with a firm right-foot drive but saw his effort bounce off the post and away.

### **Half-time: Wolves 0 Sunderland 0**

Wolves began the second half trying to whip up the same momentum they had generated in the first period. There was nearly a breakthrough for them in the 46th minute when Ferguson collected a poor clearance to set Freedman clear. He laid a fine pass into the path of Muscat, but a goal-scoring chance was denied by Ord's fine tackle. Keane collected and finished off a cross from Naylor in the 53rd minute only to see the flag raised against him before a swift counter attack between Freedman and Keane ended in man's land with the goal beckoning.

Sunderland pushed forward and alarm bells started to ring in Stowell's goal in the 59th minute when Ord broke away and crossed from the left. Wolves, for once, were caught short of cover and the ball reached Clark at the far post. Stowell managed to block his shot, and, when the rebound reached Quinn, Curle stuck out a foot to deny him as well.

Sunderland made a potentially significant change in the 60th minute, Dichio coming on to replace Lumsden and joining Quinn up front. They worked well together and Dichio's first touch in fact might well have been a goal as he

got on the end of a free-kick from the left. But Richards was there in the nick of time to turn the ball out for a corner.

Then came spectacular shots at either end as both sides tried for the breakthrough. Ord tried a powerful drive that just skimmed over Stowell's bar. The response from Freedman was a beautifully struck volley from 30 yards that was bang on target and dipping all the way. But Perez got everything behind it to save.

Sunderland struck the killer blow two minutes from time. After Johnston had bounced a free-kick off the bar, the ball wasn't cleared cleanly and it broke for BALL who saw his speculative left-foot shot dip over Stowell and into the net from the edge of the area.

So after doing most of the running, Sunderland pinched the points from under the noses of the Wolves players, who might regret those early first-half misses.

### **Full-time: Wolves 0 Sunderland 1**

#### **Wolves' Man of the Match:**

**Lee Naylor, who could be the new Derek Parkin, given time.**

**Att: 27,502**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, MUSCAT, NAYLOR, SEDGLEY, RICHARDS, CURLE, GOODMAN, FERGUSON, KEANE, FREEDMAN, ROBINSON.**  
**Subs not used: PAATELAINEN, SIMPSON, ATKINS.**

**Wimbledon v Wolves (F.A. Cup 5th round)  
14th February 1998**



# **Mixu keeps Wolves in the Cup**

**M**ixu Paatelainen has the knack of scoring in cup games. This was his fifth goal and it earned Wolves a replay against a side whose style of play is not pleasing to the eye. In fact it's rather boring and, by the number of Don supporters at the game, it must be boring even for them to watch.

Wolves made most of the running in the first-half but, as in the game against Sunderland last week, they fell behind.

Mark McGhee made four changes from that last game. Dougie Freedman, who knows every blade of grass at Selhurst Park, was left on the subs bench as he is still suffering from a stomach upset. With Keane ruled out through injury, Mark Atkins, Paul Simpson and Simon Osborn were in along with Paatelainen.

Wolves playing in green shirts and white shorts looked more like Plymouth. I just don't understand the need for the green shirts. Their Old Gold colours did not clash with Wimbledon, so why, oh why!

Wolves started brightly, and, in the tenth minute, Naylor took a deep throw and the ball found Paatelainen. His pass caused havoc in the home defence, but the ball was just too far from Goodman and was cleared with ease.

But, despite the encouraging start, Wolves were rocked when they conceded a soft goal in the 14th minute to their Premiership opponents, in

their first real attack of the afternoon. Young striker EUELL was allowed to rise above the visitors' defence and head past Stowell at the far post, after a good cross by Fear.

Wolves hit back and, in the 23rd minute, Wimbledon's Scottish keeper was forced to pull off a flying save from a Goodman header, after another dangerous cross by the lively Paatelainen.

Wolves, on the attack, won a corner after Goodman saw his attempted cross cut out into the area, but they were unable to press home the advantage and then soon found themselves under pressure from the Dons.

They were fortunate not to fall further behind when Jupp sent in a superb cross which Stowell was slow to react to. However, Fear was unable to hit the target.

## **Half-time: Wimbledon 1 Wolves 0**

Ten minutes into the half, goal-scorer Euell should have put his name up in lights again but shot weakly over from 20 yards.

Despite trailing, Wolves continued to give plenty of effort and they twice went close to getting back on level terms through efforts from Osborn and a Paatelainen header.

With Wolves seeking the equaliser, Wimbledon were open at the back, and Jones struck a sting-



ing right-foot volley that needed a spectacular save from Stowell, who stretched to tip the shot around the post. Again Stowell was in the firing line when he saved seconds later from Castledine after Naylor had failed to clear the ball from his own area.

With less than half an hour remaining, Wolves made their first substitution with Freedman replacing Sedgley. The substitution worked a treat as all Wolves' hard work paid off with an equaliser in the 68th minute. PAATELAINEN was the hero, beating Sullivan from close range after excellent work by the tireless Robinson.

Freedman, returning to the ground where he used to star for Crystal Palace, almost put Wolves in front for the first time with a delicate

chip which landed on the roof of the net. Wimbledon were clearly rocked and, with 12 minutes remaining, replaced a tired looking Cort with Clarke.

Again Freedman, who wanted to finish the tie here, went on a goalward run and was only stopped on the six-yard line.

**Full-time: Wimbledon 1 Wolves 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:  
Mike Stowell, great saves when Wolves' goal was under fierce attack.**

**Att: 15,322**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, ATKINS, NAYLOR, SEDGLEY (FREEDMAN), RICHARDS, CURLE, GOODMAN, SIMPSON, PAATELAINEN, ROBINSON. OSBORN, Subs not used: MURRAY, WILLIAMS, DALEY, CROWE.**

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# *From the Editor*

Stefan Leonard

1. Although it's been said before, I'll have to say it again; we can't keep relying on the same people to write articles, news items or just plain gossip, for inclusion in the magazine. So come on, try your hand at writing a piece for the magazine. Serious or funny, it doesn't matter, we'll look at all submissions. You could even write about the disgusting smell that appears on the 5.19pm train and can be traced back to Stuart Earl's..... ..Kebab! So, please get writing.
2. As this is a 'bumper' issue, some items have had to be left out because we'd have ended up with a magazine the size of a book! But rest assured that your letters and other features will be included in the next issue.

**Wolves v Bradford City**  
**18th February 1998**



# *It's 300 up for super sub Steve Bull*

So many times over the past ten years, Steve Bull has got Wolves out of a rut. The times he has scored the winner when a draw was on the cards, are too many to count, but, if ever you need a player to get you out of jail, then Bully is your man.

This game wasn't much to get excited about, and at times Wolves looked more like they could suffer their third home defeat on the trot.

There was nothing in a first half to split the teams, but, with seconds left of the half Wolves were awarded a corner. From the kick by Simpson, the ball was half cleared and ROBINSON sent in a dipping shot from 20 yards. It was the Welshman's third goal of the season.

**Half-time: Wolves 1 Bradford 0**

The second half was only ten minutes old when Bradford were on level terms. Ecinho set up BLAKE to drill home the ball. This was Bradford's first real attempt at goal, and then the jitters for Wolves set in.

Mike Stowell had to beat down a rising drive from Lawrence, and then Dean Richards, against his former club, had a disturbing few minutes following the late addition of John McGinlay into the Bradford attack.

There were shades of last season as Naylor carelessly

lost possession to present Blake with a clear run at Stowell only six minutes from time. Fortunately, the 21-year-old lifted his free shot inches over the bar.

Wolves needed to get their act together so they could stay in touch with the play-offs, and time was not on their side as the draw looked the most likely result. But Bradford don't have a certain Mr Bull in their side, and he made them pay in the very last minute. Lee Naylor's left wing centre found the Bradford defence dithering, and BULL stooped low to head home, off the inside of the foot of the post from six yards.

The noise around Molineux was deafening. You would have thought they had just won the championship, instead of Bully reaching another milestone. 300 goals and, hopefully, still more to come. He said "my next aim is 350 goals". Let's hope he is still around to realise his dream. So Wolves' luck holds on, and they are still in with a shout of their third play-off in four seasons.

**Full-time: Wolves 2 Bradford 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**  
**Steve Bull, despite only playing 25 minutes.**  
**Bully's last gasp effort sealed the points.**

**Attn: 21,510**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, ATKINS, NAYLOR, ROBINSON, RICHARDS, CURLE  
GOODMAN (BULL), SIMPSON, PAATELAINEN (CROWE),  
FREEDMAN, OSBORN. Sub not used: WILLIAMS.**

**Huddersfield Town v Wolves**  
**21st February 1998**



# Missed chances cost Wolves dearly

With so many missed chances by Wolves in a bombardment on the 'Town's goal when it seemed easier to score, the biggest culprits were Adrian Williams, Dougie Freedman, and Mark Atkins. In fact, Wolves gave Williams his first start since late November, but Goodman, described as fit yesterday, was out because of his achilles problems, while Simpson was absent because of flu and Muscat, after suspension, was recalled.

Wolves twice went close to taking the lead with the game still not five minutes old. First Paatelainen headed across the penalty area from Curle's long free-kick, but Williams made unconvincing contact from an excellent position and saw his close-range right-foot shot blocked by Harper at his near post.

From a corner, Osborn caught Huddersfield dozing, found Atkins, who floated a looping header against the bar with barely a flicker from the home side.

When a Curle clearance went only as far as Johnson 20 yards out, there were hopeful appeals for a penalty as the midfielder's well struck drive hit Richards around the chest.

Watts produced a vital header to divert a cross by Atkins away from the lurking Muscat, before Richards stuck out a leg to block an effort by Stewart in a Huddersfield counter-attack.

The low sun was causing havoc in the Wolves defence as it shone directly into their eyes, prompting Stowell to

reach for a peaked cap shortly before Dalton drove comfortably over the bar from 25 yards.

**Half-time: Huddersfield 0 Wolves 0**

Wolves were in need of a spark to get them going, and Robinson tried to provide it with an excellent long ball which Freedman wasted. Paatelainen curled over an intelligent centre from the left which Gray was forced to turn behind for a corner. Dougie Freedman, without a goal since the E. A. Cup win at Darlington on January 14, was having a lean afternoon and was guilty of wild finishing when he blazed yards over the bar after a Curle free-kick had been re-routed to him in space near the penalty area.

After 68 minutes, Bull came on for Freedman, but even he could not muster up a chance. It was Huddersfield who did the running in the last few minutes, and Barnes had only one thing on his mind when he cut in on the left to let fly with an ambitious drive that flashed comfortably over. In the final minute, DYSON headed in Smith's right-wing corner.

And, as they say, THAT'S THAT!

**Full-time: Huddersfield 1 Wolves 0**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**  
**Can't think of one.**

**Att: 12,663**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, MUSCAT, NAYLOR, WILLIAMS, RICHARDS, CURLE, ROBINSON, ATKINS, PAATELAINEN, FREEDMAN (BULL), OSBORN.**  
**Subs not used: WESTWOOD, KEANE.**

**Wolves v Wimbledon (F.A. Cup 5th round replay)**  
**25th February 1998**



# **Dougie's finish is so deadly**

**W**olves moved into the last eight of the F.A. Cup, better known around Wolverhampton as the **SIR JACK HAYWARD CUP**. The Wolves owner's dream is to hold the coveted trophy after his beloved Wolves have triumphed at Wembley. Could it happen? The simple answer is **YES!** Why not! They found themselves a goal down to the Premiership side shortly after the second half had started, but fought back in memorable style, that had Molineux bursting with excitement.

After some woeful finishing at Huddersfield on Saturday, in particular, Dougie Freedman, Mark Walters kept faith with the striker, and he looked a different player.

Although there wasn't much between the sides at half-time, the second half was a typical cup-tie, full of exciting moves, saves and near misses. It was Wimbledon who struck the first blow in the 48th minute. From a corner on the right taken by Artley, the ball found the head of **JONES**, whose downward effort gave Stowell no chance. There were protests from some of the Wolves players, who claimed the Wimbledon players were using rough-arm tactics, but the goal was allowed to stand.

Wolves continued to let the Dons know that they were not going to lie down and concede defeat. The attitude of the home side was nice to witness as they pushed forward in numbers, seeking that equaliser. Their constant attacking paid off in the 65th minute. Mark Atkins on

the right, crossed for **ROBINSON** to steer home skilfully from six yards with his head that beat Sullivan with ease.

Wimbledon, it must be said, were the better side up till that moment and Stowell was the hero with super reflex saves from Gayle and Fear.

With four minutes left and both sides seeking the winning goal, it was Wolves who got the important breakthrough. Wimbledon were on the attack, but Stowell raced out to clear and the ball ended at the feet of **FREEDMAN** who set off on a solo run and a spectacular right-foot cross shot from a narrow angle found the net. It was a brilliant effort by Freedman who last Saturday, couldn't even hit the proverbial barn door.

It's ironic that a stunning goal by the man whose brace denied Wolves a Wembley place last May now leaves them only two wins away from the twin towers - and set for a memorable quarter final day out at Leeds. It may just be the year of the Wolves to invade Wembley.

**Full-time: Wolves 2 Wimbledon 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**

**Dougie Freedman, what a couple of days off does to recharge the batteries and dream of Wembley.**

**Att: 25,112**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, ATKINS, RICHARDS, CURLE, NAYLOR, ROBINSON, KEANE, (WILLIAMS ) OSBORN, SEDGLEY (SIMPSON ), FREEDMAN (BULL ), PAATELAINEN.**

**Wolves v Birmingham City**  
**28th February 1998**



# ***Wolves wane as Birmingham blossom***

**W**olves were so much in control of this match that the only outcome was a certain win. Wrong! Wolves lost their way after the Blues equalised and, for manager Mark McGhee, it was very poor marking that had let their neighbours into the automatic play-off spot.

Mind you, it should never have happened. Wolves took the lead in the opening 15 minutes, when, from a fine cross by Naylor, the ball found the feet of FREEDMAN, whose fine firm low volley left Bennett in no man's land.

This was the foundation for better things, but Wolves let all their earlier domination come to nothing. In the 35th minute, NDLOVU evaded Curle and equalised with a low drive.

**Half-time: Wolves 1 Birmingham 1**

In the second half, Wolves were still in control but lost it in the last twenty minutes. ADEBOLA used his strength to hold off three attempted tackles before scoring from a narrow angle. In the 78th minute, a clumsy foul by Curle on O'Connor in the penalty area and NDLOVU

stepped up for his second goal and Birmingham's third.

With 11 minutes left, McGhee decided to bring on Bull who immediately made his presence felt when he hit a brilliant shot that came back to Paatelainen, who missed when it was easier to score.

Looking at this game as a spectator, the sad facts revealed on the other side of the coin were less pleasing to a team with promotion ambitions. Wolves were naive in defence and haphazard with their finishing. A modicum of tightness at the back and the acceptance of no more than half of the chances the creative department made for them would have brought a comfortable victory with something to spare.

**Full-time: Wolves 1 Birmingham 3**

**Wolves' Man of the Match:**  
**Carl Robinson. More players like him in the side and Wolves might just get out of this division.**

**Att: 25,591**

**WOLVES TEAM: STOWELL, MUSCAT (SIMPSON), RICHARDS, CURLE, NAYLOR, ROBINSON, OSBORN, ATKINS, KEANE (BULL) FREEDMAN, PAATELAINEN.**

Wolves v Stoke City  
4th March 1998

# Promotion play-off chances fading



Wolves' grip on the coat-tails of the First Division's top six is becoming more flimsy with every match that passes. Putting it another way, the Premiership looks as far away as ever following their miserable part in a derby which gave a worrying hint of what the rest of the season might hold.

The depressing scenes which first greeted Stoke's deserved equaliser in injury-time, and then the final whistle, spelled out the trying times now facing Mark McGhee. The boos that echoed around at the end of Wolves' second smallest crowd of the season, will be hard pushed to rebuild a strong challenge from this alarming fade-out.

Wolves took the lead in the 23rd minute and even that had a bit of luck attached to it. Justin Whittle mis-timed a low cross from just outside the corner of the area from FREEDMAN, and the ball freakishly eluded the motionless Southall.

Steve Bull was surprisingly included in the side and was as hungry as ever, but the service was fine. Bull at times looked in no man's land with the chances of adding to his 300 goals very limited. The only real chances after the goal did fall to Bull and Osborn, but Southall was rolling back his 37 years to save well.

After the half-hour, Stoke established a supremacy they were to hold right through to substitute Dean CROWE's rescue act, when he hit the ball from 15 yards through a packed goalmouth, after Thorne had headed back Tiattos deep right-wing corner. The ground-work for the draw, that lifted Stoke above Huddersfield, came in the 15 minutes up to half-time, when Hans Segers looked like turning his long awaited first-team debut into a night to savour.

Segers, given his chance because of Mike Stowell's virus, saved superbly from Richard Forsyth, Graham Kavanagh and Peter Thorne, and, despite the continuing uncertainty of the men in front of him, he seemed set for a clean sheet as Stoke's second-half pressure lacked a cutting edge.

Paul Holsgrove, on the ground where his father John plied his trade for Wolves in the late 1960s, went closest to an equaliser with two shots from outside the area. But Stoke's hopes of a much-needed point appeared when Lee Naylor's challenge prevented Thorne getting in a clean header from six yards.

After a long season for Robbie Keane, who looked leg weary, he was replaced by Kevin Muscat and Mark Atkins dropped back as a

third central defender for the final 20 minutes.

Wolves needed to do something to get a second goal to give themselves some breathing space, and Bull was denied by Southall with a blinding save, and again the Welsh star saved from another Welshman as he got down to push away Carl Robinson's header with seconds of the match to go.

As the whistles from the crowd echoed around the ground for an undeserved three points, it was boos that greeted the final whistle as three

points turned to just one, and three points behind Ipswich, currently in play-off sixth position, although the Molineux men do have a game in hand on the Suffolk side.

**Full-time: Wolves 1 Stoke City 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match: Hans Segers, three saves on his first-team league debut for twenty months.**

**Att: 21,058**

**WOLVES TEAM: SEGERS, ATKINS, NAYLOR, SIMPSON, RICHARDS, CURLE, KEANE (MUSCAT), ROBINSON, BULL, FREEDMAN (PAATELAINEN) OSBORN.**  
**Sub not used: MURRAY.**

**Leeds United v Wolves  
7th March 1998**

# ***Jolly Don puts Wolves into the semi-final***



**W**hy is it that Wolves struggle in the league, yet step up a gear or two in the Cup this season? With the league a priority, Wolves seem to be a different side come F.A. Cup day. No one gave Wolves any hope of upsetting the Premier League side, but, with nothing to lose, Wolves set about the task as if they had something to prove. After all, it wasn't long ago they were facing each other in the First Division, and Wolves had a good record against the West Yorkshire side.

Both teams sprang selection surprises, not least Wolves' inclusion of Goodman, after his tendonitis trouble, for the first time in five games. Muscat and Williams were also back in the starting line-up as Manager Mark McGhee went for a five man defence, but Stowell was considered ready only for a place on the bench.

Wolves, defending the end populated by a 5,000 plus supporters who released dozens of gold and

thick balloons as the teams came out, caught Hadden diving in the opening seconds. Freedman found space behind the hesitant Hiden to reach a through ball by Naylor and the striker's pull-back seemed destined for Bull until Ribeiro swept clear.

Wolves wasted an opportunity when Haaland threaded a clever pass into the path of Wallace, who dragged a right-foot drive comfortably wide of the far post from well inside the area, as Hasselbaink waited in space to his left.

Wolves' bright start continued when Bull headed a pass from Goodman sideways, Freedman closed in ahead of Molenaar to drive over the bar from 15 yards with a first-time left-foot effort.

After nearly half an hour, Segers had still not been tested, but was finally called into action following a mistake by Muscat. The full-back misplaced a header which released Kewell for an angled left-foot drive which the diving Segers beat down successfully. A second later, Muscat was in trouble with the official, when his late challenge earned him his 11th yellow card of the season and a meeting with the F.A. Commission.

Freedman produced a moment of high class with a superb turn that took him away from Halle, but his attempted cross for Bull was poorly directed and went astray.

At the other end, Wallace appealed optimistically for a penalty when a routine contact with Richards was completely ignored by referee Durkin.

Muscat was having a difficult time in his all Australian tussle with Kewell, who popped up in a more central position to curl left-footed, and narrowly over the bar after Halle had found him 22 yards out.

There was a scare for Wolves in Leeds' next

attack when an effort by Haaland cannoned off Wallace and was blocked near the six-yard line with Segers knowing little about it.

### Half-time: Leeds 0 Wolves 0

In the opening seconds of the new half, Segers was quickly off his line diving on a through ball from Hasselbaink, just before the in-rushing Wallace could get a foot to it.

Molenaar and Radebe made mistakes in quick succession, and, when the South African international failed to deal with a right-wing centre from Muscat, Goodman worked the ball clear and fired powerfully over from a narrow angle.

Rod Wallace turned superbly 20 yards out to curl a shot narrowly off target, as he appealed in vain for a corner.

Bull felt Wolves should have had a penalty for handball, while Williams lived dangerously in the opposite area with a nudge on Haaland following two lively bursts down the right by Wallace. In the same spell of attacking, Molenaar moved forward to power a left-footer straight at Segers from 20 yards.

Still the home side were doing little to worry Wolves' resolute defence, and Kewell was well off target with an effort from outside the penalty area.

Wolves dragged all 11 players back after Robinson had been pulled up for a foul on Kewell almost 30 yards out. Despite the distance, Hasselbaink had no thoughts other than to try his luck at goal, his curling kick being safely gathered by Segers as he went down on his knees.

With eleven minutes to go, Keane was sent on in place of Bull and dramatically Wolves went in front in the 82nd minute. A game that had been so tight was suddenly unlocked by a clever pass on the turn by Robinson, and GOOD-



MAN broke clear into the area to clip a right-foot shot over the body of a diving Martyn.

As Leeds threw everything at the Wolves' defence, they got what looked a dubious penalty as Hasselbaink was tackled by Keane. The Leeds forward took the spot-kick, only for Hans Segers to make a brilliant diving save to push the ball away at the near post, with 5,000 voices sounding like 10,000 ringing in his ears as the Wolves fans went bonkers.

What followed after the penalty was very evident to all but the officials. Curle had words with Hasselbaink, and the Leeds man seemed to head-butt the Wolves skipper.

Wolves deserved their victory, mainly because they never really let Leeds settle, and, after the mid-week boos by the Wolves' supporters at Mark McGhee, his line-up completely baffled the Leeds players. Wolves are now one step from Wembley, their 14th semi-final in the history of the club.

**Full-time: Leeds 0 Wolves 1**

**Wolves' Man of the Match: All of them including Mark McGhee's clever tactics. Why can't they do it in the league?**

**Att: 39,902**

**WOLVES TEAM: SEGERS, MUSCAT, NAYLOR, WILLIAMS, RICHARDS, CURLE, GOODMAN, ROBINSON, BULL(KEANE), FREEDMAN, OSBORN.  
Subs not used: STOWELL, SIMPSON, ATKINS, ROBERTS.**

**Wolves v Crewe Alexandra  
14th March 1998**

# **Keane and Segers earn the three points**



After last week's superb win at Elland Road, Wolves made a surprise change. Steve Bull was demoted to the subs' bench and Richards was out with a sore knee. Froggatt returned and Keane, in the line-up from the outset, were in a 4-3-3 formation. Crewe made the early running and Johnson

cleverly found Whalley, who did well to make room for an effort that he curled tamely at Segers from 20 yards.

After a promising run by Keane, Crewe threatened again after Chamock had released Street behind

Naylor on Wolves' right. The tiny mid-fielder appeared to misdirect his cross, but it bounced dangerously close to Segers' near post, causing the keeper to go down to his left and save right on the line.

It was a lively opening which continued when Freedman got the better of Walton following a chip to Muscat, only for Kearton to dive bravely at his feet in a crowded area. Wolves were now having most of the play without a real cutting edge, and the game had gone quiet in the middle of the half. Goodman, who had been given a warm reception following his superb winner at Leeds, threatened to find the key to the door with a clever pass which gave Osborn a reasonable chance on his left foot well inside the area. But the mid-fielder delayed his effort on goal and, having allowed a defender to block, he saw Freedman have a shot on the turn charged down from the loose ball.

Wolves, remaining patient in their build-ups, took the lead in the 35th minute. Froggatt and Naylor were involved on the left, and, when the cross came over, Goodman twice won headers before Freedman controlled well and turned to roll in a centre which the unchallenged KEANE nudged over the line from three yards. Crewe wasted a clear chance when a cross by Whalley found Anthrobus to steer a header comfortably wide of the far post.

#### Half-time: Wolves 1 Crewe 0

Freedman's centre from the right was cleared by Walton under pressure from Goodman before Whalley met with the same fate in an attack which ended with Goodman's effort bouncing harmlessly wide. Wolves were close to increasing their lead, though, when Froggatt's hanging centre was cleared only to the edge of the area, from where Keane's low drive was scrambled round the post by the diving Kearton. Segers, enjoying another good game, seemed to make an error of judgement when he left his line to challenge Street and saw the Crewe player

appeal hopefully for a penalty as he got to his feet.

A fine ball by Goodman, coupled with an intelligent run by Keane, promised better things, but the youngster's cross was blocked at the expense of a corner by Smith. Following the kick, Wolves worked the ball well across the field, and Robinson set up Muscat for a rising 20-yard drive that Kearton beat down and gathered.

A low-key match came dramatically to life in the 73rd minute when Crewe were awarded a penalty for a foul by Muscat on Little. Wolves' fans let the referee know what they felt before Segers brilliantly came to his side's rescue for the second successive Saturday, this time diving to his right to push away a kick by Crewe skipper Shaun Smith. Even then, the ball ran invitingly loose to Street, who returned it straight into the chest of the heroic keeper.

While Segers found himself on the end of much adulation, Bull made his popular entry in place of Freedman in the 76th minute. And the striker should have scored almost immediately when he missed badly from close range after Goodman's header had been stopped on the line by Whalley.

Although Wolves were at least a yard faster than Crewe, it was hard work but a welcome win nevertheless. Although Wolves now find themselves six points behind sixth place, they do have games in hand over most clubs, but these have to be won and they need to concentrate 100% on the league and try to forget the cup semi-final.

#### Full-time: Wolves 1 Crewe 0

**Wolves' Man of the Match: Hans Segers, enjoying a purple patch**

**Att: 24,272**

**WOLVES TEAM: SEGERS, MUSCAT, NAYLOR, WILLIAMS, FROGGATT (SIMPSON), WILLIAMS, CURLE, GOODMAN, KEANE, FREEDMAN (BULL), OSBORN.**

**Sub not used: ATKINS.**

