

What's happened to Wolves' Wembley wonders?



Paul Bradshaw

Age: 56. Served Vancouver Whitecaps, Albion, Peterborough and Newport County after leaving Wolves in 1984. Worked in airport security but now retired and living in his native Atrincham.

Geoff Palmer

Age: 58. Left Wolves after his second spell to join the police force in 1986 and served for 24 years in the Walsall area before retiring and living in Godsal. Also captain of Oxley Park Golf Club.

Derek Parkin

Age: 65. Wolves' record appearance maker continued his top-flight career with Stoke for two years after leaving. Played non-league for Harrisons, he became a landscape gardener and is retired, living in Telford.

Peter Daniel

Age: 57. Left Wolves for Minnesota Strikers in 1984 and appeared at Wembley for Sunderland and Burnley. Player-boss at Lincoln before managing several non-league teams. Now a taxi driver in Hull.

Emyln Hughes

Died in 2004 aged 57 from a brain tumour. After managing Rotherham, he played for Hull and became a successful TV game show captain on BBC's Question of Sport and Sporting Triangles.

George Berry

Age: 55. Left Wolves in 1982 and played for Stoke, Peterborough, Preston and Aldershot before graduating with a business degree and becoming commercial executive of the PFA. Lives in Stoke.

Kenny Hibbitt

Age: 62. Left Wolves in 1984, continuing his career with Coventry then Bristol Rovers before managing Walsall, Cardiff and Hednesford. Now a Premier League referees' assessor living in the Cotswolds.

Willie Carr

Age: 63. Joined Millwall from Wolves in 1982 and served Stourbridge twice and Willenhall before retiring. Became a sales selling bearings and lives near Bridgnorth. Wolves season ticket holder.

Andy Gray

Age: 57. Won the League, FA Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup with Everton and rejoined Villa before spells with Albion, Rangers and Cheltenham. Pundit for Sky and now broadcasting for talkSPORT.



John Richards

Age: 62. Joined Portuguese side Maritimo for two years before retiring. Returned to Wolves as director in 1994 then MD until 2000. Now running multimillion pound online company Pitchcare in Telford.

Mel Eves

Age: 57. Played for Manchester City, Sheffield United, Gillingham, Walsall and Telford. Became an agent and runs his own sports agency Eleven Sports in Wolverhampton. Also managed Willenhall.

Colin Brazier

Age: 55. Left for the Jacksonville Tea Men in 1982. Later played for Birmingham, Lincoln, Walsall, Kidderminster - where he won the FA Trophy - and Tamworth. Now a self-employed builder in Rugeley.

Wayne Clarke

Age: 52. Joined Birmingham and won the League with Everton in 1987. Played for Manchester City, Leicester, Shrewsbury and Walsall. Player-managed Telford and now a sales rep for Pepsi in Shropshire.

Norman Bell

Age: 57. Joined Blackburn in 1982 and stayed for two-and-a-half years before settling in the area. Had several sales-related jobs before working with young offenders for Blackburn and Darwen Council.

John McAlle

Age: 63. Joined Sheffield United and won a Fourth Division title medal before finishing with second-tier Derby then non-league Harrisons. Set up as a landscape gardener but retired and lives in Tong.

Mick Kearns

Age: 62. After understudying Paul Bradshaw for two years, the keeper rejoined Walsall in 1981 and continues to serve the Saddlers as community director after several roles including goalkeeping coach.

John Barnwell

Age: 74. Managed AEK Athens, Notts County, Walsall, Northampton and Grantham after leaving Wolves in 1982. Became League Managers' Association's chief executive in 1996, still serving on its committee.

Richie Barker

Age: 73. Managed Stoke, Notts County, Greek side Ethnikos, Piraeus and Egyptian giants Zamalek. Assisted at Sheffield Wednesday and was Albion's chief scout. Now retired and living in Market Drayton.

SPORTS POST
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Three-point plan to reverse the Molineux decline

A VIEW of the malaise, misrule and misfortune at Molineux.

Draw a line from the bed you were born in to the nearest professional football club: that's probably your team, the team you support through thick and thin. And if that club happens to be Manchester United or Barcelona (or Wolves 70 years ago), then count your blessings - you have a team deserving of your loyalty. But if the team is Wolverhampton Wanderers, over the last 30 years or so, then with the occasional blip of success your role has been a thankless and unrewarded labour of love. I was born three miles along the A449 from Molineux; I know the pain.

I departed Wolverhampton some five years ago and now live a thousand miles away; but the Wolves are still 'my' team. During those years I have not been to a single game at Molineux, so I do not feel qualified to comment too much on the recent performances of individual players. I've seen highlights of the occasional game on TV, nothing more. But I don't need to say much, do I? Sadly the team's current position speaks for itself.

Now, forgive me for stating the blindingly obvious, but if you don't make changes for the better, matters can only get worse. I see three viable options for the future.

It may be that Steve Morgan feels he needs someone with a thick hide to protect him from the fan-flak: hence his retention of the incumbent CEO. But if the club was seen to operate openly, ambitiously and progressively there simply wouldn't be any legitimate flak. Reliable, veracious communication and clear lack of support with supporters is sadly lacking. Repeatedly the representative 'voice of the club' is Jez Moxey's, and he has long since lost all credibility with anyone who holds Wolves dear. Time after time it is he who attempts to put a veneer of positive spin on glaringly erroneous business decisions. Just how stupid are Wolves supporters considered to be? In terms of irresponsibility, desperation and clear lack of business acumen, the timing of the sacking of Mick McCarthy could hardly be exceeded - but, astonishingly, it was: with the subsequent appointment of Terry Connor. The poor man was failure-fodder from the outset. But Moxey's disingenuous attempts to justify the whole sorry saga simply added insult to injury; yet another example of alienating the fan base with self-righteousness, but completely untenable, grandiloquence. In his stead Mr Morgan needs someone with credibility who can connect with the customers.

A second option is to find a buyer for the club. Someone who is prepared to run it on a genuine football basis, who will take decisive action when necessary and who is willing to prioritise the team investment required. Mr Morgan was given the club. The team itself may have proven themselves to be worth little, but the 'bricks and mortar' has significant value, as does the 'brand' and the customer base. He should be able to turn a decent profit. Hand it over to someone who is serious about success on the pitch.

If neither of these proffered options is acceptable then it must be down to the supporters to bring about change. Personally I don't see the point of demonstrations within the stadium (you have to pay to be in there so they've still got your money). I don't see that abusing players on the pitch will do anything other than demoralise them even further - it certainly won't encourage them to raise their game. As for organising street marches, who, of relevance, takes any notice? And venting one's frustrations in writing (as I am doing now) doesn't achieve much either, other than release of a bit of tension. In my view there is only one way to change things and that is to hit where it hurts most: the bottom line. No business can survive without a healthy customer base and in this instance that's the supporters. In the short term, fans should simply stay away and save their money - maybe put it in a biscuit tin towards the day, hopefully not too far away, when there is a structure and a team at Molineux worthy of their support.

Name and Address supplied

Good or bad - get behind them

I WILL put my cards on the table here and now. I am, always have been and always will be a West Bromwich Albion supporter. I support my local club. I read the recent article written by Steve Bull and I agree with every word he wrote.

I have seen some good Albion teams and I have seen some bad Albion teams. I was at Molineux that day just after we had sold Derek Kevan and the record ended up Wolves 7 Albion 0. But despite that I remained an Albion fan.

No amount of booing, whistling or jeering will improve your side's performance on the day. I never bothered what the players did on the pitch either before or after the match. I was only concerned about their performance on the pitch while they wore the Albion shirt.

If you are a real Wolves supporter, while they are on the pitch playing you will support them. Yes, have a moan about them in the pub or club after, but for those 90 minutes get behind them and show them you are a Wolves fan. I am just of an age when I can remember the Black Country ruling the roost, when England could have fielded the following: goalkeeper, Bert Williams; full-backs, Bill Shorthouse and Len Millard; half-backs, Billy Wright, Joe Kennedy and Ray Barlow; forwards, Johnny Hancox, Ronnie Allen, Roy Swinbourne, Johnny Nicholls and Jimmy Mullen.

E J Johnson
 Warley

Golden memories as Wolves legends return



Golden memories - Wolves' players celebrate their League Cup victory over European champions Nottingham Forest, courtesy of a second-half goal from Andy Gray, as they parade the trophy around Wembley

WHAT a twist of fate that Bristol City were in the next room.

The hair might be greyer or thinner, but most of Wolves' 1980 stars looked as if they could give them a game now.

On a night where the Wembley heroes were celebrating the 33rd anniversary of their last major trophy win, today's opponents were also staying at Brierley Hill's Copthorne Hotel, prompting compere Paul Franks to encourage guests to shout as loud as they could at 12.30am to disrupt them!

As it was, Andy Gray again provided the highlight as the Wembley heroes gathered once more.

Wolves' former golden boy, who scored the only goal in the League Cup final against Nottingham Forest that sparked the first reunion of the Molineux team-mates, threw a rare serious moment into a night of happy reminiscing before a packed house of around 250 guests.

"All the lads who played that day and those who were around the club at that time are privileged," said Gray.

"To be part of a club that wins something is extremely special and for us who took part in it, all we were doing is living out what all you fans would have wanted to do.

"When are Wolves going to win a major trophy again? If they still haven't in seven years' time, we'll all be back again for a 40th anniversary reunion.

"We have got a room full of Wolves fans to say thank you to for that great day. This is what makes football special."

The banter was never far away as Gray, strike partner John Richards, Geoff Palmer, George Berry, Kenny Hibbitt, Willie Carr, Mel Eves, Colin Brazier, Wayne Clarke, Norman Bell and assistant manager Richie Barker met up together for the first time in three decades and sat through a re-run of the final.

TIM NASH watches the legendary 1980 Wolves side, which lifted the League Cup, come together again and enjoys a special night at the Copthorne Hotel

As soon as he arrived, Gray was teasing Hibbitt about how he owed him a drink 33 years on for making him "chase all those passes".

Memories of how they celebrated winning the cup still vary.

While Gray recalled a full-on party at the Mount Hotel in Tettenhall and Palmer and Carr kept the three-piece band up to gam, Berry and Richards claimed half the buffet had gone to hungry councillors by the time the Wembley party reached Tettenhall.

Berry, who lived 100 yards away from the Mount, groaned: "I reckon Barney was on a backhander!" in reference to manager John Barnwell, who used to stay at the hotel.

The redeeming memory of Bell, who used to clean the boots of Richards in his younger days and was part of the travelling party that day, is seeing Gray and Richards running down Wembley Way with the cup, long after the crowds had dispersed.

For Palmer, re-living the final again made him realise how much the game has changed. "Seeing the 90 minutes now, it would have ended up five-a-side by today's standards," he said.

"I noticed a tackle by Viv Anderson on John Richards - if that had happened today, he'd have been carried off."

Palmer remembered how he and keeper Paul Bradshaw used to calm their nerves the night before a big away game.

"I used to room with 'Braddy' and I can assure you the bin in our hotel room was full of lager cans!" he said.

"He was one of those lads who would gamble on two flies running up a wall and a 40-a-



Last night - back row, Geoff Palmer, Andy Gray, George Berry, Colin Brazier, Norman Bell and Wayne Clarke with, front row, Richie Barker, Willie Carr, Mel Eves, John Richards and Kenny Hibbitt at the Copthorne Hotel

day smoker, but when you got him on the training ground he was exceptional."

The ex-long-serving right-back also recalled the steady influence of late captain Emyln Hughes - on and off the pitch.

"He used to say 'leave the referee alone - I'll have a word with him', and to be fair he got away with a few things," said Palmer.

"Myself, George and Derek Parkin used to do all his running for him, but he was another good trainer - in The Mermaid pub!"

The final was in the days of only one substitute - Brazier - and Gray quipped: "How didn't you get on, Colin? Kenny was useless, I'd have had him off at half-time! We all went into game thinking we were going to get battered. Mind you, we had Emyln Hughes and George Berry at the back!"

"Myself and John Richards kept looking up to the skies - we had no choice because that was where the ball was all the time!"

Richards said: "We were all having a go at each other watching that because some of the wallops to us were atrocious...and who picked that mid-field!"

Barker joked: "We got Emyln in who was great in the dressing room. Andy was too but not so good on the pitch!"

But the ex-Molineux assistant boss, now 74, recalls plenty of debates with Gray as they tried to get the best out of the team.

"John Barnwell used to say: 'Get Andy away from the ball' - he wanted Andy away down the inside right or left position and wanted Kenny or Willie to put it in there."

Gray had a slightly different version: "I was used to getting to the front post but they told me to go to the back post and head it back across goal - I told them I could get 30 goals a season at the front post but that if they wanted me to go to the back stick and not score I would."

Hibbitt paid tribute to the tactical master-



Emyln Hughes lifts the League Cup following the 1-0 win against Forest

stroke of Barnwell and Barker that nullified European champions Forest.

"Playing Peter Daniel on the right-hand side and moving me inside meant he got on top of John Robertson who didn't really get a kick which was important as he was so strong for them - he was a major help in them winning the European Cup," he said.

Franks delivered a poem which had been read out at Hughes' funeral in 2004 in memory of Wolves' last major trophy-winning captain. Eves, who organised the event, read an email of apology from Barnwell, who is awaiting the results of an ECG following a fall, while revealing other team-mates Paul Bradshaw (illness), Peter Daniel (following the death of his son two years ago), Derek Parkin, John McAlle and Martin Patching couldn't attend.