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History on the Pitch: The Social and Economic Impact of Professional Soccer in Postwar London



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2015 Davidson Honors College Senior Thesis – University of Montana
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1. Introduction

“Twenty-seven years ago Charlton Athletic were unknown... Now, at Wembley Stadium on Saturday a crowd just short of 100,000, among them the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet, acclaimed the South London club as FA Cup Winners. The triumph is Charlton’s greatest in a short history full of remarkable achievements”¹. As Charlton Athletic became the first professional football² club from London to hoist the FA³ Cup trophy in the postwar era, the club played a role in the social revival of London within the immediate devastation of World War II.⁴ The London club became one of many examples in how professional football played a crucial role in the postwar recovery of not only London, but England as a whole. Professional football played a key role in the social and economic recovery of England, specifically London, as the sport provided a social outlet for those affected by war to recover, while the professional realm of football provided large amounts of economic aid due to the sheer financial impact the sport had on society.

Therefore, how did one sport accomplish so much in a society devastated by death and destruction? Newspapers, club programs, financial and attendance records and other documents

¹ “First Division ‘Babes’ Win F.A. Cup,” *Western Daily Press*, April 28, 1947, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000513/19470428/024/00020001> (accessed April 12, 2015).

² For purposes of this paper ‘football’ will be used instead of ‘soccer’ to keep consistent with the name of the sport in the geographic area discussed.

³ FA is short for ‘Football Association.’

⁴ The FA Cup is an annual knockout competition played during the regular domestic football season in addition to Football League competition. Professional, semi-professional and amateur clubs throughout England participated in the competition; although more prominent professional clubs joined the competition in the later stages of the tournament. For example, Football League First and Second Division clubs at the time did not enter the FA Cup until the Third Round Proper. Clubs are paired together each round by a random draw. The FA Cup Final has traditionally been held at Wembley Stadium in London since 1923, with the only exception from 2001-2006 when the Final was held at Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, Wales due to reconstruction of Wembley Stadium.

from the time period were used to answer this important question. As a result, this research will strictly focus on the postwar impact of professional football within England, with most focus on London and London's professional football clubs.

2. A Period of Growth: Football before and during the War in London

To understand the importance of professional football in the postwar era, however, it is necessary to view the sport in the context of before and during World War II. The popularity of football hit a resilient state in the years before World War II. Not only was the game thriving all throughout London, but the football craze reached every corner of England as well. An increase in popularity and the rise of press coverage allowed football to shift from upper-class recreation to more general recreation and interest among all classes in the early twentieth century. Thus, leading up to World War II, football truly became the English national game establishing itself as part of the English cultural identity.

This cultural identity football established, however, can be seen more thoroughly in the professional realm of the sport. Much of football's success after World War I and leading up to and during the 1930s is attributed to English football's still existent professional league – The Football League. English football persevered through World War I and the global Great Depression in the 1930s, during which decade London clubs found varying success. Within London, the most successful club in the decade was Arsenal, which won five Football League First Division titles in addition to the 1935-1936 FA Cup. Chelsea mostly garnered mid-table finishes in the First Division throughout the decade, while Brentford gained promotion to the First Division as Second Division champions in the 1934-1935 season and finished at least sixth

in the First Division in the next three seasons.⁵ As a result, London fans rallied behind the popularity and success of these clubs. Other London clubs such as Tottenham Hotspur, West Ham United and Fulham had moderate to little success as they competed in the Second Division and faced relegation out of the First Division.⁶ Thus, these specific clubs gathered less of a following at the time. Therefore, differences in success and prestige between the London clubs in the pre-World War II era laid the groundwork for the role of professional football socially and economically in the postwar era.

Further establishing this groundwork immediately before the outbreak of World War II, the 1939-1940 Football League consisted of 88 professional clubs throughout England and Wales across four separate divisions and three tiers: the First Division, Second Division, Third Division North and Third Division South. Therefore, the growth of the sport was seen in the growth of the Football League, which greatly increased from 12 clubs in the 1888-1889 and 40 clubs in the 1910-1911 seasons as the sport grew in popularity even through the Great Depression. By the 1939-1940 season, the 88 Football League clubs had only played 2-3 matches before the German invasion of Poland cancelled the remainder of the season as most professional football players became immersed in the war effort.⁷ Like so many sports around the world affected by World War II, full-fledged competitive football would not return to England until 1946.

⁵ English football (and most sports leagues around the world with the most notable exceptions being United States and Australia) uses a system of promotion and relegation, where bottom clubs are relegated to the immediately lower division the next season, while top clubs are promoted to the immediately higher division. At the time, the bottom two clubs in the First and Second Divisions were relegated and the top two clubs in the Second and Third Divisions were promoted.

⁶ Ian Laschke, *Rothmans Book of Football League Records 1888-89 to 1978-79* (London: MacDonald and Jane's, 1980).

⁷ Ibid.

Over 780 footballers throughout the country were enlisted into the war with many of these men representing London clubs.⁸ Hit the hardest in regards to personnel were Arsenal and Charlton Athletic losing 42 and over 60 players respectively to war services.⁹ However, football did not disappear during the war as it provided a positive social outlet for players and spectators amongst the devastation of war, similar to the role football would play in London after the war.

As all London clubs were missing most of their players as a result of the war, many amateur players joined as clubs throughout the country and competed in wartime specific competitions. For example, Frank Morrad played with Arsenal, Crystal Palace and Clapton Orient (whose name would change to Leyton Orient after the war) as an amateur during the war. Morrad was successful in the sense he joined Leyton Orient as a professional after the war and later played for London clubs Fulham and Brentford in the following years.¹⁰ Despite the poorer quality of athletes, football was nowhere near disappearing during World War II, especially given the sport's prominence in the city before the war.

With the FA suspending play in the entire Football League and the FA Cup, clubs mostly filled by amateur players played in specific wartime competitions were created to fill the football void throughout the country. The most notable competition in London was the London War Cup consisting of most London clubs, in addition to others from southern England for two seasons from 1940-1942. Brentford was the most successful of the London clubs in the competition,

⁸ "War Football Difficulties," *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, August 13, 1940, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000640/19400813/151/0005> (accessed March 27, 2015).

⁹ "Arsenal at War," *Arsenal Football Club*, December 16, 2008, <http://www.arsenal.com/history/post-war-arsenal/highbury-stages-first-live-broadcast> (accessed February 18, 2015).

¹⁰ Graham Haynes and Frank Coumbe, *Timeless Bees: Brentford F.C. Who's Who 1920-2006* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 2006).

winning the War Cup in 1941-1942 and finishing runners-up to Reading the previous season.¹¹ Even more important was the Football League War Cup which took place every season during the war. West Ham United and Arsenal found the most success in the competition with West Ham winning the 1939-1940 edition and Arsenal finishing runners up twice.¹² Furthermore, many clubs competed in temporary divisions created by the Football League, such as the war-time Football League South in which London clubs participated. Travel was difficult to arrange and matches were frequently called off due to threats during the war. As a result, full seasons were never played and statistics and records from these matches were deemed unofficial.¹³

As evidenced by these competitions, football was not dead in England, especially in London. Yet football far from masked the sheer violence of the war in London. Peculiarly, attendance figures were still respectable given the danger throughout the city. West Ham United's 1-0 victory over Blackburn Rovers in the 1940 Football League War Cup final saw a modest 42,399 in attendance at Wembley Stadium¹⁴ when compared to the 99,370 in attendance at Wembley at the 1939 FA Cup final between Portsmouth and Wolverhampton Wanderers.¹⁵ However this so-called modest attendance was still respectable and notable given these threats, such as fear that the surrounding area of the stadium would be bombed by Luftwaffe fans in the

¹¹ "Brentford at Full Strength," *Portsmouth Evening News*, May 27, 1942, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000290/19420527/031/0004> (accessed March 25, 2015).

¹² "1940-41 The War Years: Regional League South," *West Ham United Football Programmes: A Pictorial History*, ed. by Steve March et al., 2015, <http://whu-programmes.co.uk/1940-41-first-xi/4550819329> (accessed February 27, 2015).

¹³ Given the lack of formality of wartime Football League matches, specific tables, attendance figures and statistics are difficult to find, although few do exist.

¹⁴ "Hammers Win Cup," *Portsmouth Evening News*, June 10, 1942, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000290/19400610/070/0004> (accessed March 25, 2015).

¹⁵ "Football's Final Reckoning F.A. Cup Winners: Portsmouth," *Burnley Express*, May 10, 1939, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000672/19390510/219/0006> (accessed March 26, 2015).

area.¹⁶ The 1941 War Cup Final between Preston North End and Arsenal saw 60,000 in attendance at Wembley despite Nazi Germany's consequences of "The Blitz"¹⁷ seeing London as a major target. Furthermore, the South regional Finals of the War Cup in 1942 and 1943 saw 75,000 and 85,000 in attendance at Wembley respectively.¹⁸

Attendances were modest but also impressive given the circumstances apart from large final matches at Wembley Stadium. For example, in a Football League South fixture between Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham United on July 31, 1940, 6,000 were in attendance at Tottenham's home ground of White Hart Lane¹⁹ – a respectable figure but much smaller than average attendance figures at White Hart Lane in the pre-war period where, for instance, a Tottenham home match in October 1938 against Fulham drew 46,679.²⁰ Even with danger in sight on September 7, 1940, 3,000 fans attended West Ham United's home fixture at their home ground Upton Park against Tottenham Hotspur as the match was abandoned with 10 minutes remaining because of an air-raid warning.²¹ Although the popularity of football had taken a drop-off since before the war, thousands still flocked to see their favorite professional London clubs play, providing a sense of social relief from the war effort and danger. This meant that despite war, football was truly a representation of the English cultural identity, foreshadowing the importance of the sport in the postwar focus.

¹⁶ "1940-41 The War Years," *West Ham United Football Programmes*.

¹⁷ "The Blitz" was a period of strategic bombing by Nazi Germany throughout the United Kingdom during World War II from 1940-41. Most of the strategic bombing was focused in London.

¹⁸ Laschke, *Rothmans Book*.

¹⁹ "1940-41 The War Years," *West Ham United Football Programmes*.

²⁰ "London Derby," *Hartlepool Mail*, October 13, 1938, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000378/19381013/175/0007> (accessed March 25, 2015).

²¹ "1940-41 The War Years," *West Ham United Football Programmes*.

Much like Upton Park, football stadiums in London played a significant role within the war due to their geographical placement in the context of the war. Arsenal's ground Highbury went from a football stadium to an air raid precautions stronghold at the beginning of the war. As a result, Arsenal played their home matches during the war at rival Tottenham Hotspur's ground White Hart Lane, as Tottenham returned the favor because they played at Highbury for many home matches during World War I. Highbury was bombed in 1941 as well, and much of the south end of the stadium had to be replaced before Arsenal returned to Highbury near the conclusion of the war.²²



Transformation of Arsenal's ground Highbury into an air raid precautions stronghold

Arguably even more physically affected by the war was Millwall's home ground known as The Den. The war had come at a crucial point for Millwall. During the 1938-1939 season, the club announced a major expansion to their ground. Millwall began the expansion of the stadium at the beginning of the 1939-1940 season, but these plans were abandoned at the start of

²² "Arsenal at War."

the war.²³ Years later in 1943 as part of a small Luftwaffe raid a bomb hit the north end of The Den, tearing off roofs over the stands and bombing craters onto the pitch.²⁴ No one was injured or killed in the attack, but the club was forced to play at the grounds of other London Clubs, such as rival West Ham United's Upton Park and Crystal Palace's Selhurst Park. Eventually, Millwall returned to The Den in the early postwar period, but struggled as the club's stadium was still severely damaged, living up to a previous newspaper headline that declared Millwall as "Soccer's unluckiest club"²⁵.



Aftermath of war violence at The Den

As the war began to wind down within the European theatre in 1945 with the deaths of Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, in addition to the Potsdam Conference dividing and governing the former Third Reich and establishing postwar order, London, like the rest of

²³ "Millwall, The Den and the Misfortunes of War," *The Millwall History Files*, <http://www.millwall-history.org.uk/Origins-4.htm> (accessed February 12, 2015).

²⁴ "The Den. New Cross, Headquarters of Millwall F.C. was Damaged in a High Explosive Bomb Night Raid," *Western Daily Press*, May 19, 1943, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000513/19430519/044/0003> (accessed March 25, 2015).

²⁵ "Millwall, The Den and the Misfortunes of War," *The Millwall History Files*.

Europe, had a long road ahead to establish a sense of normality in reconstruction. Therefore, the return of full-fledged professional football in London was ready to aid in the postwar recovery process. Although it was a slow process, professional football played a crucial role in this return to normality socially and economically in London.

3. Rising from the Rubble: The professional football struggle in immediate postwar London

"If you will not fight for right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory is sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves." – Winston Churchill, 1948²⁶

As Churchill's resilient quote suggests, the intensity of war affected football all throughout Europe, but London in particular was one of the cities most affected as evidenced by the state of professional football during the time period. As the war came to an end many London stadiums were left in a dilapidated state. While many footballers survived the war, as did the sport itself, the majority of top professional players were still completing their military service, and as a result most did not return to their respective clubs immediately. As a consequence, football's lasting postwar impact generally took a few years to come to fruition.

Naturally, the war claimed the lives of many footballers. In terms of fatalities, Arsenal was hit the hardest out of the London Football League clubs losing nine first team players.²⁷

Arsenal goalkeeper Bill Dean stated "well I have fulfilled my life's ambition, I have played for

²⁶ Winston Churchill, "Churchill on War," *National Churchill Museum*, <https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/war-quotes.html> (accessed April 27, 2015).

²⁷ Anton Rippon, *Gas Masks for Goal Posts: Football in Britain During the Second World War* (Brimcombe Port, Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2007).

Arsenal” years before he died as a member of the Royal Navy in 1942 when his ship, the HMS Naiad, was hit by a torpedo.²⁸ In addition, many players were no longer able to play the sport as a result of war injuries. For example, star Arsenal forward Cliff Bastin, who was with Arsenal since 1929, injured his leg in the war even though he was excused from military service because he was partially deaf. When Bastin returned to play for Arsenal his injured leg greatly affected his performance and ultimately led to his retirement in 1948.²⁹ Furthermore, goalkeeper Ray King, who simultaneously served in the war while playing at Newcastle United from 1942-1946 in his youth career, became hampered by a build-up of injuries suffered in the war such as “synovitis in the knee” and “a broken wrist”³⁰. Thus, when King signed with Leyton Orient for the 1946-1947 season he only made one appearance before recovering and spending eight seasons at Port Vale.³¹ With these examples, the immediate postwar era saw football, like so many aspects of English and European society, in a state of transition. However, further positive decisions made by the Football Association (FA) allowed football to make a social and economic impact within London.

This so-called transition took place during the 1945-1946 season. As football was still in transition in terms of personnel as players were still returning from war, the Football League did not return to full-fledged competition until the following year. Instead, the Football League continued to organize separate North and South divisions to limit travel within England as a cost

²⁸ Tom Whittaker, *The Arsenal Story* (London: Sportsmans Book Club, 1958).

²⁹ Alan Roper, *The Real Arsenal Story* (Norwich: Adur, 2004).

³⁰ Phil Shaw, “Ray King: Goalkeeper whose displays for Port Vale put him on the verge of selection for the England World Cup squad,” *The Independent*, October 14, 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/news/ray-king-goalkeeper-whose-displays-for-port-vale-put-him-on-the-verge-of-selection-for-the-england-world-cup-squad-9792349.html> (accessed February 22, 2014).

³¹ Ibid.

effective measure.³² However, despite what was still considered to be the wartime era of English football given complete Football League competition had not yet returned, all matches were fulfilled on the schedule. This highlighted a willingness of society and clubs themselves to return to football. London clubs found moderate success in the competition with most finishing mid-table. Even the clubs hit hardest by personnel as a result of the war were still able to put a competitive team out on the pitch compared to clubs outside of London.³³ The 1945-1946 season also saw the return of the FA Cup. Traditionally (and to this day), each round of the competition consisted of one match between teams drawn together. However, with increased revenue and the need for additional competitive matches in mind, the FA stifled tradition in favor of two-legged matches, meaning one match was played at the home ground of each club, with the winner determined based on the aggregate goals of the two matches.³⁴ This provided an additional financial boost for clubs and made up for a lack of league matches.³⁵

Thus, the FA Cup was the only fully-professional competition in England for the 1945-1946 season. Football League matches that season were played, but were not deemed official, similar to previous wartime leagues. In this early period out of war, more popular London clubs such as Chelsea and Arsenal found the most success. These clubs were more successful as they were the clubs most financially sufficient due to their success and prominence before and during the war, and therefore had more resources to recover competitively.

³² Laschke, *Rothmans Book*.

³³ I found it interesting that Birmingham clubs Birmingham City and Aston Villa were very successful in the 1945-1946 Football League South finishing first and second respectively, given similarities in how London and Birmingham were physically damaged and affected by the war.

³⁴ Two-legged matches are very common in football today, particularly in FIFA World Cup qualifying and European competitions, among others.

³⁵ "F.A. Cup," *Hull Daily Mail*, February 18, 1946, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000324/19460218/011/0001> (accessed March 24, 2015).

Yet in the immediate postwar period many London clubs struggled as a result of problems stemming from the war. Arguably the biggest example of this was Millwall. As the war ended, the club's home stadium The Den was still in a disastrous state. In the years before and during the transitional 1945-1946 season after playing 'home' matches at the grounds of other London clubs, Millwall decided to build temporary stand at The Den as "they felt their long-suffering fans would rather stand amongst the ruins of their beloved home ground than continue to travel to assorted local enclosures"³⁶. This showed that even within a state of ruin, football fans were willing to embrace their club. However, Millwall's issues continued in the following years as well. In the immediate postwar period the club created plans to rebuild The Den and even had the funds and materials for the construction. Yet the club encountered sheer difficulty in obtaining the building license needed to complete the construction. Furthermore, Millwall's lack of success on the pitch did not help when full competition in the Football League returned in 1946-1947. The club finished 18th in the 1946-1947 Second Division and last out of 22 in the 1947-1948 season, meaning Millwall were relegated the following season.³⁷ One of football's biggest clubs before World War II had been knocked towards the bottom in comparison to London's other clubs, yet the resiliency and passion of the club's fans still remained alluding to the social attachment towards football during the time period.

As matches were played without the distraction of the war, football helped bring a sense of normality back to society. For the first time since the 1938-1939 season, a full slate of English football competition returned for the 1946-1947 season. The full professional schedule included Football League competition across all four divisions and three levels. Furthermore,

³⁶ "Millwall 1945-64," *The Millwall History Files*, <http://www.millwall-history.org.uk/Origins-5.htm> (accessed February 12, 2015).

³⁷ Laschke, *Rothmans Book*.

the FA Cup returned to single-leg fixtures this season as regular professional competition returned by August 1946.³⁸ This overall return was remarkably fast as clubs still dealt with the aftermath of war, particularly in regards to loss of players and stadia that remained damaged.

As the war hit London harder than other areas of England, the general competitive nature of London clubs took a hit, showing the impact players serving in the war had on their clubs competitively. No London club finished in the top half of the table of the 22 Football League First Division clubs in 1946-1947 because of the competitive disadvantage. London “giants” Arsenal and Chelsea finished, by both of their standards, finished a modest thirteenth and fifteenth place respectively in the final table; a large contrast to the top finishes both clubs achieved before the war. Brentford finished twenty-first in the First Division that season and, as a result of finishing in the bottom two places, were relegated to the Second Division the following season. Within the Second and South Third Divisions, only Tottenham Hotspur (sixth in the Second Division) and Queen’s Park Rangers (second in Third Division South) found success.³⁹

One London club that saw arguably mixed success in the 1946-1947 season was Charlton Athletic. Charlton only finished two spots above relegation in nineteenth place in the 1946-1947 Football League First Division. However, the club found great success in that season’s FA Cup, winning the entire competition after finishing as runners-up in the cup the previous season. After drawing lower division clubs Rochdale and West Bromich Albion in their first two cup games, Charlton drew a difficult match against Preston North End at home in the Sixth Round

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

(quarterfinals) of the competition in which Charlton were declared a club “full of confidence”⁴⁰. Charlton moved on to upset Preston at home 2-1, Newcastle United 4-0 in Leeds and defeated Burnley 1-0 in extra time in the FA Cup final at Wembley.⁴¹

From a historical perspective, the performance of clubs greatly affected the social mentality of those in their respective communities. This was especially the case in London given the different sections of the city and their club(s) representing each.⁴² However, London clubs had different impacts on this social revival after the war as generally correlated by their success. English sports historians Tony Mason and Richard Holt argued that “football often contributes to an individual’s sense of identity with or belonging to a group or collectivity” and that “football clubs are historically one of the principal agents through which collective social identities are created and reinforced”⁴³. Furthermore to support this, Holt argued football clubs represent a sense of social belonging stemming all the way back to the rapid urbanization in England in the late nineteenth century, arguing that “these inhabitants of big cities needed a cultural expression of their urbanism which went beyond the immediate ties of kin and locality. A need for rootedness as well as excitement is what seems most evident in the behavior of football

⁴⁰ “Charlton Are Full of Confidence,” *Lancashire Evening Post*, February 26, 1947, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000711/19470226/104/0004> (accessed March 26, 2015).

⁴¹ “F.A. Cup Final,” *Western Morning News*, April 26, 1947, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000329/19470426/062/0006> (accessed March 25, 2015).

⁴² It is worth noting the short distances between many clubs from different parts in London breeding many important rivalries that are still bitter in the game today. For example in North London, the grounds of rival clubs Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur are only separated by four miles. Chelsea and Fulham are only separated by two miles.

⁴³ Adam Brown, Tim Crabbe, and Gavin Mellor, “English Professional Football and Its Communities,” *International Review of Modern Sociology* 32, no. 2 (2006): 159-79.

crowds”⁴⁴. Even stated within the context of nineteenth century industrialization, much of what Mason and Holt argue can be applied to the context of reconstruction after the war.

Overall football attendances throughout London were at an all-time high by the late 1940s. The 1946 and 1947 FA Cup finals both featuring Charlton Athletic saw over 98,000 in attendance at Wembley, showing the eagerness to return to football after the war.⁴⁵ Furthermore in 1947, approximately 35.4 million fans passed through the turnstiles to football matches throughout England, a sharp increase from 23.4 million in 1927 and 26.4 million in 1937, showing the demand and need for football as a form of postwar recovery. Furthermore, gate revenues from English football matches in 1947 doubled from 1937 figures to approximately £2.933 million from £1.575 million. Interestingly enough, average admission prices to football matches only increased from 6p to 8p, meaning that the increase in revenue was mostly due to the sheer number of people watching football rather than the cost of tickets.⁴⁶ As football admission remained relatively cheap at this point, most could afford the sport as a form of entertainment, with club revenue recycled back into football’s role in the social reconstruction of London and England as a whole, especially as the immediate postwar era London hit a crucial point in its recovery.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Adam Brown, “English Football.”

⁴⁵ “F.A. Cup Final,” *Western Morning News*.

⁴⁶ Stephen Dobson and John Goddard, "Performance, Revenues, and Cross Subsidization in the Football League, 1927-1994," *The Economic History Review* 51, no. 4 (1998): 763-785.

⁴⁷ For economic data analysis of Football League attendances in the broad postwar era, see Peter J. W. N. Bird, “The Demand For League Football,” *Applied Economics* 14 (1982): 637-649.



Charlton Athletic hoisting the 1947 FA Cup trophy

Furthermore, the professional football industry played a role in the early stages of postwar economic recovery as clubs throughout the United Kingdom were required to pay entertainment taxes based on their revenues. Larger and richer clubs throughout the country were generally able to afford these taxes, while smaller clubs were hard-pressed to forcibly make this contribution. One club struggling to pay the entertainment tax was Torquay United, who in 1946 sent a statement to all other Football League Third Division clubs arguing that “the present system of taxation is far from fair in relation to the gate receipts obtained by these clubs”⁴⁸. Given the revenue based off of the desire and need for football at the time, football clubs played a notable role in regards to the British government. However if changes to the tax, generally consisting of 40% of “gross gate receipts” were not made, representatives from Torquay United argued that “many Third Division clubs will find it very difficult to carry on and some will be

⁴⁸ I was not able to obtain tax records during this period from any of the smaller London clubs. However, the statement from Torquay United (located approximately 200 miles west on the southwestern coast of England) in the *Western Morning News* highlights almost identical financial struggles smaller London clubs were facing as a result of the entertainment tax.

dependent upon generous directors who in the past have been compelled to finance football personally to a great extent”⁴⁹. Previous clubs attempting to reduce the entertainment tax on sport were made as, for example, Tottenham Hotspur worked towards a resolution to lower the tax in an October 1945 Football League meeting in Manchester. However, the club was ultimately unsuccessful.⁵⁰

At this point in London history, the recovery process from the war was still evident. As football in England did not return to its full professional program until August 1946, football at first played a small yet notable role in the recovery process. Generally speaking, London clubs did not find as much success in the immediate years after the war compared to their counterparts from other parts of England as even most prominent clubs in London were hit the hardest both in terms of competitive personnel and infrastructure.⁵¹ However despite this disadvantage, Football League attendance was at its peak throughout England by 1947, and London clubs brought in more revenue than any previous period in the sports history, even adjusted for inflation. Thus, further progressing through the late 1940s and 1950s, the role of football in the postwar recovery process would emerge even further to truly lay its mark on English history.

⁴⁹ “Entertainment Tax Unfair,” *Western Morning News*, March 30, 1946, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000329/19460330/079/0006> (accessed April 2, 2015).

⁵⁰ “Tottenham’s Tax Move,” *Derby Daily Telegraph*, October 17, 1945, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000521/19451017/045/0005> (accessed April 2, 2015).

⁵¹ Arguably to this day, Millwall has still not recovered from a competitive standpoint from the war. The club’s supporter base remains one of the smallest of London’s professional clubs, in addition to the fact Millwall has only spent two seasons in the top flight of English football since the end of World War II.

4. Progress: Postwar professional football in London in the late-1940s and early-1950s

The quest for a London club to capture the Football League First Division title in the postwar era did not last long. Even under new manager Tom Whittaker and without star forward Cliff Bastin, Arsenal became the first London club in the postwar era to win a professional league title, having been crowned First Division champions finishing seven points ahead of Manchester United. Thus, Arsenal achieved its sixth top division title in club history, although according to many newspaper sources this championship had meant more to the Arsenal supporters than any other given the circumstances of postwar recovery in the return to normalcy.⁵²

From a competitive standpoint, the larger London clubs quickly returned to the prominence of their pre-war success. As people were ready to return to the grounds to watch football they did so in outstanding numbers. For example, Arsenal drew consistent crowds of tens of thousands per game resulting in a great deal of revenue. Arsenal's January 17, 1948 away match at Manchester United's Old Trafford saw 83,260 in attendance, which remains to this day the largest attendance ever for a Football League match.⁵³ Other prominent London clubs such as Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea were not far behind in attendance figures as well. As a result, these London clubs garnered even more financial success from the resulting income to separate themselves from other London clubs, given their large fan bases and lucrative player signings.

⁵² "Arsenal Champions Again," *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, April 12, 1948, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000687/19480412/072/0003> (accessed March 23, 2015).

⁵³ "GGM 44 Whittaker leads Arsenal to sixth title," *Arsenal Football Club*, August 8, 2007, <http://www.arsenal.com/news/news-archive/ggm-44-whittaker-leads-arsenal-to-sixth-title> (accessed February 18, 2015).

For example, in summer 1948 Arsenal had enough funds to sign a prominent young forward in Douglas Lishman for a “considerable fee”⁵⁴ in addition to midfielder Alex Forbes for £15,000, with both players having great success in the future for the club.⁵⁵ A top England striker in Roy Bentley signed with Chelsea for £12,500 as well.⁵⁶ As increasing fan bases and resulting revenues aided these London clubs, the resulting competitive prevalence of these three clubs - Arsenal, Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea - achieved a great deal of success in the late 1940s and 1950s. Following Arsenal’s 1947-1948 League Championship was a FA Cup victory in 1949-1950 and another First Division championship in 1952-1953. Furthermore, Tottenham Hotspur won the Second Division in 1949-1950 and was subsequently promoted to the 1950-1951 First Division, which Tottenham Hotspur won, in addition to a runner-up finish in the 1951-1952 First Division. Chelsea won their first ever title in the 1954-55 First Division as well.⁵⁷ As a result, prominent clubs in London encompassed a great deal of success, increasing social positivity and giving clubs supporters a positive outlook away from the devastation from the war to this point.

Although larger London clubs received most of the attention for their successes in the First Division and FA Cup, smaller London clubs fed off similar support from their supporters to achieve success at the lower levels of the Football League on a smaller scale. West London clubs Queen’s Park Rangers and Fulham won the Third Division South in the 1947-1948 and the

⁵⁴ “Arsenal Sign Lishman,” *Hull Daily Mail*, June 2, 1948, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000324/19480602/045/0004> (accessed March 24, 2015).

⁵⁵ “Scottish Wing-Half Joins Arsenal,” *Western Daily Press*, February 20, 1948, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000513/19480220/011/0002> (accessed March 28, 2015).

⁵⁶ “Chelsea Bid to Sign Bentley,” *Dundee Courier*, January 7, 1948, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000564/19480107/028/0002> (accessed March 28, 2015).

⁵⁷ Laschke, *Rothmans Book*.

1948-1949 Second Division respectively. Even Millwall, after tough seasons immediately after the war and in the 1949-1950 season when the club finished last in the Third Division South, finished runners-up in the 1952-1953 Third Division South as Millwall support and attendance had remained stagnant and supported the club through the difficult periods.

Especially seen in London, football attendance in the early 1950s was once again at its highest point ever with over 39 million in total attendance in 1952, with the average gate admission price almost doubling from pre-war levels.⁵⁸ Thus, the demand for the sport in London had never been greater. However, this point did see the gap in attendances between higher and lower level clubs, particularly in London, increase. By the 1950-1951 season, the 22 Football League First division clubs saw an increase in percentage of total Football League attendance from 42.7% in 1946-47 to 48.0%.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the financial gap between clubs became even more evident, where in the early 1950s First Division clubs acquired 54.5% of club revenues, even with the Football League First Division only consisting of a fourth of the Football League's then 88 clubs. Therefore as especially evident in London beginning in the early 1950's, as attendances began to shift to larger clubs, the competitive gap spread between more successful First Division clubs and clubs in the lower tiers. This allowed more successful London clubs to aid in the social recovery process further as a result of their success during the time period.

The late 1940s and early 1950s marked a general turning point in the ability of professional football in London to have a social and economic impact on the postwar society as London clubs became increasingly competitive and as attendance continued to rise in record

⁵⁸ Dobson and Goddard, "Performance, Revenues, and Cross Subsidization."

⁵⁹ Stephen Dobson and John Goddard, "The Demand for Professional League Football in England and Wales, 1925-92," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 44, no. 2 (1995): 259-277.

numbers. As people flocked to the many stadia of London as a way of social revival from the war as a way of affordable entertainment, football provided a way to move on from the devastation of war. London clubs achieved a great deal of success from this influx of revenue. These successes brought positive news to those with a lack of such from the war. Furthermore, the increasing gap of disparity between the top and bottom clubs professional football became more evident, as evidenced by the financial and attendance statistics demonstrating how London's top clubs were successful in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Thus, postwar attendance figures specifically established the foundation for the sport's financial and competitive dominance into the 1960s and beyond.

5. More than a Game: Race and identity in postwar London in the context of professional football

Football means something in London and the entire United Kingdom itself. Looking at newspapers from the war period to today, one would generally find football news to be addressed in a similar importance to current events. In the early 1940s, scores from the Football League War Cup, thus matches that were not even deemed official professional matches, would be located next to news events from the war. Therefore since its sharp rise in popularity after World War I, football heavily embraced itself as part of the cultural identity in London and England as a whole. With the aforementioned argument that London clubs became a sense of community for fans, clubs were further collectively embraced by racial, religious and other groups, allowing professional clubs to establish a sense of social identity in the postwar era. Thus, a sense of personal identity towards connected to London clubs played a key role in establishing the social aspect of postwar recovery. However, this sense of social identity can be looked at both through

positive and negative lens. In a positive manner, many people became representative of clubs as a social identity through religion, race and other identities. However, many others also became associated with violent gangs unofficially representing certain London clubs around the 1960s, with such violence later known under the term ‘hooliganism.’

One example of the relation between football club and religion is greatly influenced by the theme of Jewish immigration to London in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through World War II. From approximately 1870 until the start of World War I, England as a whole was seen as a “major land of settlement” in regards to Jewish immigration. Many migrants came through England en route to the United States, but a vast majority remained in England. As migrants were documented by nationality instead of religion, many Russian and Romanian migrants, among other nationalities, were documented as Jewish when in reality they were Christian. This assumption was established because of the large Jewish populations among these countries. It is estimated hundreds of thousands of migrants entered England by the turn of the twentieth century, with almost 250,000 migrants by 1901, yet only thousands of these migrants were actually Jewish.⁶⁰ Regardless at this point, the Jewish population was small but notable. Specific to London, many of these Jewish immigrants settled in the East End and North London at the time, with many settling in boroughs such as Harrow, Barnet, Hackney and other areas close to prominent professional London clubs.⁶¹

By 1910, the Jewish population increased to over 242,000 throughout the United Kingdom. A fraction of these migrants settled in the East End and North London. All coming together in the passion of football, as the sport had already become the most popular sport

⁶⁰ Lloyd P. Gartner, "Notes on the Statistics of Jewish Immigration to England 1870-1914," *Jewish Social Studies* 22, no. 2 (1960): 97-102.

⁶¹ Ibid.

throughout Europe, most Jews in the area gathered in their support of Tottenham Hotspur. Jewish journalist Anthony Clavane argued that the time “the Spurs⁶² were more glamorous back then than the closer West Ham United or Arsenal”⁶³. This early Jewish support of the club before World War I helped establish the further role of the club in the postwar era.

Jewish footballers also established a small but notable presence throughout England even before the war. Outside of London, Louis Bookman was the first Jewish footballer to play in the Football League playing at Bradford City and West Bromwich Albion before the war.⁶⁴ Additionally, Jewish footballer Les Gaunt played at Leeds United before the outbreak of World War II⁶⁵ as a defender.⁶⁶ Interestingly enough, many Jewish footballers changed their Jewish-sounding names to avoid persecution within society. For example, both Bookman and Gaunt changed their names from Buckhalter and Goldberg respectively, as Clavane argues that “having a Jewish name in public life wasn’t a good thing”⁶⁷. Jews in England, much like throughout Europe at the time, faced common anti-Semitic sentiment and persecution for this reason. Even with examples from outside London before the war, football provided a sense of community among Jews before the postwar era, establishing the groundwork for the impact of football on the Jewish community in the postwar era.

⁶² ‘Spurs’ is a common shorthand nickname of Tottenham Hotspur.

⁶³ Anthony Clavane, *Does Your Rabbi Know You’re Here?: The Story of English Football’s Forgotten Tribe* (London: Quercus, 2012).

⁶⁴ Anthony Clavane, “Anthony Clavane talks about the origins of Jewish footballers,” *Quercus Books* video, 3:51, October 19, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmjuEQJz3bA>

⁶⁵ During the Football League War Cup, Gaunt guested for London Clubs Arsenal (1941-42) and Brentford (1945-46) while also serving in the war.

⁶⁶ “Leslie Gaunt Profile,” *Leeds United F.C. History*, ed. by Tony Hill, 2006, http://www.ozwhitelufc.net.au/players_profiles/G/GoldbergL.php (accessed February 28, 2015).

⁶⁷ Clavane, “Origins of Jewish footballers.”



Jewish footballer Les Goldberg playing for Leeds United c. 1946-47

As Jews attempted to flee away from the rise of Nazi Germany in the 1930s, most western European countries, including the United Kingdom, were hesitant to let refugees into their countries. Regardless, almost a further 100,000 Jews settled in the United Kingdom by the outbreak of World War II, many of which settled in London.⁶⁸ Yet the United Kingdom still refused to take in Jewish refugees in mass quantity, as evidenced by the ultimately unsuccessful negotiations between the UK, United States and France at the Évian Conference in July 1938.⁶⁹ However, the United Kingdom, in arguable contradiction, led the *Kindertransport* from 1938-40, rescuing approximately 10,000 children between the ages of “three months to seventeen

⁶⁸ Marilyn Taylor, "Millisle, County Down: Haven from Nazi Terror," *History Ireland* 9, no. 4 (2001): 34-37.

⁶⁹ Pursued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Évian Conference attempted to derive a solution to the sharply increasing number of Jewish refugees escaping Nazi persecution. However, most countries ultimately refused to accept more Jewish refugees, and historians generally regard the conference as unsuccessful.

years of age”⁷⁰. Some of these children were sent to London, adding to the Jewish population and providing a new wave of football support in the postwar period. Much of this new Jewish generation in the East End and North London also supported Tottenham Hotspur, adding to the Jewish legacy of the club established before the war. However, much of this generation also supported Arsenal, given the club’s rise in popularity in the postwar era in comparison to before the war.

Regardless, football allowed the Jewish populations of London and throughout England to escape the persecution and anti-Semitic culture, in addition to the sheer terror, insecurity and anxiety of being a European Jew during the war. Much of the aid football provided to London Jews was promoted through club identity, with the Jewish culture of Tottenham Hotspur as the strongest example in London throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and into the postwar era. This overarching example represents the great deal of good football can provide to bring minority groups together in support of a common interest. However, later in the postwar era saw another form of social club identity much different than one of a religious context, the rise of ‘hooliganism.’

Although evidence of ‘hooliganism’ and related violence existed on some level throughout the existence of football in England, violence associated with ‘hooliganism’ did not come to the forefront until the mid-1960s when football in England reached its “Golden Age.” Yet in the immediate postwar era, many football historians regard the time period as one “in which peace and tranquility reigned in soccer grounds”⁷¹. In a broad sense, fans supported their clubs in a positive manner with few instances of violence in the late 1940s. Apart from specific

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy and John Williams, *Football on Trial: Spectator Violence and Development in the Football World* (Oxford: Routledge, 2004).

cases of violence directed towards players rather than other fans in the late 1940s and early 1950s, particularly at the grounds of Millwall and Queen's Park Rangers, The Den and Loftus Road respectively, football fandom was generally peaceful. Yet as London and the United Kingdom began to accomplish full social, economic and infrastructural recovery from the war by the 1950s, juvenile crime was rapidly increasing. Violence among youth started to become more evident throughout London and England as a whole. Thus, football crowds became increasingly violent. As professional football's role in postwar recovery in London hit a high, the sport faced a completely different type of issue.

London's media outlets in the 1960s worked diligently to cover the new widespread violence. News of violence occurring before, during or after football matches at or near grounds ran rampant throughout London. One story involved an October 1965 match between Brentford and Millwall when a Millwall supporter threw a hand grenade onto the pitch. Brentford goalkeeper Chic Brodie picked up the grenade and discovered it was a fake, even though previous action saw further fighting and violence between fans of both clubs. On November 8, 1965, British tabloid newspaper *The Sun* summarized the violence with the headline of "Soccer Marches to War," further elaborating:⁷²

"The Football Association have acted to stamp out this increasing mob violence within 48 hours of the blackest day in British soccer – the grenade day that showed that British supporters can rival anything the South Americans can do. The World Cup is now less than nine months away. That is all the time we have left to try and restore the once good sporting name of this country. Soccer is sick at the moment. Or better, its crowds seem to have contracted some disease that causes them to break out in fury."⁷³

London media further covered the rising football-related violence throughout London and England, so much that the media actually created a great deal of skepticism that promoted even

⁷² Dunning et al., *Football on Trial*.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

further violence. An example in 1967 saw a Chelsea supporter at their home ground of Stamford Bridge in advance of a match against West Ham United carrying with a razor in his hand, stating that he “read in a local newspaper that the West Ham lot were going to cause trouble,” further alluding to the sense of rivalry among London clubs.⁷⁴

Football violence and ‘hooliganism’ became more prevalent by the 1970s with the widespread establishment of hooligan firms. These firms allowed for further fighting at or away from their grounds of their respective football clubs or in a more underground nature, as large groups of men would fight under the identity of their respective clubs. Notable London hooligan firms included the Millwall Bushwackers, West Ham United’s Inter-City Firm,⁷⁵ Arsenal’s The Herd, Tottenham Hotspur’s Yid Army, the Chelsea Headhunters and Charlton Athletic’s Cockney Firestarters. With these firms came further violence and even death. One such example involved the murder of Arsenal supporter John Dickinson in 1982, who was beaten to death by members of the Inter-City Firm, represented by West Ham United supporters when the two rival firms staged a mass fight after a match between the two clubs at Highbury.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ For a fictionalized account of West Ham United’s hooligan firm see *Green Street Hooligans*, directed by Lexi Alexander, (2005; Los Angeles, CA: Freestyle Releasing, 2005), DVD.

⁷⁶ “The anatomy of a Soccer slaying,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, August 9, 1983, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=u4ZWAAAIBAJ&sjid=ruYDAAAIBAJ&pg=2907,2536904&hl=en> (accessed April 2, 2015).



Violence and 'hooliganism' at a 1975 match between West Ham United and Manchester United

As the violence continued throughout the 1980s, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was disgusted by the widespread violence and ‘hooliganism’ still existent in London and throughout the rest of the country. Thatcher and members of the then Conservative government looked to enact public campaigns against ‘hooliganism’ and worked to ban alcohol within football grounds throughout the 1980s, although very little came of these proposals.⁷⁷ Furthermore, Thatcher proposed the Football Spectators Act of 1989. The Act, establishing attendance controls on football matches in England and Wales, required away fans to present an identity card to attend away matches, among other stipulations, to help curtail this violence. However, given the events of the Hillsborough Disaster of 1989,⁷⁸ the Football Spectators Act was put on hold and never fully implemented.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ “National Archives: revelations from the released documents,” *The Guardian*, December 29, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/dec/30/national-archives-revelations-released-documents> (accessed April 1, 2015).

⁷⁸ The Hillsborough Disaster was a stadium crush as a result of overcrowding that led to the deaths of 96 people on April 15, 1989 at Sheffield Wednesday’s Hillsborough Stadium in a

Football clubs allowed London citizens to collectively come together under a single social identity, whether within the context of a religious or racial identity or such as an identity embracing violence. Regardless, the resulting social identities established by football clubs still embraced a sense of revival after World War II. Furthermore, these social identities can be seen further in the continual growth of the game in London in the 1960s as a result of further social and economic stimulation and globalization of the English football product, which brought more attention to the sport than ever before.

6. The World's Game: Professional football in London after the postwar Period

As the violence that had been established throughout football beginning in the 1960s grew, attendances declined. In the immediate postwar era, football had become a form of social recuperation for many. But now that postwar recovery had accomplished this task, football was seen through a different lens away from the play on the pitch. Yet despite all of these troubles, many football historians still consider the 1960s to be the “golden age” of English football in its own respect, particularly in London, given the globalization of the English facet of the game promoted by the hosting and winning the 1966 World Cup, among other factors. This meant despite issues from the social facet of the game, the positives in football from the time period allowed for the foundation of growth in the sport from the 1960s to the global power it is today.

F.A. Cup semi-final match between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. This event was the worst sport-related disaster in British history and led to a great deal of stadium reform and rules recommended by the 1990 Taylor Report of the disaster.

⁷⁹ The U.K. National Archives, *Football Spectators Act 1989* (Kew: The National Archives, 2015).

The mid-to-late 1950s saw shifts in the structure of the Football League and the structure of European football as a whole. As the Football League continued to grow in size in the postwar era, the league changed its structure for the 1958-1959 season by eliminating the separate divisional splits in the North and South Third Divisions, which created the Third and Fourth Divisions that spanned England. Many London clubs competed in these newly established divisions, such as Brentford and Queen's Park Rangers in the Third Division and Crystal Palace and Millwall in the Fourth Division.⁸⁰ Furthermore, the 1950s saw the creation of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) European Cup in 1955, a knockout competition between winners of most domestic leagues in Europe. Although the establishment of European-wide expansion begins to foreshadow the later globalization of the sport, English and especially London clubs found little success in the competition in its early stages, especially as Real Madrid won the first five editions of the tournament.⁸¹

This time period of restructuring and change saw a decline in overall Football League attendance as well. By 1957, overall attendance for all clubs had declined by about six million over five years. This meant each club on average saw a decrease in attendance of roughly 65,000 fans per season, resulting in a drop of approximately 1,400 fans per game.⁸² The decline of attendance can be seen in many different ways. Of course, as the postwar era wound down, other facets of English society had recovered a sense of normality. People relied on football less as a form of social recovery. Even more evident however was the televising of football matches throughout England. Although matches were televised sparingly in the postwar era, beginning in 1955 the United Kingdom's ITV frequently showed highlights from Football League matches.

⁸⁰ Laschke, *Rothmans Book*.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Dobson and Goddard, "Performance, Revenues, and Cross Subsidization."

This was a new concept at the time that would later help establish sports highlight shows aiding in the growth of the global sports broadcasting industry. Frequent televising of live matches would expand years later beginning in the 1960s.⁸³ Furthermore, the success of the English National Cricket Team in the late 1950s had an effect on the decline of football attendance as England hosted The Ashes⁸⁴ in 1956. English cricket was also successful in hosting and winning test series against West Indies and New Zealand in 1957 and 1958 respectively, taking further attention away from English football.⁸⁵

However, clubs still had an equal or greater economic impact at this time despite the decline in attendance. Revenues still increased as ticket prices to football matches rose. Until the 1960s, the average ticket price to a Football League match rose in line with inflation. However the abolishment of the maximum wage in the United Kingdom in 1961 pressured larger clubs in the First and Second Divisions to increase their ticket prices even more rapidly and at a much faster rate than the rise of inflation. By the late 1960s, the average admission price of a First Division club doubled to that of twenty years earlier.⁸⁶ Thus, football matches shifted from affordable entertainment to events only affordable to the middle and upper classes, as evidenced by the overall decline in football attendance. Despite the decline in attendance because of these reasons however, football was still a major economic factor in London and throughout England as a result of general cost increases.

Another way football became immersed in the English economy is through sports betting. Portrayed as the English “national love affair,” gambling in England is to this day a multi-billion

⁸³ Fabio Chisari, "When Football Went Global: Televising the 1966 World Cup," *Historical Social Research* 31, no. 1 (2006): 42-54.

⁸⁴ The Ashes is a test cricket series between England and Australia taking place every year and a half.

⁸⁵ Dobson and Goddard, "Performance, Revenues, and Cross Subsidization."

⁸⁶ Dobson and Goddard, "The Demand for Professional League Football."

dollar industry and football comprises of much of the industry.⁸⁷ Although sports betting existed in what was generally an illegal venture until the 1960s, the 1960 Betting and Gaming Act legalized most bookmakers for football, other sports and lotteries. Almost immediately after the act was enforced, hundreds of betting shops opened throughout London, paving the way from the importance of football betting that still exists today.⁸⁸

Even more importantly, the financial importance of the sport within the context of London still exists primarily due to the globalization of the English facet of football beginning in the mid-1960s. This globalization was aided by England hosting the 1966 FIFA World Cup. The competition put English football on the global stage, especially with England defeating West Germany 4-2 in the final at Wembley Stadium. Both Wembley and London's White City Stadium hosted matches in the tournament allowing for London to play a major role in the event.⁸⁹

Even more importantly, televising the 1966 FIFA World Cup allowed for England to promote the globalization of the sport like never before. While televised football did exist in England in the 1960s, the World Cup allowed for a more wide-spread, higher quality broadcast. FIFA signed a television contract with the European Broadcasting Union years before the event in 1962.⁹⁰ With 98,000 in attendance at the final at Wembley, over 400 million watched the match live on television throughout Europe and the rest of the world. With the sharp increase in television sets by the early 1960s, this television statistic further highlighted the foundation

⁸⁷ Stan Hey, "Our national love affair: a history of the betting shop," *The Independent*, April 5, 2008, <http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/racing/our-national-love-affair-a-history-of-the-betting-shop-804966.html> (accessed April 5, 2015).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ White City Stadium was built for the 1908 London Summer Olympics and was the home ground of Queens Park Rangers temporarily for the 1962-1963 season. The stadium was demolished in 1985.

⁹⁰ Fabio Chisari, "When Football Went Global."

between sport and broadcasting. In fact the BBC, via their World Cup coverage, is partially credited with their use of 'slow-motion' replay to cover the event, which aided in the World Cup's success and paved the way for future use of replay in sports broadcasting throughout the world.⁹¹



England victorious in the 1966 World Cup Final at Wembley against West Germany

The 1966 FIFA World Cup established an important point in time for London clubs and for other English clubs as well. As the World Cup aided in the globalization of the sport, clubs began to sign an increasing number of international players in the late 1960s further improving the competitive product - especially in the First Division - within the Football League as well. For example from 1946-1955, only 50 players from outside the United Kingdom and Ireland played in the Football League. From 1986-1995, this number increased to 216 players from outside the United Kingdom and Ireland with an increasing number of players from Africa and

⁹¹ Ibid.

South America.⁹² As a result, the globalization of English professional football became increasingly important beginning in the mid-1960s. Even though attendance was down, television viewership, much of which a result of the 1966 FIFA World Cup, helped establish the global context of English football, situating football's place internationally today.

7. Conclusion: The riches of the modern football era

In 1991, as club attendances and public interest increased and as football-related violence decreased, the Football Association argued that a new top division of English football would ultimately bring more money to the game. Thus, the FA Premier League was born in the 1992-1993 season as the previous clubs of the Football League First Division split to form the Premier League, changing the structure of the over century old Football League.⁹³ This move represents the sheer globalization and television and advertising contracts impacting the sport heading into the twenty-first century, representing the multi-billion dollar industry consuming the English Premier League today.

To truly understand this success, one has to look at the history of English football more broadly throughout the twentieth century. As football rose in popularity previous to World War II, the professional realm of the sport was entertaining and impactful, but not a necessity. Yet given the devastation during and after World War II, the sport became something more. Beginning in the mid-1940s, just after the war, football became a way for those affected by war

⁹² Patrick McGovern, "Globalization or Internationalization? Foreign Footballers in the English League, 1946-95," *Sociology* 36, no. 1 (2002): 23-42.

⁹³ The Football League still exists today, consisting of 72 clubs across three divisions – the Football League Championship, Football League One and Football League Two - below the Barclays Premier League.

to find an escape, while simultaneously providing economic support for a country in despair, with London and its respective football clubs providing the strongest example. The postwar era thus provided the spark for English football's global importance and relevance today. Without the growth the postwar era in London allowed for, the sport would have not made great strides to become the important sport it is today in the English and global context.

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