

Wembley Stadium: 50th Anniversary [B1]

Questo campo da calcio famoso in tutto il mondo celebra il suo primo centenario; può ospitare 90.000 spettatori ed è la sede della nazionale inglese. Sebbene l'edificio storico sia stato demolito e ricostruito quasi integralmente nel 2007, la sua importanza emblematica per la società britannica è rimasta invariata.



Inaugurated by King George V in 1923, Wembley Stadium — or the Empire Stadium as it was initially known — was built in less than a year at a cost of £750,000 (around £46 million today). Located in the northwest London suburb of Wembley, it was destined to be the centrepiece of the bombastic British Empire Exhibition. However, a more popular event launched the venue: the FA Cup, a football tournament first held in 1871, pitted English teams from all divisions against each other. It was decided that the 1923 final, between West Ham United and Bolton Wanderers, should be held at Wembley.

WHITE HORSE

On Saturday 28 April 1923, enormous [crowds showed up](#) at the stadium for the match. Originally designed to hold 125,000 people, it is thought that more than double tried to get through the [turnstiles](#). After an hour's [delay](#), the game began; but spectators were so close to the [pitch](#) that the ball was constantly [kicked](#) back into play when it looked like it was going out. A [mounted police officer](#) had to keep the crowd from [spilling](#) onto the [pitch](#). This iconic game (which Bolton won 2-0) would become known as the White Horse Final.

GREYHOUNDS AND LIONS

Unfortunately, the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 was a financial [flop](#). With the stadium's future in doubt, a [self-made businessman](#) called Arthur Elvin [raised the funds](#) to save it. He [relied](#) on the growing popularity of [greyhound dog racing](#) but retained the connection with the English Football Association. Some of the most emotional moments of English footballing history have centred on Wembley. On 30 April 1938, the first live TV [broadcast](#) of the [FA](#) Cup Final was [held](#). International games began at Wembley in 1945, with England (or the 'Three Lions' as they are known, because of the [crest](#) on the shirt) remaining [undefeated](#) at home for thirty years. England's [proudest moment](#), though, was in 1966 when they became world champions.

THE LIONESSES

As the 20th century [came to an end](#), it was clear that the original Wembley was [no longer fit](#) for use. In 2003, it was demolished to make way for a modern stadium, accessible to all. Today's Wembley is a ninety thousand [all-seater](#) stadium with a gigantic arch, 133 metres tall at its highest point. With its [lifts](#), escalators and huge hospitality areas, it is in the top rank of stadiums anywhere in the world. The stadium is home to the England senior men's team and the senior women's team, the [Lionesses](#) — European champions in 2022.

DIVERSE EVENTS

Wembley has, of course, also [hosted](#) other events than football: it has been a [venue](#) for two Olympic Games, in 1948 and in 2012. It has also [hosted](#) rugby matches, world title boxing fights, NFL [clashes](#), [speedway](#), [show-jumping](#), Gaelic football, hurling, motorsports and greyhound racing. Most famously, however, it is a world-renowned music [venue](#). The stadium [hosted](#) the multi-act Live Aid concert in 1985, [broadcast](#) live to more than one billion people across 110 countries. It has also [hosted](#) huge individual [acts](#), including Madonna, Queen, Beyoncé, Pink Floyd, U2 and coming up this year Coldplay, Mötley Crüe and Harry Styles.

Glossary

- **self-made businessman** = uomo d'affari che si è fatto da sé
- **no longer** = non più
- **fit** = idoneo
- **acts** = eventi, concerti
- **Wanderers** = giramondo
- **delay** = ritardo
- **undefeated** = imbattuto
- **mounted police officer** = poliziotto a cavallo
- **broadcast** = messa in onda
- **showed up** = presentarsi
- **spilling** = fuoriuscire, riversarsi
- **raised the funds** = raccogliere fondi
- **clashes** = incontri-scontri (in gergo sportivo)
- **FA** = Football Association
- **crowds** = folle, moltitudini
- **turnstiles** = tornelli
- **proudest moment** = momento di massimo orgoglio
- **hosted** = ospitare
- **centrepiece** = elemento centrale
- **bombastic** = grandiosa
- **kicked** = calciare
- **all-seater** = posti a sedere
- **crest** = stemma
- **came to an end** = giungere alla fine
- **flop** = fiasco
- **show-jumping** = salto a ostacoli (equestre)
- **pitted English teams from all divisions against** = mettere a confronto
- **pitch** = campo (da gioco)
- **relied** = contare su
- **greyhound dog racing** = corse di levrieri
- **lifts** = ascensori
- **Lionesses** = leonesse
- **venue** = stadio

- **held** = tenere
- **speedway** = pista, circuito