

= 1920 ? 21 Burnley F.C. season =

The 1920 ? 21 season was the 33rd season of competitive football played by Burnley Football Club . Burnley began the season confidently , despite not having played a match for almost four months before their first league fixture of the season . After losing their first three games , Burnley embarked on a 30 @-@ match unbeaten league run from 4 September 1920 until 26 March 1921 , winning the Football League First Division and becoming English champions for the first time in their history . Burnley 's unbeaten run stood as a Football League record for over 80 years , until it was bettered by Arsenal in the 2003 ? 04 season . Burnley ended the 1920 ? 21 season on 59 points , having won 23 games , drawn 13 , and lost 6 .

The team reached the third round of the FA Cup , defeating Leicester City away and Queens Park Rangers at home , before unexpectedly losing away to Second Division side Hull City . Burnley won the East Lancashire Charity Cup , beating Blackburn Rovers 8 ? 2 over two legs , but fared poorly in the Lancashire Senior Cup , losing to Manchester City . As league champions , Burnley qualified for the Charity Shield , in which they were beaten 0 ? 2 by FA Cup winners Tottenham Hotspur . Burnley also played two friendly matches during the season . The first , against Blackburn Rovers , marked the opening of Accrington Stanley 's new stadium ; the other was a benefit match for Patsy Gallacher , against a representative team from the Scottish Football League .

Burnley used 23 different players during the season and had nine different goalscorers . Their top scorer was Scottish forward Joe Anderson , with 31 competitive goals , including 25 in the league . Eight new players were signed by Burnley during the course of the season , and nine were released . Match attendances were the highest they had ever been at Turf Moor , with an average gate of over 30 @,@ 000 . The highest attendance of the campaign was a crowd of 42 @,@ 653 , who saw Burnley beat Bolton Wanderers 3 ? 1 on 26 February 1921 ; the lowest was 22 @,@ 000 , for the match against Sunderland on the final day of the season .

= = Background and pre @-@ season = =

The 1920 ? 21 campaign was the second season of competitive football in England after the First World War . Burnley 's chairman , Harry Windle , had been elected to the position in 1909 , and manager John Haworth was marking his 11th consecutive year in charge . After finishing as runners @-@ up to West Bromwich Albion in the Football League First Division the previous season , there was a sense of eager anticipation within the club before the season began . Team captain Tommy Boyle claimed that his side was capable of building on its success of the previous season and winning the league championship , despite Burnley not having won a trophy since their FA Cup victory in 1914 .

Burnley did not play any pre @-@ season friendly games other than a practice match between the first team and the reserves , which was watched by a crowd of around 10 @,@ 000 at Turf Moor . The team 's last competitive match had ended in a 0 ? 2 defeat against Manchester United in the Lancashire Senior Cup on 8 May 1920 , almost four months earlier . The strip for 1920 ? 21 was very little changed from that of the previous season ; the claret jersey with light blue sleeves and a light blue stripe around the collar was kept along with the white shorts , but the claret socks were replaced by black .

= = Transfers = =

The nucleus of the Burnley team remained unchanged from the previous campaign . Eight new players signed for the club , and eleven left during the season . New signings included goalkeeper Frank Birchenough from West Ham United and defender Bob McGrory from Dumbarton . Also brought in were George Richardson from non @-@ league side Horden Athletic and Tom Brophy from St Helens Town . West Bromwich Albion 's Len Moorwood was also signed in October 1920 to provide further goalkeeping backup . Attackers Richard Cragg , Billy Clarkson and Patrick Norris were among those who left the club in pre @-@ season . Defender Tom Bamford , who had not

played a match for Burnley since before the First World War thanks to the emergence of Len Smelt , also left the club and joined Rochdale in September 1920 .

Transfer activity continued after the season began . Inside forward Jack Lane was brought in from Cradley Heath in December 1920 , followed by defender John Pearson from the same club two months later . Winger George Douglas was signed from Leicester City in February 1921 . Thomas Jackson , who had made only one first @-@ team appearance for Burnley , left the club in January 1921 to sign for Scottish side Dundee . Two players who had been signed at the beginning of the season left Burnley in April 1921 ; Bob McGrory moved to Stoke City on a free transfer and Frank Birchenough was released after playing two league matches . Bert Freeman left Burnley at the end of the season after nine years service , by which time he had become the club 's all @-@ time leading goalscorer .

= = League campaign = =

Burnley 's league campaign began on 28 August 1920 with a home match against Bradford City , who had finished 15th in the league in 1919 ? 20 . The season began inauspiciously for Burnley , beaten 1 ? 4 , but the match did see eventual top scorer Joe Anderson score the first of his 25 league goals of the campaign . Two further away defeats followed , 0 ? 1 at Huddersfield Town and 0 ? 2 at Bradford City , leaving Burnley at the bottom of the league table . This run of defeats was Burnley 's worst start to a league season since 1906 ? 07 , when they also lost their opening three matches . Manager Haworth subsequently made several changes to the team ; goalkeeper Jerry Dawson and defender Tommy Boyle were reinstated , while Bert Freeman and James Lindsay were dropped in favour of Billy Nesbitt and Benny Cross respectively . Burnley picked up their first win on 6 September 1920 , beating Huddersfield Town 3 ? 0 at Turf Moor ; the goalscorers were Bob Kelly , Tommy Boyle , and Billy Nesbitt . They went on to defeat Middlesbrough 2 ? 1 at home , and to draw with them 0 ? 0 at Ayresome Park . On 25 September 1920 , four players scored in a 4 ? 0 victory against a weakened Chelsea team , giving Burnley their third successive home win .

October began with a 1 ? 1 draw with Chelsea at Stamford Bridge , after which the team recorded four straight wins throughout the remainder of the month . Burnley achieved home and away victories against Bradford (Park Avenue) , before repeating the feat in the next two matches against Tottenham Hotspur . Burnley beat Tottenham 2 ? 1 on 23 October 1920 , then achieved a 2 ? 0 victory the following week , the first time in the season that any team had been able to prevent Tottenham from scoring in a league match . The team 's performance at White Hart Lane was met with disapproval from the correspondent from the Daily Mail , who wrote that Burnley set out to stifle their opponents and in doing so " spoilt the match " . Burnley carried on their winning streak into November , with goals from Bob Kelly , Tommy Boyle and Benny Cross helping the side to defeat Newcastle United 3 ? 1 at home and 2 ? 1 away to lift them to second place in the league . The home fixture was marred by tragedy when a charabanc transporting supporters from Grassington overturned , killing five people . After the next game , a 2 ? 2 draw with Oldham Athletic at Boundary Park on 20 November 1920 , Burnley moved to the top of the table on goal average , 11 weeks after having been at the bottom . In the return match at Turf Moor a week later , Oldham were comfortably beaten 7 ? 1 ; Bob Kelly scored four goals , and the others were added by Tommy Boyle and Benny Cross .

A win and a draw against Liverpool , followed by a 2 ? 0 victory over Preston North End , took Burnley into the Christmas period three points clear at the top of the league . The convincing 6 ? 0 win over Sheffield United on Christmas Day , in which forward Joe Anderson scored four times , set a new club record unbeaten streak of 17 games , beating the record set during the 1897 ? 98 campaign . Burnley continued their good form into 1921 , beating Preston North End away before achieving two victories against local rivals Blackburn Rovers . The first of these wins , a 4 ? 1 success , was watched by 41 @, @ 534 spectators , the biggest home crowd of the season until then . The victory was followed by a 3 ? 1 away win a week later . On 5 February 1921 , Anderson scored five goals in a " brilliant " performance against Aston Villa as Burnley recorded their second 7 ? 1 win of the season . The result saw Burnley equal the Football League record of 22 matches

unbeaten , held by Sheffield United and Preston North End . A new league unbeaten record was set with a 0 ? 0 draw with Aston Villa four days later . Despite losing George Halley to an illness which forced him to miss the remainder of the season , Burnley secured a late home win over Derby County in the following game , sending Derby to the bottom of the league table . February ended with a 3 ? 1 victory against Bolton Wanderers in front of a crowd of 42 @,@ 653 , the largest attendance ever at Turf Moor at the time . The team took four points from the next three matches . Burnley firstly drew 1 ? 1 away against a Bolton Wanderers team who were unbeaten at home , before a then @-@ record crowd of 54 @,@ 609 at Burnden Park , before beating Arsenal at Turf Moor . The following week Burnley secured an away draw at Arsenal , despite their opponents attacking for much of the game .

A late Benny Cross goal gave Burnley a 1 ? 0 win over Manchester United at Turf Moor , extending the team 's unbeaten record to 30 matches . In the next match , Burnley lost a league fixture for the first time since 4 September 1920 when they were beaten 0 ? 3 by Manchester City at Hyde Road . City were also challenging for the league title and eventually finished as runners @-@ up . More than 37 @,@ 000 spectators attended the match and several people were injured as the stadium became overcrowded . Burnley followed up the setback with successive wins over Manchester City and Manchester United to take the total number of league wins in the season to 23 . The team suffered its fifth league defeat of the campaign on 9 April 1921 , losing 0 ? 2 away at West Bromwich Albion .

Burnley played West Bromwich Albion again seven days later , drawing 1 ? 1 . The team went into the match against Everton on 23 April 1921 needing a draw to clinch the league championship . Everton took the lead 15 minutes into the game , but Benny Cross scored the equalising goal three minutes later , and Burnley held on to become English champions for the first time in their history . Local newspapers were effusive in their praise of the Burnley side , calling them " the greatest team that ever was " . The draw with Everton was succeeded by another 1 ? 1 stalemate against the same team at Turf Moor . In the penultimate game , Burnley were beaten 0 ? 1 away at Sunderland , their sixth and final league defeat of the season . The campaign ended with a 2 ? 2 draw against Sunderland on 7 May 1921 in front of a season @-@ lowest crowd of 22 @,@ 000 . The draw took Burnley to a tally of 59 points , five points clear of second @-@ placed Manchester City , and one short of West Bromwich Albion 's then @-@ record total of 60 points set in 1919 ? 20 .

At half time during the final match of the season , the championship trophy was paraded around the Turf Moor pitch accompanied by a marching band . After the full @-@ time whistle was blown , supporters swarmed the pitch to celebrate the team 's success . The Football League president , John McKenna , made the official presentation of the trophy to the Burnley captain Boyle and congratulated the side on their achievement , particularly praising " their splendid training and their beautiful football " . Medals were awarded to the manager John Haworth , the club trainer Charlie Bates and the eleven players who had featured in the match against Sunderland . Three more medals were later awarded to Moss crop , Taylor and Basnett .

= = = Match results = = =

Key
Results

= = = Final league position = = =

= = Other first team matches = =

Burnley 's first match outside the league in the 1920 ? 21 season was a friendly on 22 September 1920 against a Blackburn Rovers XI to mark the opening of Accrington Stanley 's new stadium at Peel Park . Burnley won the game 10 ? 1 with seven goals from Joe Anderson in addition to strikes from James Lindsay , Walter Weaver and Thomas Jackson . Burnley 's opening game in the FA Cup

was an away tie at Leicester City on 8 January 1921 . Bob Kelly scored for the fourth game in succession and Joe Anderson scored four goals as Burnley won the match 7 ? 3 , the first time the team had scored seven goals in a competitive match away from home . After the match , the Athletic News described Burnley as the best team in the country .

Following the win over Leicester City , Burnley were drawn against Queens Park Rangers at Turf Moor in the Second Round . Despite a good performance by their opponents , Burnley progressed to the Third Round with a 4 ? 2 win , in which Bob Kelly struck twice in the first half and Joe Anderson scored either side of half time . In the Third Round , Burnley were handed an away tie at Hull City , who at the time were struggling in the Football League Second Division and had won only two matches in the previous five months . Despite being without first @-@ team regulars George Halley and Joe Anderson through injury , Burnley were expected to win comfortably , not having lost since 4 September 1920 . Hull City played above all expectations and Burnley suffered a 0 ? 3 defeat after being 0 ? 1 behind at half time .

In April 1921 , Burnley won the East Lancs Charity Cup for the second consecutive season , beating Blackburn Rovers 8 ? 2 on aggregate over two legs . The first leg was won 6 ? 2 at Turf Moor thanks to goals from Eddie Moss crop , Joe Anderson , Benny Cross and a hat @-@ trick from Bob Kelly , before strikes from Joe Anderson and James Lindsay gave Burnley a 2 ? 0 win at Ewood Park . This success was followed by a 2 ? 1 friendly victory over a Scottish Football League XI in a benefit match for Celtic winger Patsy Gallacher . Burnley also participated in the Lancashire Senior Cup ; the league matches against Blackburn Rovers and Preston North End also counted as group stage matches in the competition . The team won all four of these games to qualify for the semi @-@ finals , where they were drawn against Manchester City . The game on 9 May 1921 ended in a 0 ? 2 defeat for Burnley , and their opponents went on to win the trophy that year .

As champions of the Football League , Burnley qualified for the Charity Shield , then known as the Dewar Shield . Burnley 's opponents were Tottenham Hotspur , who had finished sixth in the First Division and beaten Wolverhampton Wanderers in the FA Cup final . In what was the last match of the 1920 ? 21 campaign , Burnley fell to a 0 ? 2 loss at White Hart Lane on 16 May 1921 . The match was not without controversy , as the Burnley players claimed that the second goal should have been disallowed despite the Tottenham goalscorer being onside , maintaining that the whistle had already been blown by the referee .

= = = Match results = = =

Key
Results

= = Player details = =

Burnley manager John Haworth used 23 different players during the 1920 ? 21 season , and there were nine different goalscorers . The team played in a 2 ? 3 ? 5 formation throughout the campaign , with two fullbacks , three halfbacks , two outside forwards , two inside forwards and a centre forward . Billy Watson played the highest number of games , appearing in all 45 First Division and FA Cup matches . Billy Nesbitt and Joe Anderson each played 43 times . Anderson was the top goalscorer for Burnley in the campaign with 31 competitive goals , including 25 in the league , the highest total since Bert Freeman 's 36 goals in 1912 ? 13 . With a tally of 23 goals , Bob Kelly was the second @-@ highest scorer , followed by Benny Cross with 15 , including the goal that won the title for Burnley . Club captain Tommy Boyle was the highest @-@ scoring defender , with seven goals in 38 league appearances . Winger Billy Nesbitt scored five times during the season .

England international goalkeeper Jerry Dawson missed three games , two because of an injury sustained in the opening match . Centre forward Bert Freeman , who had become the first ever Burnley player to score 100 league goals , and held the club record for most goals in a season , played only four matches . His final appearance for Burnley came in the FA Cup Third Round defeat to Hull City . Several players made bit @-@ part contributions to the campaign ; Tom Brophy and

Bob McGrory each made just three first @-@ team appearances and Frank Birchenough , George Douglas , Jack Lane , Len Moorwood and Bill Taylor played in two matches or fewer . George Richardson and John Pearson , both new signings in the 1920 ? 21 season , failed to make a first @-@ team appearance for Burnley during the campaign . Thomas Jackson was a squad member until January 1921 , but he did not play any games for Burnley in the 1920 ? 21 campaign .

= = = Player statistics = = =

= = Aftermath = =

The Burnley board had planned a tour of Spain to take place during the summer of 1921 after the culmination of the league campaign . However , the trip had to be cancelled when the club received notice from the Spanish Football Federation that one of their intended opponents , Barcelona , had been suspended from all matches . Further tours of Norway and France were then arranged , but these also had to be abandoned after the Football Association refused to grant permission . At the end of the season five players were given free transfers by the club ; Len Smelt and Frank Birchenough , who had both played for Burnley during the campaign , and three reserve players . Moreover , two players ? Bert Freeman and George Thompson ? were placed on the transfer list by the manager .

Burnley 's 30 @-@ game unbeaten streak during the 1920 ? 21 season stood as a Football League record for 83 years until it was surpassed by Arsenal , who completed the entire season without losing in the 2003 ? 04 campaign . After the defeat to Bradford City on 28 August 1920 , Burnley did not lose another match at Turf Moor until 11 February 1922 , when they were beaten 1 ? 2 by Blackburn Rovers . In the same match , the halfback line of Tommy Boyle , George Halley and Billy Watson ? used in 25 first @-@ team games during 1920 ? 21 ? was seen for the final time , having played together for the first time in September 1913 . The majority of the championship @-@ winning team remained intact going into the 1921 ? 22 season , although players such as David Taylor and Walter Weaver found themselves less involved in first @-@ team matches .