

= 1885 ? 86 West Bromwich Albion F.C. season =

The 1885 ? 86 season was the eighth season in the history of West Bromwich Albion Football Club . In what was their inaugural season as a professional club , Albion moved to the Stoney Lane ground after leaving their previous home at Four Acres . The team also changed the colour of its kit , wearing blue and white striped jerseys for the first time . As league football had not been introduced in England at the time , the team competed solely in cup competitions and friendly matches throughout the season , playing 52 matches in total .

West Bromwich Albion won two regional cup competitions in 1885 ? 86 . They defeated Walsall Swifts by a single goal in the replayed final of the Birmingham Senior Cup , while in the Staffordshire Senior Cup a replay was again required as Stoke were beaten 4 ? 2 following a goalless draw in the original tie . Albion also progressed through seven rounds to reach the FA Cup Final for the first time , becoming the first Midlands team to do so . However , after initially drawing 0 ? 0 with Blackburn Rovers , they lost 2 ? 0 in the replay .

= = Off the field = =

Football was an amateur game until July 1885 , when the Football Association decided to legalise payments to players . West Bromwich Albion held a committee meeting the following month , at which it was decided that the club should become professional . Albion 's first professionals earned 10 shillings ( 50 pence ) per week , with no training allowance provided .

After deciding not to renew the lease on the Four Acres , Albion moved to their fifth ground , Stoney Lane , in time for the 1885 ? 86 season . The ground was located close to the Plough and Harrow public house , which served as the club 's headquarters at the time . Albion took out an initial seven @-@ year lease on the Stoney Lane site , paying an annual rent of £ 28 to its owner , a local undertaker named Mr Webb . The pitch was returfed and levelled , with ashes spread around the perimeter , and a wooden grandstand was built that came to be known as ' Noah 's Ark ' . The ground cost £ 370 to build , a sum that was offset by a number of friendly matches that took place early in the season .

During their early years , West Bromwich Albion had played in whatever coloured kit was available locally . However , at a committee meeting held in September 1885 , the club decreed that blue and white striped jerseys should be adopted on a permanent basis . With the exception of a brief trial of scarlet and blue broad stripes early in the 1889 ? 90 season , the team have worn these colours ever since , although initially the blue was of a lighter shade ; the navy blue stripes were not introduced until after the First World War .

Due to the club 's financial situation , the reserve team had their wages halved early on in the season , and by January 1886 the payments made to reserve players were withdrawn altogether , although there was a possibility of them receiving a bonus at the end of the season if funds permitted . This resulted in Albion 's second team refusing to play against Small Heath Alliance and the game was cancelled . Some of the players were suspended as a result of their actions , but were later re @-@ instated .

= = FA Cup = =

In their third season in the FA Cup , West Bromwich Albion were drawn at home in every round prior to the semi @-@ final . In the first two rounds , they defeated Aston Unity 4 ? 1 and Wednesbury Old Athletic 3 ? 2 . The team then received a bye to the fourth round , where they beat Wolverhampton Wanderers by a 3 ? 1 scoreline . Old Carthusians were defeated by a single goal in the fifth round . A hat @-@ trick from Jem Bayliss ? the first by an Albion player in the FA Cup ? contributed to a 6 ? 0 quarter @-@ final victory over Old Westminster , putting the club into the FA Cup semi @-@ final for the first time .

The semi @-@ final took place at Aston Lower Grounds and was against one of Albion 's local rivals , Small Heath Alliance . Albion won 4 ? 0 ? Arthur Loach and George Woodhall each scoring

twice ? to become the first Midlands club to reach the FA Cup Final . After the game , Small Heath supporters invaded the pitch and then pelted missiles at vehicles bound for West Bromwich , causing several injuries . In the final , Albion met holders Blackburn Rovers at the Kennington Oval , drawing 0 ? 0 . No extra time was played , so a replay was arranged at Derby Cricket Ground , the first time that an FA Cup Final match had taken place outside London . Albion were beaten 2 ? 0 as Rovers lifted the FA Cup for the third year in succession . This was the first of three successive FA Cup Finals in which West Bromwich Albion participated .

Source for match details :

= = Birmingham Senior Cup = =

Due to a congested fixture list , Albion fielded a reserve side in the first two rounds of their fifth Birmingham Senior Cup campaign , beating Sparkhill Alliance 6 ? 0 and Burton Swifts 4 ? 1 . Tommy Green scored a hat @-@ trick in the third round match away at Notts Rangers , as Albion ran out 7 ? 2 winners . Burslem Port Vale were defeated 5 ? 0 in the semi @-@ final , which took place at a neutral venue , Aston Lower Grounds . The team drew 1 ? 1 with Walsall Swifts in the final , which was also at Aston Lower Grounds . The replay took place at the same venue and George Woodhall scored the only goal of the game as Albion won the trophy for the first time .

Source for match details :

= = Staffordshire Senior Cup = =

Albion , taking part in the Staffordshire Senior Cup for the fourth time , defeated Stafford Rangers 4 ? 0 in the first round replay ( following a goalless draw ) . In round two , a George Woodhall hat @-@ trick helped to achieve a 5 ? 2 win against Leek , after which Albion were handed a bye to the fourth round . They then beat Stoke Free Wanderers 5 ? 0 , while in the semi @-@ final Burton Wanderers were defeated 3 ? 0 at Stoke 's Victoria Ground . The final took place at the same venue as Stoke themselves provided the opposition . The match finished goalless and Albion won the replay 4 ? 2 at Stoney Lane in front of 5 @,@ 500 supporters . Two goals from Jem Bayliss and one each from Tommy Green and George Woodhall gave Albion their second victory in the competition .

Source for match details :

= = Friendlies and benefit matches = =

After the move to Stoney Lane , Albion held four exhibition games to help cover the cost of the ground . The first of these was a 4 ? 1 win against Third Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers on 5 September 1885 , in front of 2 @,@ 122 spectators . Tommy Green scored a hat @-@ trick , including the first goal to be scored at Stoney Lane . As league football had yet to be established , the club also played in a number of other friendly matches throughout the season . Their 31 friendly matches included 21 wins and 9 defeats , while one match against Bolton Wanderers was abandoned with the game still scoreless . Albion 's joint biggest friendly victories of the season were their 7 ? 0 wins against Small Heath Alliance , Aston Unity and Halliwell . The season 's heaviest friendly defeat was the 0 ? 7 reverse at home to Preston North End . Albion also took part in the Walsall Senior Cup and Birmingham Charity Cup , but entered a reserve team for both competitions .

Source for match details :