

No.48 Frank Leslie Talbot

Les was the youngest of the distinguished family of Hednesford footballers who made the jump from their hometown to League football with consummate ease.

He was born in Hednesford, 3 August 1910, spending his early school years at West Hill Junior School, which had become something of an academy for future Football League players just before, during and after the First World War. The score-line in one inter-school game read: West Hill 29 Great Wyrley 0, with young Les bagging 13 of them.

Les made his Hednesford Town debut in the opening game of the 1930-31 campaign (one of nine local lads) in a 5-1 victory against St. Georges. He spent only one month at the Keys before First Division Blackburn Rovers whisked him away in October 1930, but not before he made one parting shot (five, in fact) when he banged-in all five goals in our 5-1 home win over Bromsgrove.

Les opened his account for Blackburn with two goals against Liverpool Reserves in a 5-1 win, 24 October 1930, and made his first-team debut against Manchester United, 11 April 1931. This was the first of only 37 games, with nine goals, to show at the end of his first four seasons. The situation would change in 1934 with 12 goals from 35 outings in his favourite inside-left position.

Les had played 96 times for Blackburn's senior team and scored 21 goals when, 1 June 1936, he was surprisingly transferred to third Division Cardiff City where he scored 23 goals in 107 League and FA Cup matches during his three seasons with them.

A move to Walsall, 1 June 1939, clashed with the outbreak of World War Two, putting his debut on hold until the 1946-47 season when he managed 21 senior matches before, in retirement, Les moved to the Netherlands to coach Haarlem FC.

In 1951, he received a great welcome when he brought his side over to Walsall for a friendly game. Les would spend the remainder of his life in Holland where he managed and coached Heemstede (RCH) and took Door Wilskracht Sterk (DWS) to the Dutch Championship.

He died in December 1983 at a hospital in Alkmaar, Holland.



Captain, Les Talbot, is sitting fourth from the left with Walsall team-mates in 1946. Future Wolves and England stars Johnny Hancocks, is far left, front row and Dennis Wilshaw sits with the ball between his feet.



From a set of 24 by Dave Shaw