

No.54 Leslie Rowe

Les was born in Hednesford in 1915, joining Hednesford Town towards the end of the 1931-32 season. Tall and powerful, he gave the impression that he would make a very useful centre-forward; however, his chosen position was outside-right.

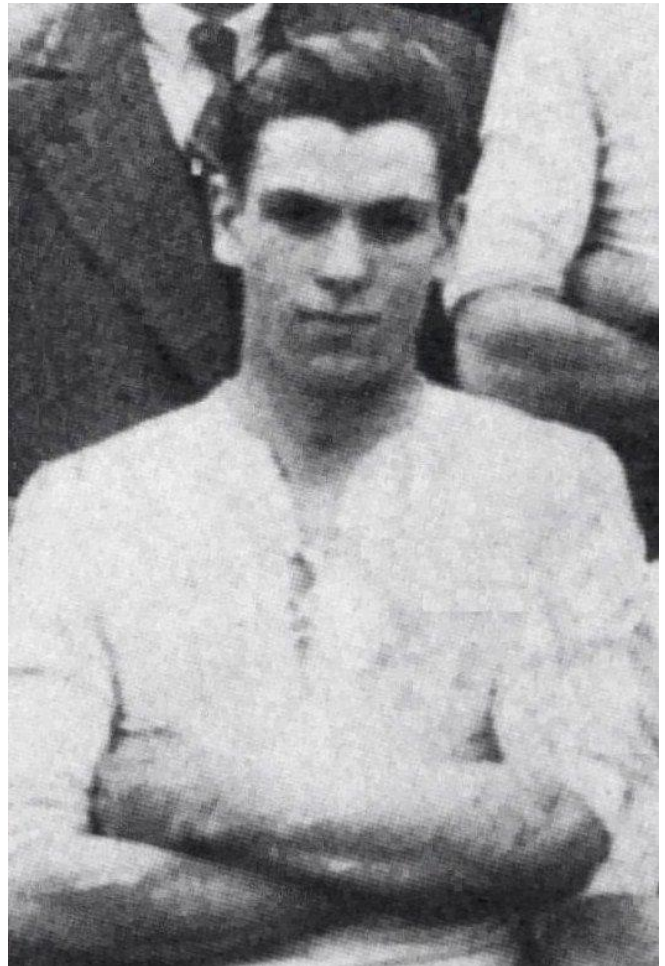
Away at Cradley Heath was Les's debut game, 23 April 1932, where the home team won 3-1. Nevertheless, the winger's speed was the highlight of what was otherwise a dull afternoon from Hednesford's point of view.

Sprinting, or foot racing as it was called in those days, had been Les's forte during his early years, with many local victories over 100 yards or less; he was reputed to be the fastest winger in Midland's football.

Jack Maund and Les were vying for the right-wing birth, and which one of them would make it into League Football first was the 'talk of the terraces' on match-day.

Jack moved to Aston Villa in October 1934; Les, having represented the Pitmen on exactly 50 occasions, had departed for Chesterfield at the end of the previous season; right-half, Harry Nichols was snapped-up by Sheffield Wednesday, Whilst West Bromwich Albion had whisked away centre-forward, George Handley. All four had gone within a six-month period.

Les made a good start with eight appearances for Chesterfield at the start of the 1934-35 campaign and scored three goals. However, he was medically advised that a stubborn injury, which had kept him out of the team during 1935-36, was too serious for him to continue. Les was retired on the spot, aged 21.



Les with his 1933 Hednesford team-mates: Fred Galley, Herbert Webster, Les Rowe, Harry Nichols, Sid Helliwell, Norman Caddick, Eddie Cameron, Teddy Groves, Jackie Orcott, Norman Dunning (with his junior international cap) and Sam Smith.