

Hilsdon was transferred to Chelsea, and a then much more famous player, Danny Shea, brought in to the club a couple of thousand pounds when he was bought by Blackburn Rovers.

In 1922 a transfer was arranged which has a place of its own in the record books. Centre-forward Sid. Puddefoot had scored getting on for a century of goals for the Hammers when the club was approached by Falkirk regarding a possible transfer.

By way of putting an end to such a ridiculous idea the reply of the West Ham manager was to the effect that five thousand pounds was the price. To his surprise the official of Falkirk there and then wrote out the cheque for that amount, and the deed was done.

So for the first time at anything like that fee an established footballer made the journey, not from Scotland to England, but in the reverse direction. The original of that cheque is also included in the West Ham souvenirs.

In the Second Division, with and without Puddefoot, the Hammers had a reasonably successful time — gradually improving. Seventh, fifth and fourth were the finishing positions in three successive seasons, and in 1923 second!

Not bothering unduly about relative importance there was an exciting League finish from the West Ham angle to the 1922-3 season. The last game of the campaign — at Upton Park — was in essence a fight for the championship. Notts County won the match and clinched the honour. There was sadness among the supporters of West Ham but they stayed to cheer to the echo when the news went round that Bury had beaten Leicester City in the last match and that West Ham had gained promotion on goal average. They had climbed to the very top class for the first time.

The One Cup Final.

That was indeed a consolation prize of the sort the supporters of few clubs have experienced. A few days earlier the players and their followers had their biggest disappointment—beaten on the first and only occasion up to now when they reached the F.A. Cup Final.

There is very little new which can be written about that first Wembley Cup Final in 1923 which has not been set out many times — an historic day in more senses than one. Nobody who was there will ever forget; the mightiest crowd ever, what the policeman on the white horse did, the delays over the start, and stoppages during the game while the pitch was cleared of people.

Two items may be mentioned which are not generally known. Before the final tie day George Kay, skipper of West Ham United, told me he was confident that his side would win the Cup, and that the two extreme wingers under his charge—Richards and Ruffell—had it in them to play leading parts in the defeat of Bolton Wanderers.

Alas, for the best laid schemes of mice and men. Those wingers of West Ham weren't given enough room by the watchers who crowded the touchlines, and who were often on the pitch when the play was in progress.

The other bit of news connected with that never to be forgotten final—not revealed until some time afterwards—was that goalkeeper Ted Hufton wasn't really fit to play, but was persuaded to turn out to give his pals confidence.

He wasn't responsible for the defeat of the Hammers by two goals to nothing, and didn't worry unduly about that result because he—and the vast majority of the people present, did not believe that the result mattered: that the order would be forthcoming for the match to be replayed. But the result stood.

For nine seasons West Ham were in the First Division. In 1929-30 they finished seventh from the top, Vic Watson setting up a club record with forty goals in League games. In 1932 they went back to the Second Division. The championship of that section in the season before last brought another day of rejoicing.

WEST HAM UNITED

Ground: Upton Park.
Colours—Shirts: Claret and Sky Blue.
Shorts: White. Stockings: Claret and Sky Blue Hoops.
Attendance Record: 44,810 v. Birmingham
F.A. Cup Runners-up: 1923.
Relegated to Division II: 1932.
Division II Champions: 1958.
Division II Runners-up: 1923.

Chelsea v. West Ham United Past League Results

Season	Home	Away	Season	Home	Away
1923-24	0-0	0-2	1931-32	3-2	1-3
1930-31	2-1	1-4	1958-59	3-2	2-4
			1959-60	Today	Feb. 6

F.A. Cup

1930-31	Round 3 (Away)	3-1
1931-32	Round 4 (Home)	3-1
1945-46	Round 4 (Home)	2-0
	Second leg (Away)	0-1

SUMMARY

	P.	W.	D.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
League: Home	...	4	3	1	0	8	5
Away	...	4	0	0	4	4	13
F.A. Cup	4	3	0	1	8	3
Total		12	6	1	5	20	21