

Arsenal are one of England's most successful football clubs with a wonderfully rich history

## → FOUNDATION TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Arsenal FC began life when a group of workers at the Woolwich Arsenal Armament Factory formed a football team in late 1886. The Club operated under the name of Dial Square and played their first match, a 6-0 win v Eastern Wanderers, on December 11, 1886. Soon after, the name Royal Arsenal was adopted but in 1891 the Club turned professional and changed its name to Woolwich Arsenal. In 1893 they joined the Football League and 20 years later, in 1913, moved to Highbury. Following the First World War, Arsenal were voted into the newly expanded First Division, where they have remained ever since.

## HERBERT CHAPMAN AND THE GLORIOUS 30s

Herbert Chapman joined Arsenal in 1925 and just five years later the Club won their first major trophy – the FA Cup. The following season Arsenal were league champions for the first time. Chapman added another title in 1932/33 and was on his way to securing another campaign triumph in 1933/34 before succumbing to serious illness mid-way through the season, but not before he had achieved legendary status. George Allison continued what Chapman had started and the Club went on to win a further two league titles and an FA Cup in what is, so far, the most successful decade in the Club's history.

**\*fact**  
2009/10 is Arsenal's 84th consecutive season in the top-flight. Next best is Everton with 56

## POST-WAR TO THE FIRST DOUBLE

With Tom Whittaker at the helm more success followed. Arsenal were Champions in 1947/48 and 1952/53 and FA Cup winners in 1950. In 1966 Bertie Mee became manager and four years later helped achieve a first European trophy for the Club thanks to victory over Anderlecht in the Fairs Cup final. The next season and another first was realised – the League and FA Cup 'double'. Arsenal clinched the title with a 1-0 win over Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane, before beating Liverpool 2-1 after extra-time at Wembley to lift the FA Cup.

Later in the decade, Terry Neill took Arsenal to three consecutive FA Cup Finals, dramatically winning the 1979 game 3-2 against Manchester United. The Gunners also reached the 1980 Cup Winners' Cup Final before, in 1986, George Graham – a star of the '71 'double' season – became manager.

## GEORGE GRAHAM'S HONOURS

The catalyst for future triumphs came in 1986/87 when Arsenal won the League Cup for the first time. Graham went on to win the League Championship in 1988/89, with a last-minute goal from Michael Thomas clinching the title with a 2-0 win at Anfield. Another title followed in 1990/91 as well as the domestic Cup 'double' in 1993 and, finally, the Cup Winners' Cup victory against Parma in 1994. Graham's departure from the Club was followed by a brief spell at the helm for Bruce Rioch before, (in September 1996), Frenchman Arsène Wenger arrived at Highbury, becoming the Club's first-ever manager from outside the British Isles.

## THE ARSÈNE WENGER ERA

In 1997/98, Wenger's first full season at Highbury, Arsenal achieved, for the second time in the Club's history, the League and FA Cup 'double' enabling the Frenchman to pick up the Carling Manager of the Year Award. Dennis Bergkamp was also named both the Football Writers' and PFA Player of the Year.

Three consecutive league runners-up medals followed and in 2000 Arsenal appeared in the UEFA Cup Final where they lost on penalties. 2001/02 saw a reversal of fortunes, however, as the Club recorded their third 'double' by beating Chelsea in

the FA Cup and ending their league campaign with a memorable 1-0 win over Manchester United at Old Trafford. The Gunners remained unbeaten at home for the whole season.

The following season Arsenal narrowly missed out on retaining the title, but did retain the FA Cup with a 1-0 victory over Southampton in Cardiff. Thierry Henry and Dennis Bergkamp both joined the hallowed '100 Club', having scored a century of goals for Arsenal.

Season 2003/2004 saw Arsenal win back the title in unbeatable fashion, going through the entire league season without a single defeat. Finishing 11 points ahead of second-place Chelsea, Arsenal eased to their 13th league title win. Spanish teenager Cesc Fabregas arrived in January and proceeded to break the record for the youngest Arsenal appearance, aged 16 years and 177 days.

The unbeaten league run continued into the following season and, in August 2004, Arsenal overtook Nottingham Forest's record for the longest all-time unbeaten sequence in English league football. The Gunners made it five trophies in four seasons by winning the FA Cup in a penalty shoot-out against Manchester United.

The 2005/06 campaign was the Club's last at Highbury and the Final Salute celebrations proved a fitting goodbye to its home of 93 years. Fourth place

**\*fact**  
Full Highbury Record  
Played 2,010 Won 1,196 Drawn 475 Lost 339 Goals For 4,038 Against 1,955

in the league – and Champions League football – was secured on the last day of the season with a 4-2 win over Wigan Athletic. The highlight of the season was the Club's amazing journey to the 2005/06 Champions League Final in Paris. A 12-game unbeaten run, including a competition record for the most consecutive clean sheets (ten), saw Arsenal face Barcelona in the Final on May 17 at the Stade de France. Despite having Jens Lehmann sent off, the Gunners scored first through Sol Campbell before the Spaniards scored two heartbreaking late goals.

## INTO EMIRATES STADIUM

In July 2006 the Club left Highbury, their stadium of 93 years, and moved to their new home. Ajax provided the opposition in Dennis Bergkamp's Testimonial as the legendary striker played his last game for the Club in the first-ever match at Emirates

Stadium. A genuine title challenge failed to materialise in 2006/07, but a superb run to the Carling Cup Final by a very young side that narrowly lost 2-1 to a strong Chelsea team at the Millennium Stadium indicated exciting times ahead. In June 2007, Thierry Henry departed for Barcelona after an eight-year spell with the Gunners in which he scored 226 goals in 370 appearances, becoming the Club's all-time top goalscorer. The following season, the Gunners finished third in the Premier League having led for much of the season, a raft of injuries in the winter eventually stretching the squad to its limits. Arsène Wenger's side progressed to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, where they cruelly lost 5-3 on aggregate to Liverpool – having made history by beating AC Milan in the previous round courtesy of a 2-0 win at the San Siro that was the first away victory against the Rossoneri by an English side. Last season, a stop-start first half of the league campaign was followed by a fine 21-match unbeaten run, ensuring Champions League qualification for another year. The side also reached FA Cup and Champions League semi-finals respectively – falling to Chelsea and Manchester United. The Gunners began 2009/10 in electric form, scoring 12 goals in their first three competitive games against Everton, Celtic and Portsmouth. ■



Herbert Chapman talks to Alex James (right) and Bob John



Dial Square



FA Cup Winners in 1950



The 1971 'double' winners



FA Cup winners in 1979



The 2004 'Invincibles'