

CARDINAL CUP WINNERS IN 1958

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THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION AMATEUR CUP COMPETITION

FINAL TIE

ILFORD

v

WOKING

SATURDAY, APRIL 12th, 1958

KICK-OFF 3 pm



EMPIRE STADIUM

WEMBLEY

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

ONE SHILLING

This Saturday Woking kick off their 2017-18 season at home to Gateshead with great hopes (if not expectations) that this season will be 'the one'. This time next year they will be getting ready for their first game in Division Two of the Football League, having picked up the FA Cup on their way (or maybe not)!

Sixty years ago they were probably thinking something similar, especially as they had just finished in second place to Wycombe Wanderers in the Isthmian League. As you can probably guess, however, '57-'58 would not be quite such a good season as far as the league was concerned (coming ninth out of sixteen), but at least Woking were able to emulate the Buckinghamshire outfit's previous year's success in reaching the final of FA Amateur Cup. In fact they did one better than Wycombe by winning at Wembley on the 12th April 1958, 3-0 against Ilford – the first, and technically the last time they won that trophy (the Amateur Cup competition becoming the FA Trophy by the time they would next pick it up in the mid 1990's).

The Cards cup campaign had kicked off well with a 6-1 victory at home to Essex side Aveley, followed by a third round, 3-1 win away against Hendon and a 5-1 home win against Hayes. The quarter final was a little more difficult, but still resulted in a 3-2 win at home to Finchley before a semi-final 1-1 draw against Barnett at Fulham's Craven Cottage ground in London. The replay at Brentford on the 22nd March saw Woking win 3-2, bringing them to the final at Wembley in front of a seventy-one thousand crowd – the last time that the FA Amateur Cup Final would be televised live (and the last time for many years that Woking would be in such limelight).

There are probably numerous copies of the cup final programme in local collections, but not so many of the earlier rounds - particularly the Aveley or the away one at Hendon.

Below The players walk out onto the pitch.



Woking's Charlie Mortimore (right) shakes hands with Ilford's Alan Whittall (left) to kick off the Final at Wembley





Woking won the match three goals to nil to bring the Amateur Cup back to Kingfield.

The key to Woking's success appears to have been its attack. In the 1956-57 season the front four had scored a record number of goals (104) – a point that was noted in the Wembley programme. It also noted that 'much of

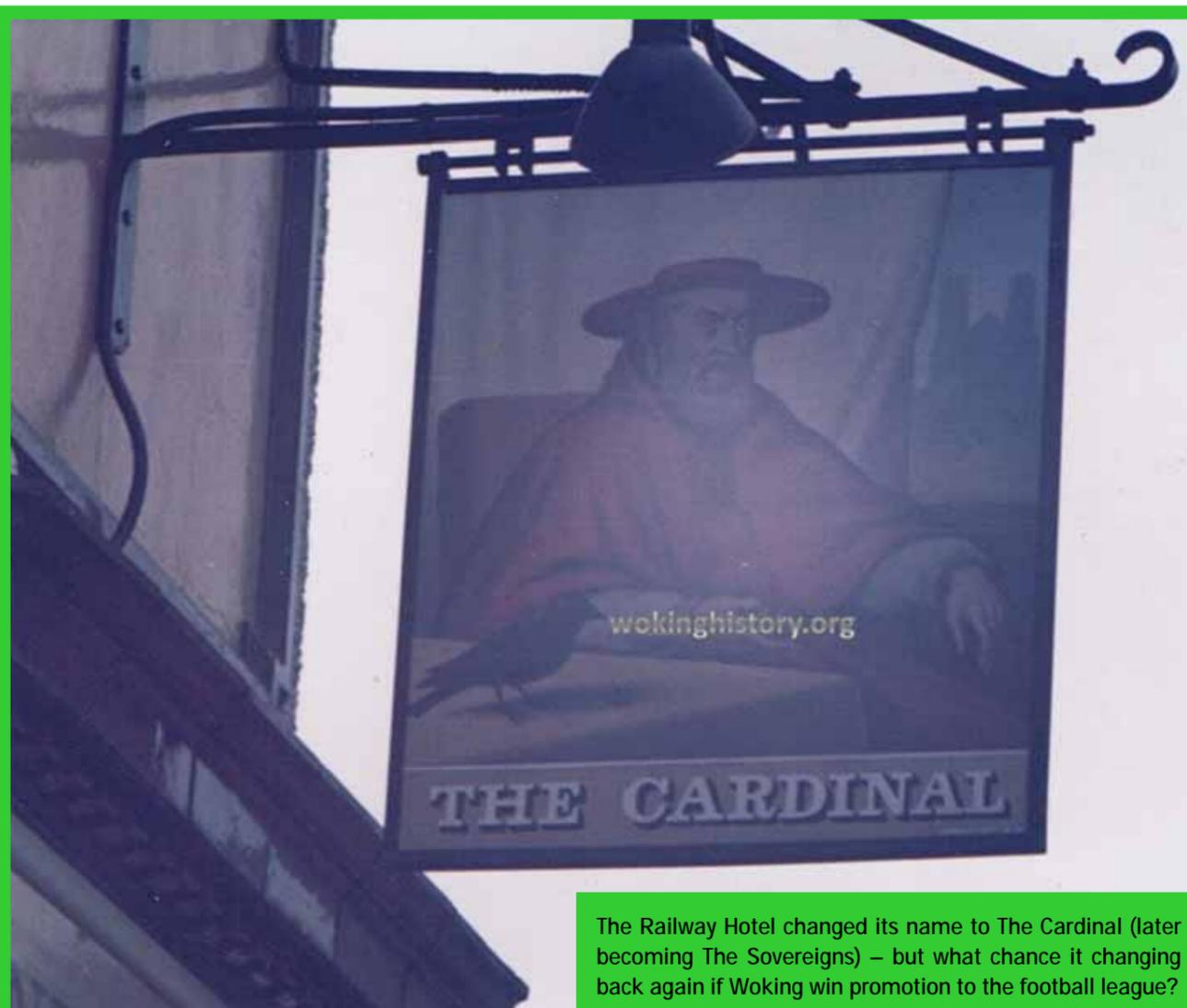
Woking's great success in recent seasons has been built up around their internationally strong forward line. With the forwards keeping up a constant attack a great deal of the pressure has been taken off the defence'.

There were four amateur internationals in the Woking squad – the 'inside right,' John Hebdon; the 'inside left', Geoffrey Hamm; the 'outside left', Reginald Stratton; and Woking's 'centre-forward' and captain, Charlie Mortimore.

When those four retired or moved on Woking's defence could obviously not cope, and for the next few years the club were very much a 'middle of the table' side (a situation, perhaps, that some would be happy with today).

I don't know for certain, but I believe it was at this time that the Railway Hotel in Guildford Road, Woking, changed its name to 'The Cardinal' in celebration of the clubs success. The Cardinal nickname was taken from the fact that the club's colours had always been 'Cardinal Red and White', with that particular shade of red being chosen because of Thomas Wolsey and the story that he was staying with Henry VIII at Woking Palace in 1515 when he received the letter from the Pope informing him that he had been made a Cardinal.

I am not certain either when exactly 'The Cardinal' changed its name to 'The Sovereigns' – although again I suspect that by then the glory days of the club had passed and the pub was probably trying to distance itself from some of the trouble caused by its almost constantly disappointed fans. Wouldn't it be good if pride in the team could return enough for the pub to once again be called 'The Cardinal'!



The Railway Hotel changed its name to The Cardinal (later becoming The Sovereigns) – but what chance it changing back again if Woking win promotion to the football league?