

Back at the Top After 30 Years: The Reds' Flight to the Premier League Title

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Welcome! This article of PRESENT will be about football, or soccer, if you prefer calling it that. Now, I know that most of our readers will be at least somewhat unfamiliar with the beautiful game, so I feel that I should explain what those unfamiliar names in the title mean, at the very least.

So, first of all, what does “the top” mean? If you were to ask football fans, most of them would say that the top of football is the UEFA Champions League final. This is a bit Eurocentric since only European clubs can become eligible to compete in the UCL. Europe is where the greatest football is played on the club level and the UCL final is definitely the greatest honor in club football, but to be crowned kings of the world, a team would have to first win the UCL, and then go and compete against other continental winners in the FIFA Club World Cup. However, the “top” in the title refers to a more local competition: The titular Premier League.

Premier League is the highest division of football in England or at least the most recent name for that division. The top of this competition would obviously be winning the League title by racking up the most points in the League throughout the year. Well, then, which club has done this to bring about the creation of this article? Who are “The Reds”? The Reds are Liverpool F.C., one of the most decorated clubs in all club football. No English club has the level of success that Liverpool has internationally, and only their most fierce rivals Manchester United can give them a run for their money in local success. So, why then, had the club not won the title in thirty years, and what changed to inspire this recent bout of success?

Well, The Reds only managed to win the PL last year, but there have been close calls before as well. The most famous of these may be the 2013/2014 season where footballing legend and the most beloved captain of Liverpool Steven Gerrard famously slipped on the most critical match of the season, costing Liverpool the title. Closer to our time, Liverpool came very close to the title, only to be thwarted by Manchester City with a historic run. The man who brought Liverpool to that point however is very important. Now widely regarded as one of the three best managers in the world, Jurgen Klopp came into power as manager as Liverpool in 2015 and has steadily built up the team from the ground up since and has won many glories with The Reds.

The most important of these, aside from the titular PL title win, happened in the aforementioned season where Liverpool missed the PL title by just a single point to Manchester City. During that season, Klopp’s team managed to win the UCL title, and with

quite a story to behold as well. Down 3-0 against Barcelona in the semi-finals, Liverpool's Europe run was thought to be all but over. Yet, with determination and rigor, and the help of a corner kick taken quickly, Liverpool managed to beat Barcelona 4-0 in the second leg and then played a less stormy game against Tottenham Hotspur winning 2-0 to claim the UCL title. Shortly thereafter, Liverpool went on to win the FIFA Club World Cup as well, adding one more trophy to the stack.

In that season, Liverpool managed to gather an awe-inspiring 97 points but was beaten by Manchester City's 98, as mentioned before. However, In the next season, 2019-2020, The Reds managed to gather a historic 99 points edging ahead of second-place team Manchester City by a whopping 18 points. This point count has brought the Premier League Title to Anfield after a thirty-year drought with much rejoicing from the fans. Unfortunately, the fans could not celebrate with the team in Anfield because of the COVID-19 crisis, yet the Liverpool F.C. mantra stood true: You'll Never Walk Alone. The fans stood firm with the team even through the pandemic.

The mantra will be put to use even more in this season it seems, however, with the team having recently suffered four defeats in a row in the home field, an occurrence last seen in the 1922-1923 season. I will not go into the nitty-gritty of the details, but due to an incredible injury crisis, Liverpool has fielded 18 different centreback tandems, which is a lot, really, a lot. The latest addition to the injury list is the influential captain Jordan Henderson, who was also playing in a centreback position. The fans are steady, however, a banner was hung outside Anfield showing support for manager Jurgen Klopp.

In conclusion, the steadfast support from the fans and the genius of Jurgen Klopp has brought Liverpool the title after 30 years. Even though the signs of both seem to be fading, because of the COVID-19 crisis and the recent injury crisis, I advise that you do not count Liverpool out from strong sides in the Premier League, I propose that these dark times are simply a passing phase in a great period of The Reds.