1. RENEGADES AND CAVALIERS

The twentieth century was barely eight weeks old when eleven young men stepped out of a public house and onto a narrow alleyway in the heart of Munich. Like many of the lanes in this part of town, the old quarter, it was named for an ancient profession. Germans called it the *Schäfflergasse*, which told you that coopers once traded here.

We don't know if the men turned left or right. But it was getting late and cold on this February evening and they had no time to waste, so it seems safe to assume that they took the shorter route to their destination. In which case they turned left and then, after only a few steps, left again.

Many years later, people would say it was very fitting that exactly eleven men walked past the imposing Field Marshals' Hall and then the equestrian statue of the former Bavarian king Maximilian I in order to form Bayern Munich FC. People would also say it was typical that all of them either came from a middle-class background or even from affluent families . . . and that none of them was actually from Munich or even Bavarian.

Yes, in a way this would have been typical – but it wasn't quite like that. Otto Naegele, at twenty years of age one of the youngest men present, was a local boy. The same went for 24-year-old Arthur Ringler and the Wamsler boys, Fritz and Karl. The 28-year-old Franz

John, meanwhile, was the son of a simple mail clerk and worked as a photographer.

But it's true that the eleven men who walked side by side on this dark, cold day – 27 February 1900 – with the express purpose of forming a football club were an unusually colourful group of people. Two of them, Kuno Friedrich and Wilhelm Focke, came from as far away as Bremen, 470 miles to the north. Focke, his friends joked, had more talents and interests than da Vinci. Among other things, he was a painter, sculptor, poet and inventor and would one day be recognised as a pioneer of German aviation. We can assume he got along very well with Naegele, who was studying at the Academy of Fine Arts and would soon become a celebrated graphic designer.

Amazingly, there was an even more famous artist among the club's founding fathers, although he wasn't present on this February night. A few weeks earlier, in January 1900, seventeen men had signed a document that declared their willingness to join a new football club if and when certain events made its formation necessary. One of these men was Benno Elkan, a 22-year-old sculptor from Dortmund who is today best known as the man who built the Knesset Menorah, the large bronze candelabra that stands in front of the Israeli parliament in Jerusalem, as well as the life-sized cock statue that adorns White Hart Lane.

The existence of this document tells you that the formation of Bayern Munich was not a spur-of-the-moment decision. Franz John – as the oldest of the group, he was something like a leader by default – and the others had known for quite some time that they might have to take drastic measures if they wanted to keep the one thing alive that united this motley crew: their love of football.

It may seem strange in retrospect that these educated, creative, liberal, cosmopolitan and rather sophisticated young men were crazy about a simple, crude game that we have come to think of as the classic workingman's sport. However, in *fin-de-siècle* Germany, things were very different. While football was already enjoying its first golden age in England, where people paid money to watch games involving professional teams, German sport was dominated by *Turnen*.

The term is normally translated as 'gymnastics', but this is a bit simplistic. The mass movement, which *Turnen* became in Germany during the nineteenth century, went back to an educator named Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, to this day widely known as *Turnvater*, the father of *Turnen*. Jahn was a fervent nationalist. During the years of French occupation (most German-speaking regions were under French rule between 1794 and 1815), he became convinced that Germans had to seek more power and influence in Europe. On a political level, he felt, this meant the various German kingdoms, such as Prussia and Bavaria, needed to be united. On a more basic level, Jahn argued, Germans had to become more disciplined, organised and physically fit. He developed a system of exercises he called *Turnen*, after an ancient Germanic word for moving about.

At Jahn's first public exhibition – which he staged in June 1811 in Berlin – many activities indeed looked like modern gymnastics. But his followers also engaged in exercises we would today associate with track and field (such as running, throwing and jumping) or combat sports like wrestling and fencing. Jahn referred to it all as *Turnen* and he made no qualms about the fact he considered it not harmless, carefree sport but 'patriotic education to prepare for the war of liberation [from French rule]'.

During the ensuing decades, Jahn's fortunes and reputation – and those of his brainchild *Turnen* – would ebb and flow. In 1848, a group of men led by a Viennese actor formed a *Turnverein* in Munich, a gymnastics club. Two years later, the Bavarian authorities disbanded this club, because they suspected the gymnasts to be republican revolutionaries. But, over the following years, the idea of a unified German empire gained wide currency (and would become reality in 1871). Gradually, the gymnasts were rehabilitated. As early as 1860, the Munich *Turnverein* – or simply: TV – was re-formed.

Like all German clubs, this Munich TV, which would one day become known as 1860 Munich, was a non-profit organisation owned by its members and serving a local community, in this case

a working-class area of Munich known as Giesing. Every citizen of good repute could join the club – and anyone could leave it. A few years later, in June 1879, four disgruntled gymnasts did just that and formed their own club: MTV 1879 (for *Männer-Turn-Verein*, men's gymnastics club).

MTV may have carried the T for *Turnen* prominently in its name, but that didn't mean the club prohibited other activities. In 1880, a few members suggested opening a fencing division and later in the same year, the club added a singing division and set up a choir. If you think a singing division is a strange thing for a club to have, imagine how surprised the MTV members must have been when, in 1897, someone put forward the motion to create a football division.

Football! The word alone was enough to drain all colour from the faces of Jahn's disciples. A teacher from Stuttgart, Karl Planck, had just published a book about this new sport in which he referred to the game as 'the English disease' and the players as 'foot louts'. The well-known pedagogue Otto Jaeger had written: 'I loathe the game, also because of the pitiful, crouching stance in which the players chase the ball.' The general consensus was that football was depraved because it was about competition rather than communion. As such, it was un-German. Playing the game amounted to an unpatriotic act.

This explains why those Germans who took to football despite all the raised eyebrows and warning words during these formative years were very often precisely the sort of freethinking, progressive young men with a rebellious streak who would follow Franz John into the night on a Tuesday in February 1900.

Otto Naegele, for instance, had been a member of what is generally considered the very first football team ever formed in Munich. It carried the unusual Latin name Terra Pila (*pila* means ball) and was set up by students and schoolboys in September 1896. When Terra Pila (whose members were so adventurous they also played baseball!) was dissolved only two years later, some players formed a new club. Others, like Naegele, went for a more obvious solution and joined

an existing one: MTV 1879, or more precisely that club's still young football division.

Initially, everything was fine. MTV had a good football team, built around a young English goalkeeper called Dr Cushing and the noted all-round athlete Julius Keyl. But in 1899, players with some experience joined the club. One was Josef Pollack, the son of a Jewish merchant. Back in his native Freiburg, Pollack had founded one of the best clubs in southern Germany, Freiburg FC. The other was Franz John, who had played for one of the oldest clubs in Berlin before he relocated to Munich.

They weren't experienced simply because they had played football before. Rather, they had played regularly – and competitively. While MTV only played friendlies, just five or six per year, the game was more advanced and organised in other parts of the country. There were regional associations and even championships. As early as 1894, a match between the best team from Berlin (Viktoria 1889) and the strongest side in southern Germany (Hanau 1893) was supposed to produce a national champion. In the end, the match didn't happen, because Hanau couldn't afford to send the team to the capital, more than 300 miles away.

Still, German football was rapidly becoming more regimented during the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1897, the Southern German Football Association was set up and began to schedule games for the large region between Frankfurt and Munich. Or rather, that was the plan. But not a single club from Bavaria joined the association. Although Munich had grown to become the third largest city in the entire country, after Berlin and Hamburg, it was lagging behind with regard to football.

Franz John was unhappy with this situation. He felt MTV had to join the association and began lobbying the club's members. 'I started my work,' he recalled a quarter of a century later. 'First isolated, private conversations with one or another member. Ideas and hints about how we would be in a totally different situation if MTV would

be part of the Southern German Association. Just look at organised sports in cities that are nowhere near as big as Munich and you must realise that we need sporting development to make progress.'

He swayed some, but not many. John was told in no uncertain terms that the gymnasts at the club were vehemently opposed to joining an association that staged competitive games. In fact, there was already some unrest because Dr Cushing, the goalkeeper, had imported track spikes from England and suddenly many of the footballers had begun to do track and field as well. What's worse, they were having success. In the eyes of the gymnasts, racing against each other and the clock in order to win silverware or set records was English. In other words: morally corrupt.

That's when Franz John realised there might be only one way to resolve the conflict: forming his own club. Of course, he and like-minded members like Pollack could have simply left MTV and joined another club – for instance 1860 Munich, which had started its own football division just a few months earlier, in March 1899. But this club centred around *Turnen* as well. John feared he would always clash with reactionary, nationalist gymnasts. What was needed was a club only for football. (Half a century would pass before the club that Franz John eventually founded became a true multi-sports club by gradually adding various non-football divisions. More than twenty years after his death, in 1974, Bayern Munich even opened a division for – gymnastics.)

These considerations explain the existence of the document with seventeen signatures. As early as January 1900, John was testing the waters to see if he could find enough supporters to set up a new team. 'MTV's leaders got wind of these plans,' he later wrote, 'and a general meeting of the club's football division was convened for 27 February 1900, at the Bäckerhöfl restaurant.'

Almost immediately after the meeting had begun, John was taken to task and accused of dividing the club. A heated debate ensued. Many of the footballers were perfectly happy at MTV, among them

the influential Julius Keyl, an outstanding player. They assured John that there was still a chance they would join the Southern German Association. John, however, replied the gymnasts would always boss the footballers around. At this point, a mutual friend of John and Keyl spoke up. 'It is obvious,' he said, 'that what these gentlemen want is to go and form their own club. So why don't we end the debate here and now and part in peace and as friends so that we'll have a good understanding in the future?'

John and his ten disciples grabbed their coats and left the room. He later said that one prominent club member yelled after them: 'Let them go, they will be back soon!' Then they stepped out into the darkness and made for Café Gisela on Fürstenstrasse, a restaurant some ten minutes away, not far from the Odeonsplatz, one of the two most famous and important squares in Munich. (The other is the Marienplatz, where Bayern traditionally celebrate their title wins.)

At 8.30 p.m., John opened what would turn out to be the foundation meeting of one of the biggest and most famous football clubs in the world. Quite a few formalities had to be followed, but it seems that the eleven men knew exactly what they wanted, because only three of them gave fairly brief speeches: John, Pollack and Paul Francke, a young man from Leipzig who went on to become the new club's first captain and player-manager. The only extended discussion, according to the minutes of the meeting, concerned the matter of money. (Characteristically, one is tempted to add.) Eventually, the men agreed on a monthly membership fee of one mark.

Surprisingly, the crucial matter of the club's name was settled swiftly and without much ado. As was common at the time, the men decided to name the club for the region it was based in. Such patriotic flourishes were popular, not least because they signalled footballers, always viewed with suspicion, were faithful subjects of the kaiser. A famous club from Berlin was called Preussen (Prussia) and soon a team based in Augsburg would be named Schwaben (Swabia).

It was all the latest rage to use Latin names. Clubs in Westphalia, Hesse or the Rhineland loved to call themselves Westfalia, Hassia or Rhenania, and there were countless clubs named Alemannia, Germania or Teutonia. So you would have expected John and the others to call their new club Bavaria (which is both English and Latin). However, that name was already taken by a team set up only a few months earlier. Maybe that's why they used the German word – Bayern.

Despite – or maybe because of – the fact that most of the eleven men who were now Bayern FC had come to Munich from places far away, the traditional Bavarian white and blue were chosen as club colours. Then, as if final proof was needed that a lot of behind-the-scenes planning had already gone into the creation of this new club, John informed the others that the municipal authorities would allow the team to play on a public field at Schyrenstrasse, just south of the river Isar. At 11.15 p.m., everybody went home.

If you feel like retracing the historic steps taken by the eleven club founders on that Tuesday all those years ago, you will run into a few problems. Neither Schäfflergasse nor Fürstenstrasse still carry these names. The house where the Bäckerhöfl restaurant used to be is long gone, not least because large parts of central Munich were completely destroyed by British bombs. Café Gisela, too, has disappeared almost without trace.

Amazingly, though, the club's very first pitch is still there – and it is still a municipal football field. These days it is used by local schools. Almost 115 years to the day after Bayern were formed, I visited. Since it was February, the trees lining the pitch were still without leaves. Under a bright but chilly sun, I was able to stand there and imagine it was 18 March 1900, the day Bayern played their first-ever game – against Munich FC, a club that traced its origins back to Terra Pila.

I allowed myself to imagine a group of young men, all with short hair, most sporting a moustache. They are wearing white knee-length trousers. Otto Naegele is in goal. Bayern are awarded a corner and

Paul Francke walks over to the flag to take it. He kicks the ball hard, hoping it will find one of his teammates in the penalty area. Somehow, either because Francke has powerful legs or because it's a very windy day, the ball carries and carries and suddenly ends up in the goal. Bayern win 5-2.

Clubs can be strange things. On the face of it, they are just a coalition of people whose names and faces change over the years. (Not to mention that in Germany, where nearly all clubs are member-owned, the number of people linked to a club can be huge. Today, Bayern Munich has more than 270,000 members and is thus the largest sports club in the world, ahead of Benfica from Lisbon.) And yet some clubs seem to lead a life of their own. They possess an identity – to avoid the esoteric term collective soul – that never really changes, no matter whom the members elect to be in charge or who those members are in the first place.

Paradoxically, the two men who had worked the hardest to form their own club both left Bayern Munich in 1903, after less than three years. Franz John returned to Berlin and his old club, VfB Pankow, while Josef Pollack emigrated to the United States. And yet the circumstances of Bayern's formation and the identities of the eleven founding fathers would resonate down the decades and shape the future of the club to an astonishing degree.

Bayern Munich would never cease being progressive, freethinking and independent – qualities for which the club paid a heavy price during the Nazi dictatorship. Bayern Munich would also remain a club that somehow attracted and united people from all sorts of places, not necessarily only from the city whose name it carried. (To this day, there is a widespread preconception that people from Munich support 1860 rather than Bayern. This may have been true once, but it no longer is, partly because of 1860's long and seemingly terminal decline.) And Bayern would never stop being open-minded and cosmopolitan – when John went back to Berlin in 1903, a Dutchman by the name of Willem Hesselink became the new club president.

While serving in this post, Hesselink obtained a doctorate in both philosophy and chemistry. This piece of trivia underlines another Bayern characteristic that hasn't really changed since day one: the club which was formed by artists and white-collar workers would forever tend to be more cultivated, educated and sophisticated than most of its rivals. No surprise that during the club's early years, only members who had completed secondary education were eligible for the first team. And this team was so well-dressed that Bayern quickly gained the first of many nicknames: the Cavaliers' Club.

Needless to say, Bayern's detractors have always tended to replace 'cultivated' with 'arrogant'. (Not necessarily a far-fetched term once you have heard Bayern's fans sing a popular terrace song which refers to 1860 supporters as 'peasants from Giesing'.) And indeed, another nickname the club garnered during its first decade was *Protzenklub* – the flaunters' club.

Finally, the team that came into being when a ragtag group of renegades walked out on another club would for more than one hundred years remain homeless – in more than one sense. The 5-2 win over Munich FC was the only official game the club played on the Schyrenstrasse pitch. The next five home matches were staged on Theresienwiese, the open space where the annual Oktoberfest is held. Then, in 1901, Fritz and Karl Wamsler's father, a rich factory owner, allowed Bayern to use a piece of land on Clemensstrasse, in the bohemian borough of Schwabing. For a handful of years, the club called this place their own ground, then began an odyssey around town that saw Bayern use eight different stadiums, none of which they owned. It wasn't until the Allianz Arena opened in 2005 that this situation finally changed.

This shiny arena, built for the 2006 World Cup, is so far on the outskirts of town, seven miles north of where Café Gisela used to be, that some people say it's not even in Munich any more. (That's not true, but it's undoubtedly quite a trek to get there.) It may be inconvenient, but somehow it's fitting, because Bayern also lack what other clubs like to call a spiritual home.

Since the late 1940s, Bayern's training pitches have been on Säbener Strasse in Giesing, right in the middle of a residential area. Later the club's headquarters moved there, too. The low, red-and-white main building – which looks like one of those functional state schools they used to build in the late 1960s – has almost become a Munich landmark and is dearly loved by all club employees, despite the fact it's long since become much too small for one of the world's biggest clubs. But although Franz Beckenbauer grew up just a twenty-minute walk from here, Giesing is traditional 1860 territory. Bayern only ended up here because, well, you need a roof over your head, don't you?

Oh, and there is another thing that Bayern have been right from the start: very, very good. Less than two months after its formation, the team demolished one of the oldest football clubs in town, Nordstern FC, by a score of 15-0. In September 1902, Bayern easily won their first-ever derby against 1860: 3-0. In fact, during those early years, the true Munich derby was the match between Bayern and MTV 1879, because 1860 didn't really stand a chance. (Between 1907 and 1912, Bayern won fourteen out of fifteen games against 1860.)

But there was one thing the fledgling club was not: rich. There were a few wealthy patrons such as Wamsler or Alfred Walter Heymel, a publisher who had inherited a fortune from his adoptive father and bestowed the first kit (sky-blue shirts and white shorts) upon the club. But, like everyone else, Bayern was an amateur club that generated revenue only through membership fees and gate money. Since the club didn't boast a particularly large number of members, not least because it only offered football, and didn't have its own ground, finances continued to be a problem.

That's why Bayern joined forces with the Munich Sports Club (MSC), then also based in Schwabing, in early 1906. MSC is now primarily known as a field hockey club, but back then it dabbled in next to everything that wasn't *Turnen*, from boxing to tennis. At one point, MSC boasted twenty-two individual divisions and could call itself the biggest sports club in Europe. MSC was so large that the

club had enough money to lease a spacious area of land from the city. There was a nice football ground on it that would soon have the first covered grandstand in Munich. This ground could hold 1,000 spectators and there was even talk of floodlights so that teams could train in the evenings.

The ground was so enticing that Bayern approached MSC and suggested becoming that club's football division. MSC agreed to the deal, mainly because Bayern's first team was already regarded as a powerhouse around town. MSC even allowed Bayern to play under their own name. There was only one condition which wasn't negotiable: Bayern had to play in MSC's colours – white shirts and red shorts.

The alliance between the two clubs would last only about a dozen years, partly because football – and Bayern Munich – became so popular so quickly that the ground which at first had seemed huge would soon be too small. However, the colour change would prove to be permanent. People began to refer to Bayern's players as *die Rothosen*, the Red Shorts. It was eventually shortened to *die Roten* – the Reds. It is still the club's most widely-used nickname. (1860 are known as the Lions, after their club badge, or *die Sechziger*, after their year of foundation. However, in Munich itself people tend to simply distinguish between Reds and Blues.)

Bayern severed ties with MSC in 1919 and it was during the following years that the club acquired yet another nickname, this one darker, uglier and more ominous, because it hinted at things to come. Some people began to call Bayern *der Judenklub* – the Jews' club.

In the wake of World War One, anti-semitism was dramatically on the rise in Germany. In his award-winning book about Bayern's Jewish heritage, the writer Dietrich Schulze-Marmeling says that some clubs were 'denounced as Jews' clubs although the number of Jewish members is usually small. What counts is not their number but whether or not they hold down official functions at the club and wield influence.' At Bayern, this was certainly the case – in the years just

before the Nazis came to power, three Jewish men in a row coached the team, with great success.

Then there was the president. In January 1919, a 35-year-old accountant by the name of Kurt Landauer was elected to this post. It was his second stint as president. Landauer had already run the club in 1913–14, when Bayern quickly needed someone to take over from the well-liked Angelo Knorr, who had been arrested for homosexuality (a criminal offence under German law at the time).

Landauer, who had joined Bayern as early as 1901 and used to keep goal for the reserve team, was a larger-than-life character. Born near Munich, he loved women, beer and roast pork. If he had been Catholic he would have made a picture-book Bavarian. But he wasn't, he was Jewish. And although he wasn't a religious man and didn't observe the practices of his faith, it was enough for Bayern to be termed a Jews' club.

The same was said of Eintracht Frankfurt, because three Jewish businessmen, owners of a large shoe factory, were that club's main benefactors and sponsors. This is noteworthy due to a twist of fate you could call absurd, ironic or even tragic, as you prefer. Thanks in no small part to Landauer's skills as a club leader, on 12 June 1932 Bayern played in the final for the national championship. Bayern's opponents were Eintracht Frankfurt. Barely seven months before the Nazis seized power in Germany, two Jews' clubs were the best football sides in the country.

As the example of the Dutch president (and star player and coach) Willem Hesselink shows, Bayern were never afraid to look abroad for help. This was not unusual for a German football club in the early years of the twentieth century, because everyone was aware they were playing an English sport and thus looked for British expertise to learn the finer points of the game. However, the extent to which Bayern Munich opened up to outside influences from very early on was astonishing – and would remain another constant.

In Nuremberg, by comparison, 100 miles north of Munich, another club formed in the year 1900 was about to become the biggest and best team in the land: Nuremberg. But Nuremberg almost prided themselves on the fact that they didn't have a proper coach until the 1920s, arguing their players were so good that they didn't need to be told what to do. Bayern handled matters markedly differently. Under the aforementioned president Angelo Knorr, the club signed an English coach as early as August 1911.

The key word here is 'signed'. It's worth remembering that German football was completely amateur at this time and would remain so for decades to come. In fact, everything to do with money was considered taboo in German sport for so long that even today, when clubs make hundreds of millions and pay their players accordingly, being considered commercial is still the worst possible insult.

Although, as we shall see later, the number of exceptions is growing, German clubs as a rule are not individually owned, either by persons or by corporations, and since they are not companies they cannot be bought or sold. In Germany, sport is not part of the entertainment industry – or, for that matter, any other industry. It is a communal experience.

This is also one of the numerous reasons why there was no nationwide league in Germany until the 1960s. Only professional clubs could have shouldered the costs that came with sending squads across such a large country and only professional players would have been able to criss-cross the land on a regular basis. And so the question of what came to be known as the Bundesliga was forever intrinsically linked to the concept of professionalism. You couldn't have one without the other.

That's why the German game remained regional long after everyone else had started thinking big. Over the years, the rules, the scheduling, the number of teams involved and the names of divisions changed, but the basic concept remained the same from 1903, when the first official national champions were crowned, to 1963, when the Bundesliga at long

last came into being. Each of the country's regions was split into a few divisions, the rough equivalent of county leagues. At the end of the regular season, the best teams from each of the divisions went through to either a play-off or a small tournament to determine the regional champion. Then the various regional champions met each other in knock-out rounds which culminated in a one-legged final for the national title.

Bayern came close to reaching the later nationwide stages in both 1910 and 1911, when they finished the season as the second-best team in all of southern Germany, behind only a fiendishly strong Karlsruher FV side. One of the head-to-head games between the two teams attracted an unheard-of crowd of 4,000 to Bayern's cosy ground – and earned the club a pile of money.

Now the question was: how to invest those funds wisely? President Knorr suggested signing a full-time, salaried coach for a trial period of one season. Why the trial period? Well, some clubs in the south had learned the hard way that not every Briton was automatically a dedicated sportsman. Some coaches from the place that spawned the game had, as Bayern's club historian Andreas Wittner put it, 'distinguished themselves through regular trips to the pub and by consuming excessive amounts of alcohol rather than through teaching basic football tactics'.

In August, Bayern poached a man with some pedigree, Karlsruher's Rugby-born manager Charles Griffith. He wasn't the first foreigner (not even the first Englishman) to coach the team, but he took things to a whole new level. Griffith introduced training sessions on every working day of the week and had the club rent a gym during the winter months to allow indoor practices. He improved the players' stamina with running exercises and their strength by having them work out with weights. Soon, Bayern's deputy chairman Hans Tusch would laud the team for 'playing well and also being worthy of a club like ours in terms of discipline and sportsmanship'.

There was just one problem: the results. An absurd fluke defeat on the last day of the regular season cost Bayern first place in their county

league. Without the prospect of lucrative knock-out games against well-known teams, Griffiths could no longer be paid and was let go as early as April 1912. However, a seed had been sown. Griffith taught Bayern that it was possible to remain an amateur club and still be professional about how you approached the game. The following year, Knorr's successor Kurt Landauer signed a coach even more famous than Griffith – the former Blackburn Rovers forward and English international William Townley, the first man to score a hat-trick in an FA Cup final.

Townley had already coached three different German clubs with great success and Landauer had high hopes for him. Bayern were the best team in Munich, one of the two or three best in Bavaria and among the seven or eight best in southern Germany. The next step, Landauer felt, was to be among the country's elite. It was by no means an unrealistic vision, as the club had already produced three internationals – the fleet-footed right-winger Max Gablonsky, centre-forward Fritz Fürst and goalkeeper Ludwig Hofmeister.

True, the German national team was still in its infancy, having played its first-ever game only in 1908, and amateurish in the least flattering sense of the word. (When Gablonsky made his debut against Belgium in May 1910 in Duisburg, only seven German players arrived in time for the kick-off. Four local players were culled from the crowd to make up the numbers. Germany lost 3-0.) But Bayern were definitely up and coming. Hofmeister, for instance, may have been good enough to play for Germany, but he wasn't good enough to play for his club. In 1910, the Austrian goalkeeper Karl Pekarna had joined Bayern. He was so talented that he had played professionally – not for any old continental team, but for Rangers in Glasgow. On the continent, where professionalism was illegal, he was forced to become an amateur again, but it was well known that a not insignificant amount of money changed hands before Pekarna donned Bayern's colours.

The club as a whole was healthy, too. In the 1913–14 season, Bayern had some 900 members (400 of them being juniors). Twelve senior teams and twenty youth teams were playing at various levels

of organised football. The future seemed rosy. But whether or not Townley would have been able to deliver nationwide success with his fine first team, we'll never know. In the summer of 1914, the Great War broke out. Townley, suddenly an enemy, hurried home and Landauer, along with almost two-thirds of Bayern's members and players, went to fight for what he believed to be his country.

More than sixty members did not survive the four-year carnage, but Landauer did. He returned from the front in France having been made an officer and with two military decorations dangling from his broad chest. The war was lost and the kaiser forced to abdicate; the German Empire had collapsed. But, along with many other German Jews who had risked life and limb for a nation that grudgingly tolerated rather than accepted them, Landauer felt he had proved himself to be a proper German citizen. Little did he know that right-wing groups would soon blame defeat in the war on the Social Democrats and the Jews – with gruesome consequences. Or that his beloved Munich would gradually change from a liberal, artistic and pleasantly provincial city into a hotbed of fascism. Or that the entire country would become more and more dangerously hostile until there was only one retreat for him, only one place where he was respected, loved and protected: his club, Bayern Munich.

In January 1919, the members elected Landauer president again – and thus began Bayern's first golden age. Under his guidance, Bayern temporarily merged with another club (named after, of all people, that dreaded *Turnvater* – Jahn), once again in the misguided hope that this would lead to getting a ground of their own. In the summer, Landauer brought William Townley back to Munich, a daring move, considering the war had ended only a few months earlier. A year later, in another typically progressive and far-sighted move, the president took out accident insurance for all first-team players.

It was a good time to move forward, because something very strange had happened during the war: Germans lost interest in *Turnen* and went crazy for football. The last final in peacetime (Fürth vs Leipzig

in Magdeburg) had attracted 6,000 spectators. The first final after the war (Nuremberg vs Fürth, played on 13 June 1920, in Frankfurt) was watched by a sell-out crowd of 35,000. When the match began, throngs of people were still queueing in front of the gates and touts were demanding 200 marks for a single ticket. Nobody had ever seen anything like it. Social reforms after the war, for instance the introduction of the eight-hour day, had made football the workingman's game.

And the workingman didn't merely watch it. The DFB (the German FA) – only one month older than Bayern, having been founded in January 1900 – was growing rapidly. In 1919, the association represented 3,100 clubs and 460,000 members. Only one year later, the numbers had risen to 4,400 and 760,000, respectively. The clubs organised under the DFB's umbrella fielded more than 20,000 individual teams in all age groups and at all levels.

One of those teams was Bayern's first XI. It would be too much to say the side struggled after the war, but it certainly stalled – the coveted Southern German title remained elusive. Where once Karlsruhe had dominated this part of the country, it was now Nuremberg that would acquire truly mythic status. How mythic, you ask? Well, the club was so much better than anyone else that people nicknamed it . . . The Club. (In 1925, the club – or rather: The Club – became *Rekordmeister*, an honorary title conferred on the team which has more championships to its name than any other. Nuremberg would proudly carry the epithet for more than six decades until you-know-who overtook them for good. Today, *Rekordmeister* is a widely used synonym for Bayern.)

What's more, a pesky little Munich club was challenging Bayern's local dominance. A team called Wacker Munich gave Landauer headaches for a few years. There were no two ways about it, he needed help from abroad again. In 1924, Bayern signed a Scottish-born coach by the name of James McPherson, about whom little seems to be known, except that he was fanatical about conditioning. (Some sources say he used to play for Newcastle United, but that isn't the case. There was a trainer called James McPherson at Newcastle, but it's not the

same person. I suspect Bayern's McPherson must be the same coach who was in charge of Norway during the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp.) Under his stewardship, the first-team players began to resemble semi-pros. They were now paid expense money for games and even training sessions. Although the sums were modest, Munich's municipal archivist Anton Löffelmeier calculates that a first-team regular might have made as much as 150 marks per month through what was essentially his hobby, at a time when a worker's monthly wage came to 200 marks.

It was a typical Bayern Munich move – and, of course, a logical development – but the timing wasn't good. The DFB was run by an increasing number of stout conservatives and was about to vigorously clamp down on the budding professionalism. In fact, the governing body's stance was so strict it even sought to prohibit clubs from playing friendlies against professional teams. In Bayern's club magazine, Landauer ranted: 'Where will the German game end up if German teams are barred from competing with sides from England, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary?' (All these countries had legalised professionalism or were about to.)

At the end of McPherson's first season as Bayern coach, the club celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday with a spectacular party held at the German Theatre, a location so posh that *Kicker* magazine marvelled: 'Never before has a football club become the talk of town with such a brilliant event.' Bayern's anniversary publication said of Landauer: 'We owe the esteem in which we are held at home and abroad to his enormous workrate.'

The club's members and supporters were also treated to a spectacular, almost exotic, event on the football pitch – a game against a club side from South America. In early May, Bayern hosted Argentine champions Boca Juniors, based in Buenos Aires, the first team from the country to set foot on European soil. Manuel Seoane put the visitors ahead, but Georg Hutsteiner equalised before the break for a final score of 1-1. During their three months in Europe, Boca Juniors played seven games in Germany. This was the only one they failed to win.

Bayern's most eagerly awaited anniversary present, however, arrived one year late. In 1926, the team broke Nuremberg's stranglehold on German football, winning the regional Bavarian league two points ahead of the reigning champions. McPherson's team then also went on to win the Southern German championship in a small round-robin tournament ahead of Fürth. For the first time, Bayern would be playing on the really big stage – the final rounds for the national title. However, the joy was short-lived. In the round of 16, Bayern were beaten by a small club few people in Munich had ever heard of, Fortuna Leipzig. It was such a shock that many Bayern members called the radio station after hearing the result to make sure it hadn't been a mistake.

The next coach who tried to take the club all the way was another foreigner: Leo Weisz. The Hungarian was signed from local rivals Wacker Munich and guided Bayern to their second Southern German championship in 1928. In May, seven weeks before the nationwide knock-out rounds began, Bayern played a high-profile friendly against West Ham. The Hammers weren't one of England's best teams at that time, but they did play in the first division (and were, of course, fully professional), so Bayern's 3-2 win amounted to a shock result.

Unfortunately, it wasn't the last stunning scoreline of the season. Bayern progressed to the semi-finals of the national championship, where they met Hamburg. The game was staged at a neutral ground, in Duisburg, and was tied at 1-1 after forty-five minutes. In the second half, though, the roof fell in on Bayern. The team's 31-year-old goalkeeper Alfred Bernstein broke his fingers and, since it was the days before substitutions were allowed, defender Emil Kutterer went between the sticks. Bayern lost 8-2.

As his name suggests, Bernstein was the son of a Viennese Jew. His mother, though, was German. This probably saved his life, because while he would suffer considerable harassment during the dark times ahead, Bernstein would avoid deportation, agony and a near-certain death in one of the concentration camps. In contrast to almost everyone named Landauer.