



# CHESTER FOOTBALL CLUB

THE STORY OF THE LOGO



**A**round 20 years ago, I was stood on the terraces at Sealand Road and experienced one of my greatest moments as a Chester fan. Graham Abel picked up the ball against the mighty Wolves and unleashed an unstoppable 35 yard strike right into the top corner.

I was directly behind his shot and knew as soon as he'd hit it that it was goalbound!

This year, whilst Wolves were entertaining the likes of Liverpool and Manchester United, Chester City Football Club was wound up by a court order.

In late 2009, City Fans United was launched with a view to securing the long-term future of professional football in the City. After a public vote to agree the name of the new club, Chester Football Club was born.

The thing that struck me was that, despite the turbulent times, the new formation brought with it a real feel-good factor amongst fellow fans. Irrespective of which league we were to play in, the Club was now run by fans for fans.

Many teams claim to be a 'People's Club' but no team can lay claim to this title more than Chester FC.





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**T**he Club has given me much enjoyment over the years, so I thought I could try and assist in some way.

Unfortunately, I am not as wealthy as Roman Abramovich, so offered CFU my services free of charge to create the new Club crest.

I originally thought that the logo could include imagery such as seals (to link in with the distant past); wolves and crowns (to link in with the not-so-distant past); or imagery to link in with the City of Chester, such as the Walls or Eastgate Clock.



The badge for Chester City Football Club is one I have seen almost every day for the last 20 years. But what does it actually say about the City of Chester?

The Wolf dates back to when William the Conqueror's nephew, Hugh D'Avranches was appointed the Earl of Chester. He had the nickname 'Lupus' which is the Latin translation for 'wolf'. Just as well the Club didn't make use of his other nickname, 'The Fat Hunter', or who knows what the emblem might have been! Interestingly, the Norman translation for 'The Fat Hunter' was 'Gros Veneur', which is where 'Grosvenor' comes from. The crown refers to Chester being a royalist City, although others thought it depicted the famous City Walls. It is unclear whether the leaves are laurel, a recognised symbol of victory, or oak, a significant (and common) tree in Chester. Oak has long been used in the Cheshire Regiment's logo, reference to saving King George II's life beneath an oak tree at the Battle of Dettingen in 1749.



**M**odernising the club motif was therefore imperative, but it was also important to retain a link to the past.

Arsenal Football Club are an excellent example of a football club modernising their logo in order to improve branding potential.

The old badge (pictured above left) depicted many components: the cannon; the coat of arms of the Metropolitan Borough of Islington; a scroll inscribed with the Club's Latin motto and a highly decorative font for 'Arsenal'. In 2002, they introduced a modernised crest, simplified in that it only included a sleek adaptation of the cannon and the Club's name in a more modern sans-serif typeface. The cannon now was undoubtedly the 'star of the show' and was to be used extensively in merchandising and branding in its newly simplified format.



Speaking to City Fans United it was clear that the wolf, crown and the leaves needed to be retained in the new club badge.

I produced a range of simplified graphics for each of these components, which when used together, would form the new logo. I thought the 'phoenix from the flames' theme was still a powerful message, so on some of my ideas I tried to depict the wolf rising defiantly, therefore the Crown took on more of a firey nature. There was a fine line though between making the wolf look defiant and downright scary, so I reduced the fang-size to make the logo more befitting of a family club! The leaves proved problematic as I didn't want them to dominate the wolf / crown theme, by surrounding them. I therefore used some simplified leaves to complete the circle made by the words 'Chester' and 'Football Club'.



# CHESTER



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One of the main considerations when designing a logo, is the use of colour. This wasn't as important in this case though as Chester in anything other than blue just wouldn't be right - after all, we are the "blues" and the "blue army!"

I always found the use of red on the old Chester logo slightly odd, although it did brighten the badge up, especially with the golden crown and ring of leaves. I tried examples of the logo in the same colours, and also in a reduced colour palette, such as blue/yellow or blue/black. This is because printers, embroiderers and sign-makers charge extra the more colours used. For a 'phoenix' club such as Chester FC, any savings made on the reproduction of the badge is a major advantage. However, as well as being cost-efficient, I was adamant that the badge needed to look bright, modern and something that people would be proud to wear at the pub. Club merchandising is a potentially huge income generator for modern sports clubs, so the club badge needed to be designed in such a way that it could be used effectively on a vast range of merchandising products.



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The literal definition of Chester Football Club's new crest:

**The Wolf (symbol of Chester), rising defiantly, from a crown of flames - It represents solidarity and a never-say-die spirit which people can wear with pride**







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