

CENTRE-BACKS

(BACKS / STOPPERS / MAN-MARKERS / CENTRE-BACKS)

#50



Rainer STILLER (b. 1944)
Germany, Stopper/Full Back

An important player for Hannover for 10 years, mostly as a stopper but also as an offensive full back on both sides. An accomplished marker in central defense.

League record

1966-67	2	0	Hannover (BL)
1967-68	24	0	Hannover (BL)
1968-69	34	2	Hannover (BL)
1969-70	34	0	Hannover (BL)
1970-71	33	2	Hannover (BL)
1971-72	34	1	Hannover (BL)
1972-73	32	1	Hannover (BL)
1973-74	29	2	Hannover (BL)
1974-75	34	0	Hannover (Div. 2)
1975-76	32	1	Hannover (BL)
1976-77	37	4	Hannover (Div. 2)
1977-78	37	5	Hannover (Div. 2)

#49



Uwe WITT (b. 1939)
Germany, Stopper/Sweeper

Began his career as a left back but soon found his best role in that of a stopper-sweeper. Good positioning and a clean tackler, not much of a threat in front of the goal but very reliable and important for his teams' defense. Retired because of a suspension due to his involvement in the Bundesliga scandal.

League record

1959-60	19	2	Concordia Hamburg (Div. 1 – North)
1960-61	27	2	Concordia Hamburg (Div. 1 – North)
1961-62	19	0	FC St. Pauli (Div. 1 – North)
1962-63	27	3	FC St. Pauli (Div. 1 – North)
1963-64	30	2	Arminia Hannover (Div. 2)
1964-65	31	5	Arminia Hannover (Div. 2)
1965-66	29	2	Holstein Kiel (Div. 2)
1966-67	31	0	Holstein Kiel (Div. 2)
1967-68	16	0	Hertha BSC (Div. 2)
1968-69	34	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
1969-70	34	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
1970-71	24	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
1971-72	31	1	Hertha BSC (BL)

#48



Anton (Toni) KUGLER (1898-1962)

7 A, Germany, Back

League champion 1920, 1921, 1924, 1925

League runner-up 1922

Started out as a half back but by 1920 he had evolved into a left-sided back who was an excellent header of the ball despite being rather small, he was known for his very good positioning. Feared were his uncompromising tacklings as he was considered the best tackler in German football during the 1920s. In the infamous 1922 "never ending" German championship final between Nürnberg and Hamburg, it was the small Kugler that faced Hamburg's hulk-like centre forward Tull Harder. Although Kugler lost four teeth and a gold filling in his duels with Harder, the Hamburg goalgetter failed to score a goal in the 294 minutes the two finals lasted. He retired in 1932 after 668 games for Nürnberg.

Senior club

1914-32 1. FC Nürnberg

#47



Josef (Seppi) MÜLLER (1893-1984)

12 A, Germany, Left Half/Back

League champion 1926

For many years the tall, athletic Seppel Müller played convincingly as a back due to his strength in one-on-one duels, good positioning and excellent heading coupled with a sound technique.

League record (incomplete)

1910-21	-	-	Ludwigshafen
1921-22	10	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1922-23	15	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1923-24	23	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1924-25	14	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1925-26	24	1	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1926-27	22	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1927-32	-	-	Würzburg (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1932-33	-	-	Bremen (Div. 1 – Weser)
1933-34	18	0	Bremen (Div. 1 – Lower Saxony)
1934-35	1	0	Bremen (Div. 1 – Lower Saxony)

#46



Dietmar SCHWAGER (b. 1940)

Germany, Stopper/Sweeper

A ruthless marker who was considered one of the hardest defenders in the Bundesliga of the 1960s and 70s. Later in his career he became a sweeper.

League record

1962-63	26	1	VfR Kaiserslautern (Div. 1 – Southwest)
1963-64	37	1	VfR Kaiserslautern (Div. 2)
1964-65	20	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1965-66	27	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1966-67	33	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1967-68	33	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1968-69	34	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1969-70	33	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1970-71	28	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1971-72	28	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1972-73	30	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1973-74	28	2	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1974-75	26	0	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)

#45



Lothar WOELK (b. 1954)
Germany, Defensive Midfielder/Stopper
Cup finalist 1988

For roughly ten years Lothar Woelk was a defensive key player for lowly Bochum. A very hard and robust marker (either in defense or in midfield), very good aerial game. A typical 1970s/80s hard man who nobody wanted to play against.

League record

1977-78	33	3	Bochum (BL)
1978-79	33	3	Bochum (BL)
1979-80	34	1	Bochum (BL)
1980-81	32	2	Bochum (BL)
1981-82	31	1	Bochum (BL)
1982-83	34	2	Bochum (BL)
1983-84	31	4	Bochum (BL)
1984-85	32	1	Bochum (BL)
1985-86	29	1	Bochum (BL)
1986-87	32	6	Bochum (BL)
1987-88	33	1	Bochum (BL)
1988-89	31	1	Bochum (BL)
1989-90	32	1	Duisburg (Div. 2)
1990-91	32	1	Duisburg (Div. 2)
1991-92	35	4	Duisburg (BL)

#44



Hans REICH (b. 1942)
Germany, Stopper/Sweeper
League champion 1966, 1974
League runner-up 1967, 1975
Cup winner 1964, 1970
CWC finalist 1966

Originally a stopper who later evolved into a sweeper, Hans Reich was a skillful defender and a great personality in the ranks of TSV 1860 München in the mid- to late-1960s.

League record

1960-61	4	0	TSV 1860 München (Div. 1 – South)
1961-62	26	0	TSV 1860 München (Div. 1 – South)
1962-63	8	0	TSV 1860 München (Div. 1 – South)
1963-64	7	0	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1964-65	30	0	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1965-66	26	0	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1966-67	23	0	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1967-68	23	1	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1968-69	32	6	TSV 1860 München (BL)
1969-70	36	0	Kickers Offenbach (Div. 2)
1970-71	21	0	Kickers Offenbach (BL)
1971-72	28	0	VOEST Linz (Austria)

1972-73	30	0	VOEST Linz (Austria)
1973-74	30	0	VOEST Linz (Austria)
1974-75	4	0	VOEST Linz (Austria)
1974-75	32	0	TSV 1860 München (Div. 2)
1975-76	37	1	TSV 1860 München (Div. 2)

#43



Amand THEIS (b. 1949)
Germany, Stopper/Midfielder

An unpleasant rock-hard stopper and one of the most notorious hard men that every team in the 1970s and 80s had.

League record

1968-69	7	0	Nürnberg (BL)
1969-70	29	2	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1970-71	36	2	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1971-72	36	2	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1972-73	32	4	Kickers Offenbach (BL)
1973-74	25	2	Kickers Offenbach (BL)
1974-75	12	1	Kickers Offenbach (BL)
1975-76	31	5	Kickers Offenbach (BL)
1976-77	36	11	Kickers Offenbach (Div. 2)
1977-78	32	4	Dortmund (BL)
1978-79	31	1	Dortmund (BL)
1979-80	21	1	Dortmund (BL)
1980-81	25	4	Düsseldorf (BL)
1981-82	31	3	Düsseldorf (BL)
1982-83	29	2	Düsseldorf (BL)
1983-84	20	1	Düsseldorf (BL)

#42



Detlef PIRSIG (b. 1945)
Germany, Stopper
Cup finalist 1975

Detlef Pirsig's claim to fame is that he was Gerd Müller's most-feared opponent in the Bundesliga. A pitilessly hard marker who apparently was not very interested in the ball as long as the striker didn't get past him. For roughly ten years, the destroyer Pirsig kept a steady good level.

League record

1965-66	2	0	Duisburg (BL)
1966-67	14	1	Duisburg (BL)
1967-68	23	0	Duisburg (BL)
1968-69	34	1	Duisburg (BL)
1969-70	32	1	Duisburg (BL)
1970-71	34	1	Duisburg (BL)
1971-72	34	0	Duisburg (BL)
1972-73	33	4	Duisburg (BL)
1973-74	34	0	Duisburg (BL)
1974-75	31	0	Duisburg (BL)
1975-76	34	0	Duisburg (BL)
1976-77	32	1	Duisburg (BL)
1977-82	-	-	Lüttringhausen (Amateurs)
1982-83	35	3	Lüttringhausen (Div. 2)
1983-84	13	1	Lüttringhausen (Div. 2)

#41



Reiner HOLLMANN (b. 1949)
Germany, Stopper

A tall and massive stopper, very strong header of the ball of great defensive reliability yet still had an offensive mind-set as the foundation of his game.

League record

1970-71	25	0	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1971-72	32	2	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1972-73	34	7	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1973-74	33	3	Eintracht Braunschweig (Div. 2)
1974-75	32	1	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1975-76	34	3	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1976-77	30	4	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1977-78	24	4	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1978-79	27	2	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1979-80	31	0	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1980-81	13	2	Eintracht Braunschweig (Div. 2)
1981-82	25	3	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1982-83	29	1	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)
1983-84	27	6	Eintracht Braunschweig (BL)

#40



Roland GRAHAMMER (b. 1963)
Germany, Man-Marker
League Champion 1989, 1990, 1994
League runner-up 1991

For a man-marker, Roland Grahammer was quite talented on the ball and possessed an above average technique. Good positioning and reading of the game which meant that he didn't have to tackle all that much. It was predicted early in his career that he would once play as a decent libero but when he joined Bayern after the 1988 Olympics he stalled in his progression. Klaus Augenthaler was the libero so Grahammer had to continue as a man-marker, which he did sufficiently but he never reached the next level. A grave injury in August 1992 ended his career premature.

League record

1982-83	34	2	Augsburg (Div. 2)
1983-84	30	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1984-85	30	2	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1985-86	28	7	Nürnberg (BL)
1986-87	30	6	Nürnberg (BL)
1987-88	31	3	Nürnberg (BL)
1988-89	28	0	Bayern München (BL)
1989-90	28	1	Bayern München (BL)
1990-91	24	1	Bayern München (BL)
1991-92	20	0	Bayern München (BL)
1992-93	2	0	Bayern München (BL)
1993-94	0	0	Bayern München (BL)

#39



Wolfgang PAUL (b. 1940)
Germany, Stopper
League champion 1963

Cup winner 1965
CWC winner 1966
World Cup finalist 1966

A tall centre half who started out as an inside forward but quickly evolved into a hard, strong at heading central defender. Despite his beginnings as an offensive midfielder, Wolfgang Paul must be described as a very defensive centre half with mainly marking duties. His style of playing was often compared to Werner Liebrich. Paul was part of the 1966 World Cup roster but never won a cap.

League record

1961-62	24	1	Dortmund (Div. 1 – West)
1962-63	26	0	Dortmund (Div. 1 – West)
1963-64	13	0	Dortmund (BL)
1964-65	20	0	Dortmund (BL)
1965-66	33	1	Dortmund (BL)
1966-67	31	2	Dortmund (BL)
1967-68	24	1	Dortmund (BL)
1968-69	17	2	Dortmund (BL)
1969-70	10	0	Dortmund (BL)

#38



Mladen KRSTAJIĆ (b. 1974)
59 A (2 goals), Serbia, Centre-Back
League champion 1996, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2011
League runner-up 2000, 2005, 2007
Cup winner 1998, 2004, 2011
Cup finalist 1996, 1999, 2005

Expert at heading and generally very good and reliable defensively, the Croatian was also a capable and intelligent passer when in possession. Bremen bought him as a left back and initially he did not do that well in that role. After switching him to central defense Krstajic became one of the pillars of Bremen and later Schalke. One flaw was his tendency to lack in concentration in games against minnows.

League record

1995-96	6	1	Partizan (Serbia & Montenegro)
1996-97	11	0	Partizan (Serbia & Montenegro)
1997-98	21	4	Partizan (Serbia & Montenegro)
1998-99	17	0	Partizan (Serbia & Montenegro)
1999-00	29	2	Partizan (Serbia & Montenegro)
2000-01	25	2	Bremen (BL)
2001-02	26	2	Bremen (BL)
2002-03	31	4	Bremen (BL)
2003-04	30	3	Bremen (BL)
2004-05	28	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2005-06	29	2	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2006-07	27	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2007-08	23	2	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2008-09	24	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2009-10	22	2	Partizan (Serbia)
2010-11	21	1	Partizan (Serbia)

#37



Peter KAACK (b. 1941)
Germany, Stopper
League Champion 1967

A tough as nails yet fair stopper who for many seasons was an important key player in the famous 'concrete' defense of the 1960s Eintracht Braunschweig side.

League record

1961-62	19	0	Neumünster (Div. 1 – North)
1962-63	29	1	Neumünster (Div. 1 – North)
1963-64	27	1	Braunschweig (BL)
1964-65	30	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1965-66	34	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1966-67	34	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1967-68	33	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1968-69	26	1	Braunschweig (BL)
1969-70	25	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1970-71	28	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1971-72	31	0	Braunschweig (BL)
1972-73	31	0	Braunschweig (BL)

#36



Martín DEMICHELIS (b. 1980)
50 A (2 goals), Argentina, Centre-Back/Defensive Midfielder
League champion 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2014
League runner-up 2004, 2009, 2015
Cup winner 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010
World Cup finalist 2014
Copa America finalist 2015
Champions Cup finalist 2010

Hard in tackling and enormously strong in one-on-one situations, excellent heading and physically robust. The Argentine was a great centre back but his career in Germany was not as good as could have been expected because he often had to play as a central defensive midfielder, which he did not like at all. He played reasonably well in that position but clearly was more valuable as a centre back. Not a highly refined passer, Demichelis was not the most reliable in possession when he faced pressing in midfield and also not the fastest player.

League record

2001-02	17	0	River Plate (Argentina)
2002-03	35	1	River Plate (Argentina)
2003-04	14	2	Bayern München (BL)
2004-05	23	0	Bayern München (BL)
2005-06	27	1	Bayern München (BL)
2006-07	26	3	Bayern München (BL)
2007-08	28	1	Bayern München (BL)
2008-09	29	4	Bayern München (BL)
2009-10	21	1	Bayern München (BL)
2010-11	6	1	Bayern München (BL)
2011-12	18	1	Malaga (Spain)
2011-12	35	2	Malaga (Spain)
2012-13	31	4	Malaga (Spain)
2013-14	27	2	Manchester City (England)
2014-15	31	1	Manchester City (England)
2015-16	18	0	Manchester City (England)
2016-17	2	0	Espanyol (Spain)

#35



Michael SCHULZ (b. 1961)

7 A, Germany, Man-Marker/Left Back

League runner-up 1992, 1995

UEFA Cup finalist 1993

Euro finalist 1992

An exceptionally tall left back and later man-marker who impressed with his aerial ability and his dynamism and who could also be deployed as a defensive midfielder. A defensively-minded full back who wouldn't advance close to the touchline when going forward but was content with crossing and distributing the ball from an inside position. His career peak came as a man-marker in the early-1990s playing for Borussia Dortmund.

League record

1984-87	92	21	Oldenburg (Div. 2)
1987-88	30	1	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1988-89	21	2	1. FC Kaiserslautern (BL)
1989-90	21	1	Dortmund (BL)
1990-91	26	1	Dortmund (BL)
1991-92	38	1	Dortmund (BL)
1992-93	21	0	Dortmund (BL)
1993-94	27	1	Dortmund (BL)
1994-95	27	0	Bremen (BL)
1995-96	13	0	Bremen (BL)
1996-97	19	1	Bremen (BL)

#34



Neven SUBOTIĆ (b. 1988)
36 A (2 goals), Serbia, Centre-Back
League champion 2011, 2012
League runner-up 2013, 2014, 2016
Cup winner 2012
Cup finalist 2014, 2015, 2016
Champions Cup finalist 2013

A fine athlete and at his best a rock in defense and also offensively dangerous. The Serb was the perfect complement to Mats Hummels in the Dortmund defense during that club's great phase in the early 2010s. More physical and somewhat unconventional in his approach than Hummels, Subotic is a defensive enforcer. Like Hummels, he preferred to play long precise passes from the back.

League record

2006-07	1	0	Mainz 05 (BL)
2007-08	33	4	Mainz 05 (Div. 2)
2008-09	33	6	Dortmund (BL)
2009-10	34	3	Dortmund (BL)
2010-11	31	1	Dortmund (BL)
2011-12	25	0	Dortmund (BL)
2012-13	25	3	Dortmund (BL)
2013-14	10	0	Dortmund (BL)
2014-15	28	2	Dortmund (BL)
2015-16	6	0	Dortmund (BL)
2016-17	12	0	1. FC Köln (BL)

#33



Anders GISKE (b. 1959)
38 A, Norway, Man-Marker/Sweeper
League runner-up 1990

A sober-minded Norwegian man-marker who was good at heading and in one-on-one duels. In 1985 he became captain of the Norway national team as well as Nürnberg in the Bundesliga. In Köln he was a decent replacement of Jürgen Kohler when he joined Bayern in 1989.

League record

1978-79	16	0	Bergen (Norway)
1979-80	-	-	Bergen (Norway)
1980-81	20	2	Bergen (Norway)
1981-82	14	1	Lillestrom (Norway)
1982-83	21	11	Bergen (Norway)
1983-84	20	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1984-85	24	1	Leverkusen (BL)
1985-86	5	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1985-86	19	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1986-87	31	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1987-88	24	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1988-89	24	0	Nürnberg (BL)
1989-90	29	1	Köln (BL)
1990-91	16	1	Köln (BL)
1991-92	25	6	Köln (BL)
1991-92	3	0	Bergen (Norway)

#32



Martin KREE (b. 1965)
Germany, Man-Marker
League champion 1995, 1996
Cup winner 1993
Cup finalist 1988
Champions Cup 1997
Intercontinental Cup 1997

Martin Kree was a not very tall but sturdy, heavy-set left-footed man marker who was also used as a left back if need be. Most renown for his powerful shot (137 kilometers per hour were measured in 1988), he also was a good header of the ball. As a player Kree resembled Hans-Peter Briegel, although not quite as fast and mobile.

League record

1983-84	7	1	Bochum (BL)
1984-85	27	2	Bochum (BL)
1985-86	33	2	Bochum (BL)
1986-87	32	4	Bochum (BL)
1987-88	32	7	Bochum (BL)
1988-89	33	12	Bochum (BL)
1989-90	34	7	Leverkusen (BL)
1990-91	32	2	Leverkusen (BL)
1991-92	38	9	Leverkusen (BL)
1992-93	34	4	Leverkusen (BL)
1993-94	18	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1994-95	24	1	Dortmund (BL)
1995-96	23	0	Dortmund (BL)
1996-97	21	0	Dortmund (BL)
1997-98	13	0	Dortmund (BL)

#31



Josip SIMUNIĆ

*105 A (3 goals), Croatia, Centre-Back
League champion 1996, 2012, 2013, 2014
Cup winner 2012, 2015
Cup finalist 2014*

A technically very strong central defender, very strong in the air and maybe too technical for a defender as Simunic could have been a midfielder just as well. His great skill on the ball often led him to play maddeningly nonchalant on the verge of arrogance. Due to his outstanding technique and stately overview he mostly could afford that kind of attitude. It was mostly a joy to watch Simunic do his thing. Initially Simunic had trouble concentrating fully on his job and he also was never the strongest mentally. His assets are refined conduct in defensive duels, overview and his good passing skills. Despite his skill Simunic had a reputation as a rough and hard defender. His tackling was razor-sharp, uncompromising and forceful – just like his heading.

League record

1995-97	30	3	Melbourne (Australia)
1997-98	2	0	Hamburg (BL)
1998-99	-	-	Carlton SC (Australia)
1999-00	6	0	Hamburg (BL)
2000-01	14	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2001-02	27	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2002-03	22	1	Hertha BSC (BL)
2003-04	28	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2004-05	30	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2005-06	18	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2006-07	25	1	Hertha BSC (BL)
2007-08	29	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
2008-09	29	1	Hertha BSC (BL)
2009-10	31	1	Hoffenheim (BL)
2010-11	10	0	Hoffenheim (BL)
2011-12	0	0	Hoffenheim (BL)
2011-12	11	0	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)
2012-13	25	1	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)
2013-14	27	2	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)
2014-15	5	0	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)

#30



Heinz STEINMANN (b. 1938)

3 A (1 goal), Germany, Half Back/Stopper

League champion 1965

League runner-up 1968

Cup winner 1959

In the first half of his career Heinz Steinmann was predominantly deployed as a right half before he settled as a stopper in the second half. He made the 40-man roster for the 1962 World Cup but was not part of the final squad that travelled to Chile. Steinmann became one of the most solid and respected stoppers in the Bundesliga after he had joined Werder Bremen in 1964.

League record

1956-57	25	2	SW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1957-58	-	-	SW Essen (Div. 2)
1958-59	-	-	SW Essen (Div. 2)
1959-60	25	0	SW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1960-61	-	-	SW Essen (Div. 2)
1961-62	30	0	SW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1962-63	30	0	SW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1963-64	30	1	1. FC Saarbrücken (BL)
1964-65	26	0	Bremen (BL)
1965-66	32	0	Bremen (BL)
1966-67	32	0	Bremen (BL)
1967-68	32	2	Bremen (BL)
1968-69	31	2	Bremen (BL)
1969-70	30	0	Bremen (BL)
1970-71	1	0	Bremen (BL)

#29



Robert KOVAČ (b. 1974)

58 A, Croatia, Centre-Back

League Champion 2003, 2005, 2009

League runner-up 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004

Cup winner 2003, 2005, 2009

Highly reliable central defender who was especially strong in one-on-one duels but also prone to acting carelessly from time to time. One of his main assets was his pace which allowed him to win almost any sprinting duel.

League record

1991-92	27	1	Zehlendorf (Div. 3)
1992-93	29	2	Zehlendorf (Div. 3)
1993-94	32	5	Zehlendorf (Div. 3)
1994-95	24	4	Zehlendorf (Div. 4)
1995-96	33	1	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1996-97	13	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1997-98	25	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1998-99	31	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1999-00	27	1	Leverkusen (BL)

2000-01	31	0	Leverkusen (BL)
2001-02	29	0	Bayern München (BL)
2002-03	24	0	Bayern München (BL)
2003-04	19	0	Bayern München (BL)
2004-05	22	0	Bayern München (BL)
2005-06	18	1	Juventus (Italy)
2006-07	17	0	Juventus (Italy – Div. 2)
2007-08	22	0	Dortmund (BL)
2008-09	4	0	Dortmund (BL)
2008-09	12	0	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)
2009-10	8	0	Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia)

#28



Günther SCHÄFER (b. 1962)
Germany, Man-Marker/Right Back
League champion 1984, 1992
Cup winner 1997
Cup finalist 1998
UEFA Cup finalist 1989

A VfB Stuttgart right back of relatively small height, predominantly defensive with great consistency between 1982 and 1994 whose main task was always man-marking. Günther Schäfer's role on the pitch was nominally that of a right back but he often was playing as the right-sided man marker in Stuttgart's 3-5-2 system. Wiryly by nature, he had good pace and when he moved forward he could bend crosses quite well. Uncompromising in his marking, Günther Schäfer was always overshadowed by his teammates Karlheinz Förster and Guido Buchwald.

League record

1980-81	13	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1981-82	12	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1982-83	29	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1983-84	26	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1984-85	27	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1985-86	29	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1986-87	29	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1987-88	28	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1988-89	20	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1989-90	22	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1990-91	22	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1991-92	28	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1992-93	24	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1993-94	8	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1994-95	5	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1995-96	8	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1996-97	1	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1996-97	22	0	Bielefeld (BL)
1997-98	20	0	Bielefeld (BL)

#27



Benedikt HÖWEDES

44 A (2 goals), Germany, Centre-Back/Full Back

League runner-up 2010

Cup winner 2011

World Cup winner 2014

A versatile defensive player, who often has to act as a full back, Höwedes is at his best in the centre of defense. He is fast, solid in defensive duels, dangerous at setpieces due to his heading prowess and he's also competent in initiating build up from the back. Höwedes, like Per Mertesacker, is a player that overall players better in big games (national team, international club competitions) than in less big games (domestic competitions). As a full back his value is almost only a defensive one, as his offensive ability is very limited in that position.

League record

2007-08	6	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2008-09	24	2	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2009-10	33	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2010-11	30	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2011-12	22	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2012-13	32	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2013-14	19	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2014-15	28	2	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2015-16	15	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
2016-17	31	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)

#26



Daniel VAN BUYTEN (b. 1978)

84 A (10 goals), Belgium, Centre-Back

League champion 2008, 2010, 2013, 2014

League runner-up 2009, 2012

Cup winner 2008, 2010, 2013, 2014

Cup finalist 2012

Champions Cup 2013

Champions Cup finalist 2010, 2012

Intercontinental Cup 2013

The Belgian giant with the physique of a wrestler was a very dynamic defender, almost unbeatable in the air and also a real weapon with his offensive heading if need be. His conduct in one-on-one duels on the ground however was not optimal, because his technique was ordinary and his movements stodgy. Van Buyten at his best was like a bastion of calm and solid as a rock in central defense and a capable defensive organiser. Of course his lack of agility was a downside but more of a flaw was his lacking consistency over a longer period. Van Buyten was like a violent brute (in a positive sense) when he appeared in the opposition box. There, his primitive force was highly valuable if all the intricate passing brought no results. In a way the Belgian was synonymous for the famous Bavarian self-confidence during his time in Munich.

League record

1998-99	19	1	Charleroi (Belgium)
1999-00	28	3	Standard Liège (Belgium)
2000-01	26	3	Standard Liège (Belgium)
2001-02	23	2	Marseille (France)
2002-03	35	8	Marseille (France)
2003-04	18	2	Marseille (France)
2003-04	5	0	Manchester City (England)
2004-05	34	5	Hamburg (BL)
2005-06	27	2	Hamburg (BL)
2006-07	31	3	Bayern München (BL)
2007-08	19	1	Bayern München (BL)
2008-09	18	3	Bayern München (BL)
2009-10	31	6	Bayern München (BL)
2010-11	21	2	Bayern München (BL)
2011-12	13	4	Bayern München (BL)
2012-13	13	0	Bayern München (BL)
2013-14	12	1	Bayern München (BL)

#25



Gerhard (Gerd) ZIMMERMANN (b. 1949)

Germany, Stopper

League champion 1970

Cup winner 1979, 1980

Cup finalist 1978, 1983

CWC finalist 1979

Remembered today mostly because he was the only player who could rival Rainer Bonhof in shooting the ball very hard, Gerd Zimmermann of Düsseldorf was a towering central defender with a very firm header. Zimmermann struck fear into his opponents when he advanced into midfield getting in a position to unleash one of his super hard shots. Defensively, Zimmermann was a tough tackling marker but not a pure destroyer.

League record

1968-69	2	0	Bor. Mönchengladbach (BL)
1969-70	6	0	Bor. Mönchengladbach (BL)
1970-71	34	3	Fortuna Köln (Div. 2)
1971-72	33	3	Fortuna Köln (Div. 2)
1972-73	34	6	Fortuna Köln (Div. 2)
1973-74	29	4	Fortuna Köln (BL)

1974-75	32	8	Düsseldorf (BL)
1975-76	33	8	Düsseldorf (BL)
1976-77	33	5	Düsseldorf (BL)
1977-78	32	6	Düsseldorf (BL)
1978-79	31	13	Düsseldorf (BL)
1979-80	5	0	Düsseldorf (BL)
1979-80	10	2	Houston Hurricane (United States)
1980-81	27	3	Calgary Boomers (Canada)
1981-82	24	0	Solingen (Div. 2)
1982-83	14	5	Solingen (Div. 2)
1982-83	9	2	Fortuna Köln (Div. 2)

#24



Peter NOGLY (b. 1947)
4 A, Germany, Midfielder/Stopper/Sweeper
League champion 1979
League runner-up 1980
Cup winner 1976
Cup finalist 1974
CWC winner 1977
Euro finalist 1976

A tough as nails stopper and sweeper who started out as a defensive midfield marker. A merciless defender both in the air and on the ground who was dangerous with his headers at set-pieces and a rolemodel for endurance and steadiness.

League record

1967-68	32	12	Lübeck (Div. 2)
1968-69	30	10	Lübeck (Div. 2)
1969-70	22	1	Hamburg (BL)
1970-71	26	6	Hamburg (BL)
1971-72	28	5	Hamburg (BL)
1972-73	32	3	Hamburg (BL)
1973-74	32	4	Hamburg (BL)
1974-75	33	3	Hamburg (BL)
1975-76	34	9	Hamburg (BL)
1976-77	20	1	Hamburg (BL)
1977-78	28	3	Hamburg (BL)
1978-79	34	1	Hamburg (BL)
1979-80	31	2	Hamburg (BL)
1979-80	21	7	Edmonton (Canada)
1980-81	28	9	Edmonton (Canada)
1981-82	32	4	Tampa Bay (United States)
1982-83	24	4	Tampa Bay (United States)
1983-84	18	2	Hertha BSC (Div. 2)
1984-85	20	2	FC St. Pauli (Div. 2)

#23



Norbert EDER (b. 1955)

9 A, Germany, Defensive Midfielder/Stopper

League champion 1985, 1986, 1987

League runner-up 1988

Cup winner 1986

Cup finalist 1982, 1985

World Cup finalist 1986

A late bloomer whose career really only took off after he joined Bayern at the age of 29 in 1984. Eder was primarily a man-marker after having started out as a defensive midfielder in the mid-1970s. In his first two years at Bayern he became one of the very best man-markers of the Bundesliga but found it difficult in 1987-88 to adapt to Bayern's new defensive zonal system introduced by new manager Jupp Heynckes.

League record

1974-75	12	3	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1975-76	26	4	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1976-77	34	5	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1977-78	35	9	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1978-79	29	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1979-80	39	1	Nürnberg (Div. 2)
1980-81	33	2	Nürnberg (BL)
1981-82	32	2	Nürnberg (BL)
1982-83	32	0	Nürnberg (BL)
1983-84	28	0	Nürnberg (BL)
1984-85	34	2	Bayern München (BL)
1985-86	34	2	Bayern München (BL)
1986-87	32	1	Bayern München (BL)
1987-88	32	1	Bayern München (BL)

#22



Willi GIESEMANN (b. 1937)

14 A, Germany, Centre-Half/Half-Back

Cup winner 1963

Cup finalist 1967

CWC finalist 1968

Giesemann impressed as an athletic defender at the start of his career, but continued to work on his ball control so that Sepp Herberger was convinced that the fast and committed allround-defender's footballing level was good enough for a call up to the national side. His strength clearly remained one-on-one situations. His preferred assignment was that of a left back, he was mostly used as a central defender or defensive midfielder though.

League record

1956-57	4	0	Wolfsburg (Div. 1 – North)
1957-58	25	4	Wolfsburg (Div. 1 – North)
1958-59	28	1	Wolfsburg (Div. 1 – North)
1959-60	29	2	Bayern München (Div. 1 – South)
1960-61	30	7	Bayern München (Div. 1 – South)
1961-62	30	2	Bayern München (Div. 1 – South)
1962-63	25	2	Bayern München (Div. 1 – South)
1963-64	30	6	Hamburg (BL)
1964-65	30	3	Hamburg (BL)
1965-66	19	2	Hamburg (BL)
1966-67	19	0	Hamburg (BL)
1967-68	6	2	Hamburg (BL)
1968-69	25	1	Barmbek (Div. 2)
1969-70	30	4	Barmbek (Div. 2)
1970-71	34	1	Barmbek (Div. 2)
1971-72	12	0	Barmbek (Div. 2)

#21



SOKRATIS Papastathopoulos (b. 1988)

62 A (2 goals), Greece, Centre-Back

League champion 2011

League runner-up 2006, 2007, 2014, 2016

Cup winner 2017

Cup finalist 2006, 2014, 2015, 2016

League record

A uncompromising fighter and never-tiring leader-type, very strong in aerial duels and aggressively determined on the ground in defensive one-on-one situations. Offensively, Sokratis does have some flaws in building up from the back.

2005-06	0	0	AEK Athens (Greece)
2005-06	11	0	Volos (Greece – Div. 2)
2006-07	14	0	AEK Athens (Greece)
2007-08	24	1	AEK Athens (Greece)
2008-09	21	2	Genoa (Italy)
2009-10	30	0	Genoa (Italy)
2010-11	5	0	AC Milan (Italy)
2011-12	30	1	Bremen (BL)

2012-13	29	1	Bremen (BL)
2013-14	28	1	Dortmund (BL)
2014-15	21	1	Dortmund (BL)
2015-16	25	1	Dortmund (BL)
2016-17	26	2	Dortmund (BL)

#20



Gerhard (Gerd) STRACK (b. 1955)
10 A (1 goal), Germany, Stopper/Sweeper
League champion 1978
League runner-up 1982
Cup winner 1977, 1978, 1983
Cup finalist 1980

A huge defender who started as a stopper for Köln and later was 'promoted' to the libero position. In both roles he did fairly well and for a short time was Germany's standard libero (1982-1983). Gerd Strack was a very capable header of the ball and there was never a corner or freekick where he did not advance to the opposing penalty box. His technique was pretty solid for his type of player but in the end not quite good enough for a lasting international career.

League record

1974-75	18	1	Köln (BL)
1975-76	21	2	Köln (BL)
1976-77	16	2	Köln (BL)
1977-78	32	2	Köln (BL)
1978-79	19	1	Köln (BL)
1979-80	30	6	Köln (BL)
1980-81	22	3	Köln (BL)
1981-82	32	6	Köln (BL)
1982-83	28	5	Köln (BL)
1983-84	26	2	Köln (BL)
1984-85	17	0	Köln (BL)
1985-86	25	2	Basel (Switzerland)
1986-87	25	2	Basel (Switzerland)
1987-88	17	2	Düsseldorf (Div. 2)

#19



Hans HAGEN (1894-1957)
12 A, Germany, Back/Half Back/Centre-Half
League champion 1926, 1929
League runner-up 1920

Hans Hagen was a grim-looking back nicknamed "The grim Prince" due to a facial injury he suffered in World War 1. He was one of the defining players of the famous 1920s Fürth side. A very versatile player who was deployed as centre-half, half back but most often as a pure back, he marshalled Fürth's defense so that the ball virtuosos Andreas Franz and Lony Seiderer could go on about their offensive endeavours undeterred. Hagen was a wiry and smooth defender, very fast and committed player equipped with an inimitable combat strength and quite a temper.

League record

1917-18	19	9	SpVgg Fürth (War League)
1918-19	19	10	SpVgg Fürth (War League)
1919-20	16	8	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1920-21	17	6	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1921-22	13	1	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1922-23	20	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 – North Bavaria)
1923-24	23	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1924-25	13	3	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1925-26	24	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1926-27	25	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)
1927-28	27	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1928-29	27	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1929-30	26	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1930-31	26	1	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1931-32	28	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1932-33	34	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –North Bavaria)
1933-34	16	0	SpVgg Fürth (Div. 1 –Bavaria)

#18



Markus BABEL (b. 1972)
51 A (1 goal), Germany, Man-Marker/Right Back
League Champion 1997, 1999, 2000, 2007
League runner-up 1996, 1998
Cup winner 1998, 2000, 2001
UEFA Cup 1996, 2001
Euro winner 1996
Champions Cup finalist 1999

Babel oscillated between right back and man-marker during most of his time in Germany, reliable in both roles. His strength was clearly the defense. Very good aerial game and a sound technique for a defender.

League record

1991-92	12	0	Bayern München (Bundesliga)
1992-93	27	1	Hamburg (BL)
1993-94	33	0	Hamburg (BL)
1994-95	26	2	Bayern München (BL)
1995-96	30	2	Bayern München (BL)
1996-97	31	1	Bayern München (BL)

1997-98	30	1	Bayern München (BL)
1998-99	27	1	Bayern München (BL)
1999-00	26	1	Bayern München (BL)
2000-01	38	3	Liverpool (England)
2001-02	2	0	Liverpool (England)
2002-03	2	0	Liverpool (England)
2003-04	25	3	Blackburn (England)
2004-05	32	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
2005-06	12	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
2006-07	2	0	VfB Stuttgart (BL)

#17



Leo WILDEN

15 A, Germany, Stopper

League champion 1962, 1964

League runner-up 1960, 1963, 1965

Leo Wilden became a regular starter in Köln's first team during his second season there (1959-60), playing as centre half. As a defensive centre half (stopper), he was primarily occupied with marking the centre forward, doing well with his excellent positioning and uncompromising marking but he was also useful in buildup. Soon, Leo Wilden was regarded as one of the best – if not the best – stopper in German football. After Herbert Erhardt had retired from international duties in 1962, Wilden's time as the no. 1 central defender had come. One of Wilden's best performances was neutralizing Nürnberg's centre forward Heinz Strehl in the 1962 German championship final, which Köln won 4-0. In 1965 Wilden lost his starting place in Köln's first team as the young talent Wolfgang Weber was drawn back into central defense. Wilden moved to Leverkusen in 1966 where he successfully resumed his stopper role.

League record

1955-58	-	-	VfL Köln 99 (Div. 2)
1958-59	7	0	Köln (Div. 1 – West)
1959-60	30	0	Köln (Div. 1 – West)
1960-61	27	0	Köln (Div. 1 – West)
1961-62	26	1	Köln (Div. 1 – West)
1962-63	29	0	Köln (Div. 1 – West)
1963-64	29	1	Köln (BL)
1964-65	22	0	Köln (BL)
1965-66	12	0	Köln (BL)
1966-67	32	0	Leverkusen (Div. 2)
1967-68	34	1	Leverkusen (Div. 2)
1968-69	29	2	Leverkusen (Div. 2)



Thomas LINKE (b. 1969)

43 A (1 goal), Germany, Man-Marker

League champion 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007

League runner-up 2004, 2006

Cup winner 2000, 2003, 2005

Cup finalist 1999

Champions Cup 2001

Champions Cup finalist 1999

Intercontinental Cup 2001

UEFA Cup 1997

World Cup finalist 2002

Trained as a left back during his time in East Germany, Thomas Linke quickly became a left-sided man-marker when he played in the Bundesliga. Linke had a proficient technique, result of his training in East Germany, he was good at heading, closely marked his opponent and was useful in build up. Linke managed a respectable professional career which lasted almost 20 years, something few at the start of his career thought he would be capable of.

League record

1988-89	5	0	Erfurt (East Germany)
1989-90	22	0	Erfurt (East Germany)
1990-91	25	1	Erfurt (East Germany)
1991-92	27	1	Erfurt (Div. 2)
1992-93	25	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1993-94	31	4	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1994-95	31	2	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1995-96	27	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1996-97	30	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1997-98	31	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1998-99	27	1	Bayern München (BL)
1999-00	27	1	Bayern München (BL)
2000-01	27	0	Bayern München (BL)
2001-02	20	0	Bayern München (BL)
2002-03	32	0	Bayern München (BL)
2003-04	21	0	Bayern München (BL)
2004-05	11	0	Bayern München (BL)
2005-06	24	3	Salzburg (Austria)
2006-07	27	0	Salzburg (Austria)

#15



Uwe KLIEMANN (b. 1949)
1 A, Germany, Stopper/Sweeper
League runner-up 1975
Cup winner 1974
Cup finalist 1977, 1979

Dubbed “radio tower” by the media, Uwe Kliemann was a very tall stopper and later sweeper with a great, commanding aerial presence. It was almost impossible to beat him in the air and his heading ability was also a weapon at set-pieces. Additionally, Kliemann was one of the very first stoppers who initiated attacks with long passes from the back, a job usually reserved for the libero. For a player of his height, he possessed a very good control of the ball and his passes were razor-sharp precise. His one drawback was his lack of pace. Due to being a somewhat unconventional type of player and character, more conventional stopper-types like Schwarzenbeck and Rolf Rüssmann were always preferred for national duties. After his retirement, Kliemann became a streetworker in Berlin.

League record

1966-67	1	0	Zehlendorf (Div. 2)
1967-68	21	3	Zehlendorf (Div. 2)
1968-69	30	14	Zehlendorf (Div. 2)
1969-70	24	10	Zehlendorf (Div. 2)
1970-71	26	0	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1971-72	30	4	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1972-73	34	3	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1973-74	34	5	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1974-75	34	7	Hertha BSC (BL)
1975-76	21	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
1976-77	26	3	Hertha BSC (BL)
1977-78	33	1	Hertha BSC (BL)
1978-79	24	0	Hertha BSC (BL)
1979-80	30	2	Hertha BSC (BL)

#14



Ludwig (Luggi) MÜLLER (b. 1941)
6 A, Germany, Stopper/Sweeper
League champion 1968, 1970, 1971
League runner-up 1975

As a stopper Ludwig 'Luggi' Müller was sublime, one of the best of the late-1960s who later evolved into a passable libero, too. He had great charisma, was tough in one-on-one situations, had a good overview and anticipation and was pretty good at building up from the back and thus a classic 'defensive' organizer. Because of the great competition in his position he only managed six international games. He did have what it took for a far greater international career.

League record

1959-64	-	-	Hassfurt (Div. 3)
1964-65	28	2	Nürnberg (BL)
1965-66	19	0	Nürnberg (BL)
1966-67	27	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1967-68	33	1	Nürnberg (BL)
1968-69	29	6	Nürnberg (BL)
1969-70	33	1	Bor. Mönchengladbach (BL)
1970-71	34	2	Bor. Mönchengladbach (BL)
1971-72	14	3	Bor. Mönchengladbach (BL)
1972-73	29	4	Hertha BSC (BL)
1973-74	34	3	Hertha BSC (BL)
1974-75	34	3	Hertha BSC (BL)

#13



Karl-Heinz (Charly) KÖRBEL (b. 1954)
6 A, Germany, Stopper
Cup winner 1974, 1975, 1981, 1988
UEFA Cup 1980

The player with most games in Bundesliga history (602 between 1972 and 1991), and all of them for a single club, Eintracht Frankfurt. Hence his nickname "loyal Charly". Körbel spent the huge majority of his games as a stopper who famously debuted at the age of 17 having to mark Gerd Müller. Although Müller scored a late goal, Körbel was lauded from all sides afterwards. From this moment on Körbel remained a fixture in the Eintracht side for the next 19 years. He embodied a new kind of stopper with a very good technique who tried to avoid foulplay, was skillful in one-on-one situations, a cultured defender who tried to eliminate his opponents in a playful manner. With the ball at his feet he liked to venture into midfield, was very good at heading and a very consistent player. His compulsion to move forward was ultimately the reason for his modest international career, as Franz Beckenbauer preferred a defensive stopper at his side but Körbel also lacked the necessary perserverance throughout his career.

League record

1972-73	18	0	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1973-74	34	2	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1974-75	32	10	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1975-76	34	2	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1976-77	32	1	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1977-78	29	0	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1978-79	33	0	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)

1979-80	32	4	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1980-81	30	0	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1981-82	34	5	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1982-83	33	6	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1983-84	30	5	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1984-85	32	1	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1985-86	33	2	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1986-87	33	1	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1987-88	33	2	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1988-89	33	3	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1989-90	34	1	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)
1990-91	33	0	Eintracht Frankfurt (BL)

#12



Heinz WEWERS (1927-2008)

*12 A, Germany, Stopper
League champion 1955
Cup winner 1953*

Nicknamed 'long tall Heinz', Wewers was a defensive centre half with excellent aerial presence and superb in man-to-man duels. A determined defensive enforcer who for many years was a massive physical presence in the successful team of RW Essen during the 1950s.

League record

1949-50	30	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1950-51	29	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1951-52	30	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1952-53	30	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1953-54	24	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1954-55	30	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1955-56	29	1	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1956-57	28	1	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1957-58	24	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1958-59	28	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1959-60	28	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1960-61	28	0	RW Essen (Div. 1 – West)
1961-62	20	1	RW Essen (Div. 2)

#11



Christian WÖRNS (b. 1972)
66 A, Germany, Man-Marker
League champion 2002
League runner-up 1997
Cup winner 1993
Cup finalist 2008
UEFA Cup finalist 2002
Euro finalist 1992

Christian Wörns was a rather atypical man-marker for his time in that he would not go rigorously into a one-on-one situation, no bone-breaker, but a technically pretty good defender who liked to play clean without much tackling. Tidy at buildup, Wörn's drawback were weaknesses in positioning, which were exposed especially at the highest international level. Despite his 66 international games for Germany between 1992 and 2006, Wörns was never fully established in the national team. Known as a humble, intelligent player, he was not someone the general football public got easily used to, preferring rougher players like Jürgen Kohler in defense instead.

League record

1989-90	18	0	Mannheim (BL)
1990-91	34	2	Mannheim (BL)
1991-92	38	0	Leverkusen (BL)
1992-93	34	2	Leverkusen (BL)
1993-94	33	6	Leverkusen (BL)
1994-95	19	1	Leverkusen (BL)
1995-96	25	2	Leverkusen (BL)
1996-97	33	1	Leverkusen (BL)
1997-98	29	1	Leverkusen (BL)
1998-99	28	2	Paris St.-Germain (France)
1999-00	26	2	Dortmund (BL)
2000-01	23	3	Dortmund (BL)
2001-02	29	2	Dortmund (BL)
2002-03	30	0	Dortmund (BL)
2003-04	31	1	Dortmund (BL)
2004-05	29	1	Dortmund (BL)
2005-06	28	2	Dortmund (BL)
2006-07	24	2	Dortmund (BL)
2007-08	20	1	Dortmund (BL)

#10



Rolf-Dieter (Rolli) RÜSSMANN (1950-2009)
20 A (1 goal), Germany, Stopper
League runner-up 1972, 1977
Cup winner 1972

A hard as iron, physically imposing 'classic' stopper, a hard-tackling centre half with exceptional aerial prowess. During his 16 seasons in the Bundesliga, Rolf Rüssmann proved to be an incredibly consistent and solid player who was always a starter. The one blight in his career was his involvement in the 1971 Bundesliga scandal for which he was banned from the national team until 1977 (like his Schalke teammates Klaus Fichtel and Klaus Fischer) and suspended from playing in Germany from March 1973 to February 1974 (followed by two month-long suspensions in February and December 1976). When he was finally available for the national team in 1977, he had lost some of his pace already (and he wasn't the fastest player to begin with anyway), which in the long run limited his international activities to only 20 caps.

League record

1969-70	16	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1970-71	34	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1971-72	30	4	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1972-73	25	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1973-74	11	0	Club Brugge (Belgium)
1973-74	9	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1974-75	19	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1975-76	21	0	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1976-77	33	9	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1977-78	34	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1978-79	34	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1979-80	34	3	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1980-81	15	1	FC Schalke 04 (BL)
1980-81	18	1	Dortmund (BL)
1981-82	34	8	Dortmund (BL)
1982-83	31	4	Dortmund (BL)
1983-84	33	3	Dortmund (BL)
1984-85	33	2	Dortmund (BL)

#9



Ditmar JAKOBS (b. 1953)

20 A (1 goal), Germany, Midfielder/Stopper/Sweeper

League champion 1982, 1983

League runner-up 1980, 1981, 1984, 1987

Cup winner 1987

Champions Cup 1983

Champions Cup finalist 1980

UEFA Cup finalist 1982

World Cup finalist 1986

Jakobs began his career as a central midfielder and sometimes striker for lowly Oberhausen and Tennis Borussia Berlin, scoring a good number of goals for both clubs. When he joined Duisburg in 1977 he was already converted to a stopper. The new role suited him well as he had all necessary attributes for that specific job: tall, good at heading, physicality, a hard tackler with a rough edge about him, a good anticipation and useful ball control. He quickly became one of the foremost defenders at this position. His international career really only took off in 1984-85 when the German national team under Franz Beckenbauer changed its system from 4-3-3 with two full backs, a sweeper and a stopper to the 3-5-2 system, with one sweeper and two man-markers. Before that, Karlheinz Förster was irreplaceable as the stopper of the team hence Jakobs was not featured internationally, but with the new system of two man-markers backed by a sweeper, there now was room for a second stopper and Jakobs was now a serious option for a starting position in the national side. In 1983, Ernst Happel said that Jakobs was the most important player in his team. After Hamburg's libero Holger Hieronymus had to retire in 1985 due to an injury, Ernst Happel made the pragmatic decision to make Jakobs the new libero, albeit his interpretation of the job was clearly a very defensive one, like a classic sweeper in the Willi Schulz tradition. The peak of his career unexpectedly came in the summer of 1986 at the age of 32 when Jakobs replaced the injured Klaus Augenthaler as the sweeper in a very defensive German side that eventually managed to reach the World Cup final in Mexico City. For that kind of rough-edged team, Jakobs was the perfect sweeper. He remained Hamburg's sweeper until the 1989-90 season when a terrible incident abruptly ended his career: When an attacker lobbed the Hamburg goalie, Jakobs lunged feet-first into his goal and scraped the ball off the line. However, he fell into the snap hooks fixing the goal to the ground (at that time, the hooks were not stipulated to be under the earth). He hung there for 20 agonising minutes, the hook deeply embedded in his flesh. Finally, the team doctor cut the hooks from his back with a scalpel. With this, the nerves in his back were cut. Because of this horrible accident, he was forced to end his career. However, he regards himself lucky, as the hook missed his spinal cords by a mere two inches.

League record

1971-72	5	0	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1972-73	34	12	RW Oberhausen (BL)
1973-74	33	13	RW Oberhausen (Div. 2)
1974-75	6	0	RW Oberhausen (Div. 2)
1974-75	30	3	Tennis Borussia Berlin (BL)
1975-76	38	12	Tennis Borussia Berlin (Div. 2)
1976-77	33	1	Tennis Borussia Berlin (BL)
1977-78	34	0	Duisburg (BL)
1978-79	34	2	Duisburg (BL)
1979-80	34	4	Hamburg (BL)
1980-81	33	3	Hamburg (BL)
1981-82	33	4	Hamburg (BL)
1982-83	31	5	Hamburg (BL)
1983-84	32	3	Hamburg (BL)
1984-85	29	1	Hamburg (BL)
1985-86	33	3	Hamburg (BL)
1986-87	32	1	Hamburg (BL)
1987-88	28	1	Hamburg (BL)
1988-89	29	2	Hamburg (BL)
1989-90	9	0	Hamburg (BL)

#8



Reinhold MÜNZENBERG (1909-1986)

41 A, Germany, Stopper/Full Back/Half Back

League runner-up 1944

Cup finalist 1943

Reinhold Münzenberg was one of the best and most powerful defensive players of the 1930s. He started his career as a stopper, a role in which the physically strong Münzenberg excelled, being one of the best headers of the ball of his time. After Germany had played at Wembley against England in 1935 (England won 3-0), the English press praised 'Steely' Münzenberg for his combination of toughness and technical ability, claiming that he played more 'English' than the English themselves. His reputation was one of athleticism and tremendous commitment. The first time Münzenberg made international football headlines was after the 1934 World Cup third place game, when he neutralized the Czech super goalgetter Josef Bican. By 1936, Münzenberg had been converted from stopper to full back, another role in which he excelled. The full back pairing of Janes-Münzenberg evolved into one of the best of the late-1930s in Europe.

Senior clubs

1927-41	-	-	Alemannia Aachen
1941-42	-	-	Bremen
1942-43	-	-	Braunschweig
1942-44	-	-	Luftwaffe Hamburg
1947-48	21	1	Alemannia Aachen (Div. – West)
1948-49	18	3	Alemannia Aachen (Div. – West)
1949-50	3	1	Alemannia Aachen (Div. – West)
1950-51	3	0	Alemannia Aachen (Div. – West)



Werner LIEBRICH (1927-1995)

16 A, Germany, Stopper

League champion 1951, 1953

League runner-up 1948, 1954, 1955

Cup finalist 1961

World Cup winner 1954

Mostly remembered today for being the player who allegedly injured Ferenc Puskas on purpose in the 1954 World Cup, Werner Liebrich was a stopper of great aerial authority, a relentless defender with a commendable discipline. Unknown to many is his background coming from a worker's family, his father was a plasterer and communist persecuted by the Nazis, Liebrich himself was a lifelong member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). A real organizer at the back, Liebrich debuted aged 17 in the first team of Kaiserslautern in 1944. He was one of the main factors in the series of successes of the Kaiserslautern club during the early-1950s. Additionally to his first-rate heading, Liebrich impressed with his pace and stamina, but he was also known as a very hard player often close to overstepping the mark. Virtually perfect was his sliding tackling. All these features were instrumental in Germany's successful 1954 World Cup campaign. His best game at that tournament came in the quarterfinal against Yugoslavia where he impressed with a World Class performance in the centre half position. Even better was his game against England at Wembley in December 1954 (which Germany lost 1-3), when he effectively marked English centre forward Ronnie Allen and also helped out covering Stanley Matthews with whom left back Werner Kohlmeyer had tremendous difficulties. After the game Sepp Herberger honored him by saying "Werner, the English pennant belongs to you." Liebrich was not only a great defender but also often seen stimulating Kaiserslautern's offense if need be. In the 1955 German championship final he steered his teammates forward with the score being 3-1 to RW Essen. Kaiserslautern got a grip on the game but in the end lost 3-4. A bit of a hothead on the pitch he had a sense of justice outside of it and didn't balk at expressing his opinion. Known for his dry and at times sarcastic humour, he was the backstage entertainer of his teammates.

League record

1944-52	148	8	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1952-53	18	4	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1953-54	30	1	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1954-55	25	2	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1955-56	20	2	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1956-57	13	3	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1957-58	6	0	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1958-59	27	7	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1959-60	19	2	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1960-61	29	0	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)
1961-62	20	1	1.	FC Kaiserslautern (Div. – Southwest)



Guido BUCHWALD (b. 1961)

76 A (4 goals), Germany, Man-Marker/Sweeper/Midfielder,

League Champion 1984, 1992

Cup finalist 1986

UEFA Cup finalist 1989

World Cup winner 1990

Euro finalist 1992

A tall, powerful man-marker by nature with aerial prowess and hard-tackling ways, Buchwald was utilized by his club Stuttgart mainly as a defensive midfielder in the 1980s since the man-marking jobs were dealt with by Karlheinz Förster and Günther Schäfer. By the early-1990s Buchwald – now a player that was used in all defensive positions, even that of sweeper - had become the all-commanding presence in the Stuttgart team, forming a vital tandem with Matthias Sammer in the 1991-92 Bundesliga championship winning campaign.

League record

1979-80	33	1	Kickers Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1980-81	38	8	Kickers Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1981-82	38	5	Kickers Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1982-83	37	4	Kickers Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1983-84	34	3	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1984-85	15	4	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1985-86	32	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1986-87	33	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1987-88	30	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1988-89	30	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1989-90	28	5	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1990-91	21	3	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1991-92	37	5	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1992-93	33	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1993-94	32	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1993-94	25	2	Urawa (Japan)
1994-95	24	4	Urawa (Japan)
1995-96	40	3	Urawa (Japan)
1996-97	38	2	Urawa (Japan)
1997-98	9	0	Karlsruhe (BL)
1998-99	31	3	Karlsruhe (Div. 2)

#5



Ludwig (Lutte) GOLDBRUNNER (1908-1981)

39 A, Germany, Centre-Half

League champion 1932

Lutte Goldbrunner was one of the superstars of German football in the time before WWII. Goldbrunner was centre half of Bayern München's first really great side, the 1932 German champions. A year later, Goldbrunner debuted for Germany against Switzerland. In the following years Goldbrunner took turns with Reinhold Münzenberg at the centre half position, but by 1936 Münzenberg had moved to full back which allowed Goldbrunner to settle in at the stopper position permanently. During his international career, Goldbrunner played against the best centre forwards in European football, namely England's George Camsell, Portugal's Fernando Peyroteo, Belgium's Raymond Braine, France's Paul Nicholas, Italy's Silvio Piola, Scotland's Armstrong and Spain's Isidro Langara. Out of these, only Camsell managed to score against Goldbrunner. Goldbrunner was a tall, athletic and very combative stopper who embodied the ideal centre-half (stopper) of the WM system. Despite being mainly a defensive player, Goldbrunner was also contributing to his team's build up in a significant manner. A short characterisation by Sepp Herberger read as follows: "Outstanding his aerial presence and as soon as he has the ball he usually immediately initiates the next attacking move."

Senior club

1927-45 Bayern München

#4



Hans-Georg (Katsche) SCHWARZENBECK (b. 1948)

44 A, Germany, Left Back/Stopper/Sweeper

League champion 1969, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1980

League runner-up 1970, 1971

Cup winner 1967, 1969, 1971

Champions Cup 1974, 1975, 1976

CWC winner 1967

Intercontinental Cup 1976

World Cup winner 1974

Euro winner 1972

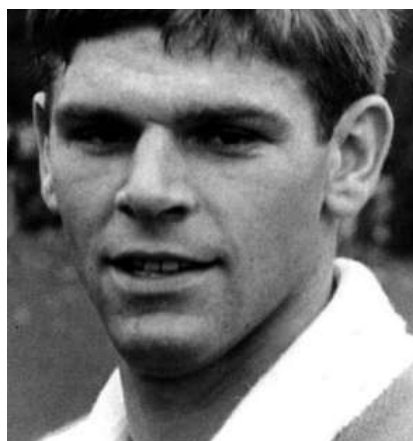
Euro finalist 1976

A 'classic' stopper type who acted as de facto sweeper for Bayern München whenever Franz Beckenbauer was surging ahead. Georg Schwarzenbeck, who was once described by a Dutch commentator as 'half man, half bull' was an important player in the all-conquering Bayern München side of the 1970s and also for Germany. His footballing skills were generally underestimated due to his physical appearance as a tough-tackling, intimidating looking man-marker, but actually he possessed a good touch and was good in distributing the ball from the back. It is often said that he only played regularly in the national team because Beckenbauer wanted it, but that assumption again means to undersell him as a footballer. He was by no means a pure destroyer, but an accomplished ball winner who intended to tackle only as a last resort. After Franz Beckenbauer had left Bayern in 1977 it was Schwarzenbeck who was picked to replace 'the Kaiser' (albeit only after the originally intended replacement, Wolfgang Rausch, did not convince in that role). Schwarzenbeck's most famous moment was his last-minute equalizer in the 1974 European Cup final against Atletico Madrid. 1973-74 was arguably his peak season, scoring seven goals in the league, a very good number for a defensive stopper like him. Most of his goals came from long distance shots, just like the one vs. Atletico. In hindsight it is often said that it was a totally unlikely occasion when of all players it was Schwarzenbeck who scored that highly crucial equalizer, but in fact it was a common scenario in quite a few Bundesliga games that season. That same season Schwarzenbeck was crowned World Champion, but in the final he had to perform an unlikely task in that he was not deployed as the marker of the nominal Dutch centre forward Johan Cruyff but instead had to play as a right back against Rob Rensenbrink. He did just as well in that role, neutralizing the highly dangerous Dutch outside left. Schwarzenbeck actually had spent his first two seasons at Bayern (1966 to 1968) as a full back (albeit on the left side) and thus he was familiar playing as a lateral defender instead of a central defender.

League record

1966-67	21	0	Bayern München (BL)
1967-68	33	0	Bayern München (BL)
1968-69	34	0	Bayern München (BL)
1969-70	32	1	Bayern München (BL)
1970-71	29	2	Bayern München (BL)
1971-72	32	1	Bayern München (BL)
1972-73	34	1	Bayern München (BL)
1973-74	33	7	Bayern München (BL)
1974-75	34	3	Bayern München (BL)
1975-76	33	1	Bayern München (BL)
1976-77	31	1	Bayern München (BL)
1977-78	34	1	Bayern München (BL)
1978-79	34	3	Bayern München (BL)
1979-80	2	0	Bayern München (BL)

#3



Wolfgang (Bulle) WEBER (b. 1944)

53 A (2 goals), Germany, Half-Back/Stopper

League champion 1964

League runner-up 1965, 1973

Cup winner 1968, 1977

Cup finalist 1970, 1971, 1973

World Cup finalist 1966

A physically strong stopper nicknamed 'bull' who was extremely good at headers, had excellent positioning and anticipation, not a brute but a relatively skilled defender, albeit one of the harder ones around. One of the most legendary episodes was him continuing to play with a broken calfbone (which he was unaware of) in the 1964-65 European Cup quarterfinal of Köln vs. Liverpool.

He broke his leg in a collision with Gordon Milne in the 30 th minute, was treated behind the byline for the rest of the first half. During half-time, the team doctor made him jump from a table to see if the leg would break, it didn't, so it was decided that Weber would continue playing (on the left wing) as substitutions were not allowed at the time. Weber felt a strong pain but soldiered on even during extra-time and almost scored a goal in the process. Weber began as a right half in 1963 but soon was withdrawn to central defense where he replaced long-time centre half Leo Wilden in 1965 and immediately was regarded as the strongest player in that position in Germany. In the 1970s he suffered several injuries and illnesses (cardiac irregularity) which set back his national and international career.

League record

1962-63	0	0	suspended
1963-64	17	3	Köln (BL)
1964-65	23	3	Köln (BL)
1965-66	32	1	Köln (BL)
1966-67	25	1	Köln (BL)
1967-68	31	2	Köln (BL)
1968-69	28	0	Köln (BL)
1969-70	30	1	Köln (BL)
1970-71	33	1	Köln (BL)
1971-72	21	0	Köln (BL)
1972-73	22	2	Köln (BL)
1973-74	29	5	Köln (BL)
1974-75	20	0	Köln (BL)
1975-76	27	2	Köln (BL)
1976-77	18	0	Köln (BL)

#2



Jürgen (Kokser) KOHLER (b. 1965)
105 A (2 goals), Germany, Man-Marker
League champion 1990, 1995, 1996, 2002
League runner-up 1989, 1991, 1992, 1994
Cup winner 1995
Cup finalist 1992
Champions Cup 1997
UEFA Cup 1993
UEFA Cup finalist 1995, 2002
Intercontinental Cup 1997
World Cup winner 1990
Euro winner 1996
Euro finalist 1992
German Footballer 1997

The embodiment of the classic 1990s man-marker, Jürgen Kohler was an adamant central defender with a solid technique. In one-on-one situations he was actually more compromising than other, less known man-markers of the same ilk like Roland Dickgiesser or Dieter Schlindwein. His tackling was hard but usually clean, precise and on the spot. A fast player with good defensive heading qualities who didn't offer much when going forward (which he rarely did).

His short passing game was above average and he was very good at anticipating the intentions of his opponents, his biggest asset however was - just like that of his idol Karlheinz Förster - the ability to fully concentrate on his job for the whole 90 minutes and hence being a very reliable defender. For the national team, Kohler was one of the most consistent and longest-serving man-markers of all time.

League record

1983-84	5	0	Mannheim (BL)
1984-85	26	2	Mannheim (BL)
1985-86	32	1	Mannheim (BL)
1986-87	32	3	Mannheim (BL)
1987-88	30	2	Köln (BL)
1988-89	27	0	Köln (BL)
1989-90	26	2	Bayern München (BL)
1990-91	29	4	Bayern München (BL)
1991-92	27	3	Juventus (Italy)
1992-93	29	1	Juventus (Italy)
1993-94	27	3	Juventus (Italy)
1994-95	19	1	Juventus (Italy)
1995-96	29	5	Dortmund (BL)
1996-97	30	2	Dortmund (BL)
1997-98	23	3	Dortmund (BL)
1998-99	29	2	Dortmund (BL)
1999-00	30	2	Dortmund (BL)
2000-01	28	0	Dortmund (BL)
2001-02	22	0	Dortmund (BL)

#1



Karlheinz FÖRSTER (b. 1958)
81 A (2 goals), Germany, Stopper
League champion 1984, 1989, 1990
League runner-up 1979
Cup winner 1990
Cup finalist 1986, 1987
World Cup finalist 1982, 1986
Euro winner 1980
German Footballer 1982

Arguably Germany's best pure defender, a very reliable and consistent stopper who, like his older brother Bernd, did not offer much in terms of offense. A rough edged man-marker with a decent touch, aerial prowess in spite of his average height. His great asset was that his performance level remained constantly high year after year, always reaching between 90-100% of his potential, which made him Germany's no. 1 stopper from 1978 until his premature retirement from international duties after the 1986 World Cup when he was just 27 years old. Despite his combative edge he avoided to get sent-off more than one time in his 272 Bundesliga games. His playing style was considered as hard as that of his older brother but his touch was definitely superior.

League record

1975-76	5	0	VfB Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1976-77	34	5	VfB Stuttgart (Div. 2)
1977-78	34	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1978-79	34	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1979-80	31	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1980-81	30	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1981-82	26	3	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1982-83	32	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1983-84	29	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1984-85	29	2	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1985-86	27	1	VfB Stuttgart (BL)
1986-87	27	2	Marseille (France)
1987-88	37	3	Marseille (France)
1988-89	35	1	Marseille (France)
1989-90	4	0	Marseille (France)