

CLASSIC MATCH



Sunderland 1 Leeds United 0

FA Cup Final

Saturday May 5, 1973, 3pm Wembley Stadium

Attendance 100,000 Goal Porterfield (32)

Referee KH Burns (Stourbridge)

Sunderland (4-4-2): Montgomery, Malone, Guthrie, Horswill, Watson, Pitt, Kerr, Porterfield, Halom, Hughes, Tueart.

In the spirit of LLL magazine, JON HOWE takes a retro look at some of our most memorable moments.

Oh dear, tell me this didn't happen! Can I suggest re-locating to an Anderson shelter for the next 50 years? If you thought Colchester was bad two years ago, this was the stuff of dreams for the national press and the droves of detractors within the game just waiting to pounce on our every failing.

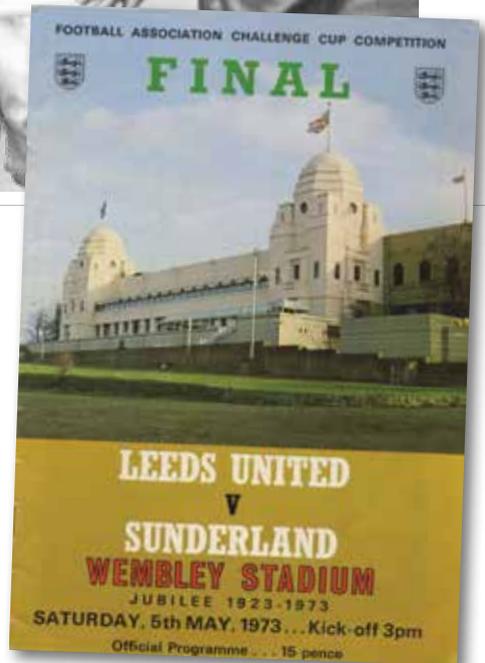
Completely illogical, too? Leeds were made such overwhelming favourites against Second Division Sunderland, you began to wonder if the press were just building us up for this almighty fall. If so, they got their wish. The sight of Sunderland boss Bob Stokoe bounding across the Wembley turf in celebration will be forever etched on my brain; bedecked in a trilby, raincoat and red tracksuit bottoms as if he had just escaped from some facility and thrown on the only clothes he could find in Lost Property.

Stokoe won the psychological war, didn't he? He and Revie have a mutual dislike going back to Stokoe's days at Bury and an infamous 1962 meeting with Leeds. Pre-match Sunderland appeared casual,

relaxed and reveling in the atmosphere. But Leeds, in their fifth Wembley final in eight years, rather than exuding a superior confidence looked edgy, troubled and flat.

This translated onto the pitch, too? From the first whistle Leeds underperformed. Sunderland battled and fought with an undeniably impressive spirit, never letting us settle. Although Leeds dominated in terms of possession, Sunderland carved out some great chances. It was only in the last 15 minutes that we exerted any real pressure, but by this time it just reeked of kitchen-sink desperation.

Two notable incidents? Yes, and each one demonstrated the fine line on which these things can balance over against you. The goal and a second-half save by



TRAGIC NUMBER

FA Cup finals, just one win.

Trevor Cherry gets the ball in the net – but it's disallowed for a foul on Sunderland keeper Jim Montgomery by Allan Clarke (foreground).



Sunderland keeper Jim Montgomery will be remembered forever, but each were a millimetre away from working out in Leeds' favour.

First the goal, then... A deep out-swinging Billy Hughes corner from the left was aimed at the towering centre-half Dave Watson, but dropped conveniently to the unmarked Ian Porterfield. He neatly cushioned the ball on his thigh and swiveled to direct a rasping volley straight down David Harvey's throat. Except it took a tiny, barely visible deflection off Allan Clarke's shoulder and bulged the roof of the net. Harvey stood motionless with hands still in position as if to say, "I had it covered, lads!", but as the Sunderland fans and every neutral in England erupted, that counted for precisely nothing.

...and this save? Leeds had a Trevor Cherry goal chalked off on 50 minutes for a Clarke foul – deservedly – but also had a clear penalty decision

turned down when Watson fouled Bremner. However, on 65 minutes Jim Montgomery single-handedly confirmed the footballing gods were against us, with a double save that was not just physically implausible, but frankly ridiculous.

I'm not going to like this, am I?

Reaney sent over a deep cross to the back post which Cherry met perfectly with a diving header. Montgomery palmed it away into the path of the onrushing Lorimer. Ordinarily, there would be no safer bet than the Lash to tuck the ball into the empty net. From six yards he firmly connected and was already celebrating when Montgomery, with an abnormal ability that was surely some form of cheating, sprang to his feet and touched the ball onto the bar. Even then, the ball didn't ricochet down over the line or to a white shirt, it had the audacity to spin away to safety. Dark forces were at work.

That was that? The save sapped Leeds' strength and our pressure after that was directionless and incoherent. The final whistle signaled the biggest Wembley upset in history. Denied the chance to celebrate the FA Cup success 12 months before by the FA's inhospitable re-arrangement of the critical Wolves game, Leeds had arranged a "celebration" banquet at the Savoy Hotel. It went ahead, but safe to say it was more like a wake.

How were the Leeds fans? Shocked, stunned and thinking up excuses.

Best Leeds player? Young left-back Trevor Cherry had a hand in almost all of Leeds' better moments.

In a nutshell? Are Revie's battle-weary and ageing troops finished?

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