

CLASSIC MATCH



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

A crazy game: Sometimes football hurts you, or simply bores you rigid. But once in a blue moon you are served a match like this when you least expect it. Not only did we see Leeds come from behind to win in stoppage time, but we saw the lead change hands three times.

We nearly made a pig's ear out of it, though?

Leeds created an astonishing array of chances, and against a team in the bottom six we had countless opportunities to put the game to bed, but we kept letting Hull back in. I can laugh about it now, but we couldn't afford to drop any points in this game. With eight minutes remaining defeat was intolerable, and the prospect triggering an almighty childish tantrum on my part.

Some big performances today? I doubt they spend many hours sharing extra-curricular pursuits, but on the pitch Strachan and Jones are the odd couple that make Leeds tick. They were both immense today and simply refused to settle for anything less than victory.

Leeds United 4 Hull City 3

Barclays League Division Two

Saturday February 10, 1990, 3pm Elland Road

Attendance 29,977 **Goals** Hendrie (18), Payton pen (30), Jones (36), Payton pen (51), Doyle (78), Varadi (82), Strachan (90)

Referee D Axcell (Southend)

Hull City (4-4-2): Hesford, Buckley, Jacobs, Jobson, Terry, De Mange, Roberts, Payton, Bamber, Askew, Doyle.



Okay... the goals? Well, we had already seen a bizarre back-flicked header from Imre Varadi tipped over and a rare errant finish from Strachan, before John Hendrie opened the scoring on 18 minutes. The ball was cleared from a corner to Hendrie on the edge of the penalty area. He launched himself at it to



power a looping header over Hesford in the Hull goal. Minutes later Beglin's low cross evaded everyone – including Chapman with the goal at his mercy.

We paid for that? On the half-hour, Hull's lumbering forward Dave Bamber was upended in the box and Andy Payton rifled the penalty in to the roof of the net, incurring the Kop's wrath with an ill-advised celebration. Six minutes later, however, we were back in front when the irrepressible Jones latched onto a loose clearance, and 30 yards out displayed incredible balance and technique to execute a dipping volley into the top corner. Stop the vote: Goal of the Season! Elland Road exploded accordingly.

It was soon forgotten, though? It was the talk of half-time, but six minutes into the second half Hull were level again. This time Bamber somehow outfoxed Fairclough and drew another clumsy foul. Payton dispatched the penalty and suddenly this was becoming more than a mild irritation.

Which was about to progress to rage? Not before Varadi had wildly lashed a very presentable opportunity high into the Kop, and Hull had survived a blatant handball appeal against former Leeds man Ken De Mange. On 78 minutes our collective world caved in when Steve Doyle outrageously bettered Vinnie's earlier strike with a bullet 30-yard finish that Day could only stand and admire. Cue: sweaty palms and nervous shuffling.

This was when we needed a leader... And Strachan stepped up to the plate. Hull led for just four minutes, before Strachan went on a mazy run to the right byline and teed up Varadi twice, the second time his scuffed finish somehow evaded the keeper and a man on the line. At 3-3, with Elland Road bouncing, surely there could only be one conclusion to this unhinged commotion of an afternoon?

A couple of interesting subs? Yeah, Vince Hilaire made a rare appearance, and it's fair to say the crowd didn't quite know what to make of the, ahem, robust figure of Chris O'Donnell bounding on to the pitch. I'm not sure he touched the ball, but he can say he was

on the pitch when Leeds magnificently won the Game of the Decade. Jones had a brilliant shot turned wide by Hesford, before he beat two men and teed Strachan up in injury time. Time stood still as the wee man looped an expert finish into the top corner. Memories are vague of what happened next, let's just say everything made sense again in a gloriously euphoric way.

How were the Leeds fans? Emerging from the wreckage elated.

Best Leeds player? Strachan's captain's performance just shades it from the maturing Jones.

In a nutshell? Sanity restored.

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↑ Imre Varadi

← Gordon Strachan

← Vinnie Jones

7
MAGIC
NUMBER

The decisive seventh scored by our number 7, Gordon Strachan.

