

CLASSIC MATCH



Leeds United 4 VfB Stuttgart 1

(4-4 on aggregate, Stuttgart win on away goals)

European Champions Cup
First Round second leg

Wednesday September 30, 1992,
7.45pm Elland Road

Attendance 20,457

Goals Speed (18), Buck (34), McAllister pen (38), Cantona (66), Chapman (80)

Referee Kim Milton Neilson (Denmark)

Stuttgart (5-4-1): Immel, Schafer, Frontzeck, Dubajic, Strunz, Buchwald, Buck, Sverrisson, Walter (Knut), Gaudino, (Simanic), Kogel.

Typical Leeds? It seems harsh to be critical in these circumstances, but yes, this had all the good and bad characteristics of Leeds United, laid bare for the world to see. We made light work of the enormous odds stacked against us in overturning a 3-0 first-leg deficit, and showing limitless passion, bravery and belief to put in a performance of devastating gallantry. Yet ultimately, due to one momentary lapse, it counted for nothing.

That's got to sting a bit? I have a pain in the pit of my stomach, and a sense of injustice that we got nothing from this game, but for once we can blame no one but ourselves. Still, to take the German champions so close to the

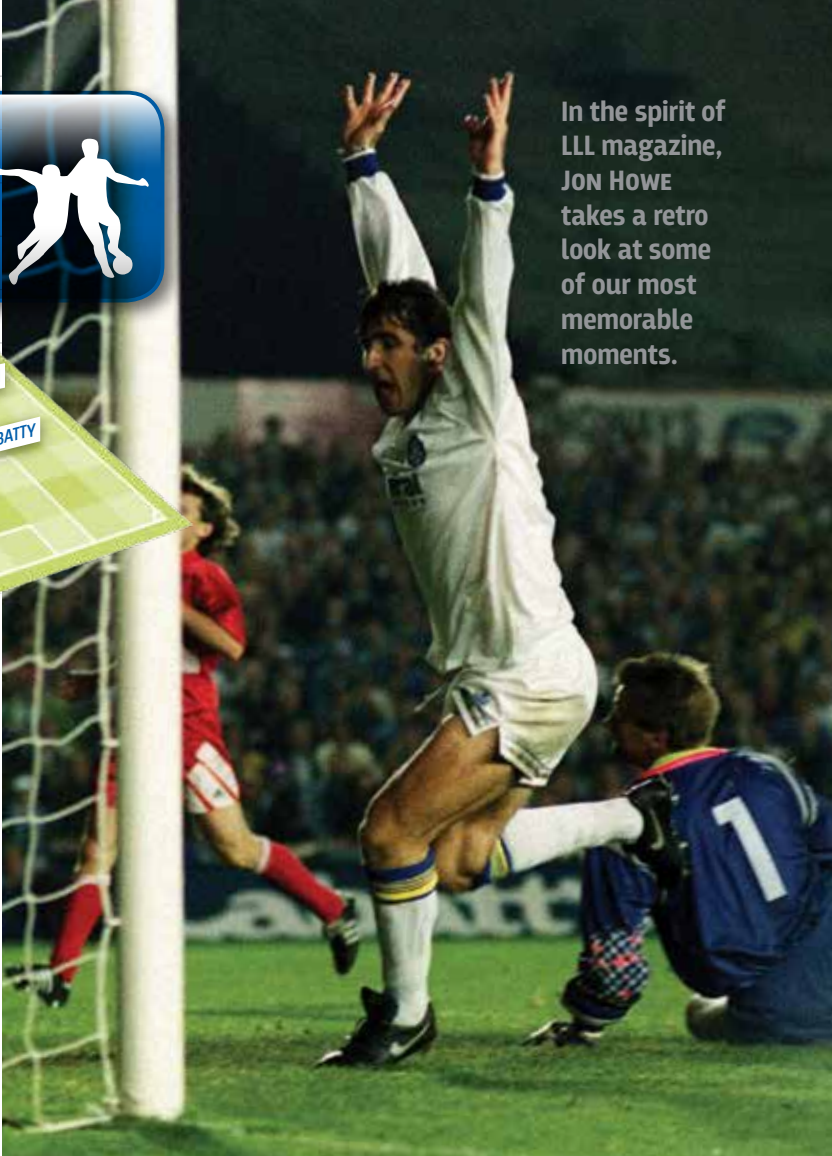
wire was a stirring demonstration of Leeds United at their best; the bearing of teeth, the impudent willingness to indulge in toe-to-toe combat, the refusal to give in. Sadly, also on display was our inherent ability to shoot ourselves in the foot.

Wilko's intentions were clear? Yes, the troublesome right-back slot was filled by David Batty tonight – but there wasn't much defending to be done. Scott Sellars played in midfield, and our cavalier approach to the game was evident right from the off. Leeds attacked with an almost schoolboy disregard for keeping the back door shut, but Stuttgart were so comprehensively hemmed in by our ceaseless raids, it hardly

mattered. McAllister torpedoed three shots on goal in the frenetic opening exchanges, but it was Speed who lit the touch paper on 18 minutes. He arrived in the box to latch onto Cantona's knock-down, and like a cricketer dispatching a cover drive off the middle of the bat, with no backlift he connected sweetly to send the ball fizzing past Eike Immel. It was the perfect start, and a crowd already baying for blood, now had a frenzied taste for it.

But not for long... When Leeds foul up like this, it's usually the maddeningly avoidable nature of it that truly rankles, and this was no different. A rare foray into our half saw Buck collect the ball 25 yards out. Three

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covering defenders deliberated over which one would stick a foot out to challenge him. Yet no one did, and a tame shot rolled past Lukic's outstretched hand, and Elland Road fell deathly silent.

Most other clubs would have just packed it in then, wouldn't they? Exactly, that would be the natural thing to do, but this Leeds side just can't accept that. Now needing a further four goals to cancel out the away goal, much of the crowd had accepted our lot and expected to go through the motions for the remaining 60 minutes. Instead, just four minutes later Buchwald wrapped his arms around Chapman in the box, like they were about to go on a parachute jump together, and McAllister dispatched the resulting penalty with confident aplomb.

Go on then, let's have another crack! We had 45 minutes to get three goals, and the Germans looked like they would crack under the incessant pressure. However, it wasn't until the 66th minute that we made a breakthrough, when a lofted Strachan through-ball was untidily bundled into the net by Cantona. We were now suffocating Stuttgart under ceaseless waves, and the 20,000 crowd, reduced by a combination of post-first-leg apathy and some ludicrous UEFA security regulations, sounded like 50,000. It was immense.

And what a finale! Chapman headed in at the near post from a Strachan corner, but just before that he hit the bar with another header that looked like it may have crossed the line. Nevertheless, the noise and hunger were electrifying. It seemed inconceivable that we could get



the four goals required before kick-off and yet not proceed, but that's what happened. On the final whistle both sides collapsed to their knees. Stuttgart looked like they had stared death in the face. Leeds were proud, invigorated, but beaten.

How were the Leeds fans? They'd been right through the mill, but this was as heart-warming and magnificent as defeat is likely to get.

Best Leeds player? Strachan had a hand in all four goals but, in truth, every player was outstanding tonight.

In a nutshell? All for nothing.

↑ Eric Cantona scoring the third Leeds goal.

↑ Lee Chapman celebrating after making it 4-1.

1 TRAGIC NUMBER
Away goal conceded.

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