



Classic Match

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

What's this? A George Graham side scoring four goals? Well, finding ourselves 3-0 down after 33 minutes made scoring four goals something of a necessity, but leaving the winner until injury time was a breathtaking end to a gripping journey.

So, 3-0 down... and we won? Yep, and thoroughly deserved, too. Clearly the first third of the game suggests otherwise, but having overcome that we dominated the game and had Alfie's back-post shot not been hacked desperately off the line, we could actually have been level by half-time.

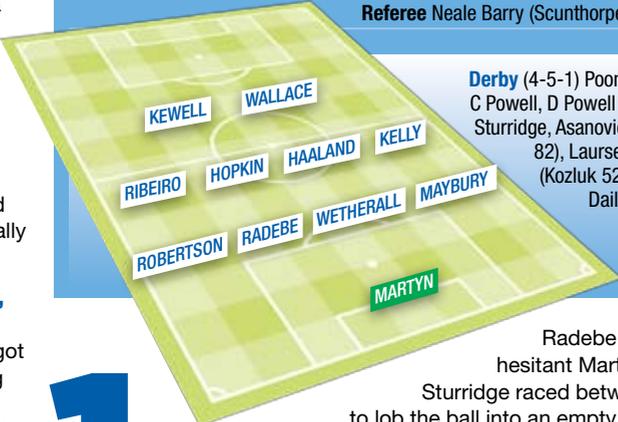
Sounds like a pretty barmy game, you'd better take this step-by-step... Basically, it started badly and got considerably worse, particularly for Big Nigel who was at fault for the opening two goals. On three minutes an over-hit back-pass from Robertson was arching into the top corner until Nigel palmed it off the line but straight to the gleeful Sturridge to tap in. Seven minutes later a hopeful punt forward confused both

Leeds United 4 Derby County 3

Barclays Premiership Saturday November 8, 1997, 3pm Elland Road

Attendance 33,572 **Goals** Sturridge (3), Sturridge (10), Asanovic pen (33), Wallace (37), Kewell (42), Hasselbaink pen (81), Bowyer (90)

Referee Neale Barry (Scunthorpe)



Derby (4-5-1) Poom, Rowett, C Powell, D Powell (Hunt 84), Sturridge, Asanovic (Trollope 82), Laursen, Carbon (Kozluk 52), Carsley, Dailly, Baiano.

Radebe and a hesitant Martyn, and Sturridge raced between them to lob the ball into an empty net.

1 Magic Number

Minutes of the game we spent ahead.

Stunned silence, no doubt? Just a bit, and on 33 minutes Sturridge caused more problems when hauled down by Robertson for a penalty that Asanovic stroked home without fuss. Nobody

could quite believe we had shipped three goals to Derby in such soft fashion. This was a bad dream.

So what changed? Not sure, really. In an attacking sense we hadn't played too badly, so we just got our heads together and carried on. Fortunately it only took us four minutes to register on the scoresheet when a speculative Ribeiro shot from 30 yards was diverted past a wrong-footed Poom by Rod Wallace. Psychologically it was vital we got a second before half-time and just before the break we did – through Harry Kewell's sweet volley from a half-cleared corner – and suddenly the fightback was most definitely on.

Like the assault on the Alamo?

Absolutely, the second half was one-way traffic, and the Elland Road faithful were in a frenzy. Wallace, Kewell and Wetherall (twice) had great chances to bring us level, and you couldn't help thinking it was not to be. On 75 minutes Graham did the obvious thing by bringing on Jimmy to add more options up front, and the striker made a difference immediately. From a deep Kelly corner Christian Dailly inexplicably handled, and with much of the crowd peering through their fingers Jimmy strolled up as if it was Monday morning training and rolled the ball nonchalantly past the stationary Poom. The ground exploded with relief.

But we didn't settle for a draw?

Most people would have, but what happened next was the kind of bonus that comes along very rarely in a lifetime.



Facing page: **David Wetherall and Nigel Martyn after Derby's first goal.**

Below: **Rod Wallace.**

Bottom: **Harry Kewell shooting.**

Left: **Celebrations after Lee Bowyer's dramatic winner.**



With the 90 minutes up Jimmy took on a defender on the right wing and beat him to the by-line with impressive pace. Rather than the hopeful chip into the six-yard box for the plethora of onrushing White shirts, Jimmy decided to drag it back to the penalty spot. It ran to Alfie who must have got a shout from behind, because he leapt out of the way for a juggernaut by the name of Lee Bowyer to arrive from nowhere and connect with sweet left-footed perfection. The ball arrowed like a missile into the corner of the net and Poom was beaten for the fourth and most delicious occasion. The scenes following this were like none I have ever seen – breathless pandemonium everywhere.

How were the Leeds fans? Not quite the afternoon anyone expected, from confused despair we saw a thrilling recovery, the nature and finale of which will never be forgotten.

Comedy moment? The thunderous bang from some kind of firecracker let off in the Kop seconds after Derby's third goal. Granted, not hugely amusing at the time but a bizarre incident on an afternoon that, even without this, was not short of collective bewilderment.

Best Leeds player? Jimmy changed the game when he came on but 19-year-old Harry Kewell was a constant threat and crucially ensured our attacking tempo never wilted.

In a nutshell? How to win a football match in the form of finely-scripted theatre.