



Classic Match

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

A Greek tragedy, I assume?

"Tragedy" doesn't do it justice – this was an out-and-out robbery. I am actually finding it hard to speak in rational tones at the moment, I try to explain this game but my words just degenerate into a boiling rage.

Er, a sorry end to the season again?

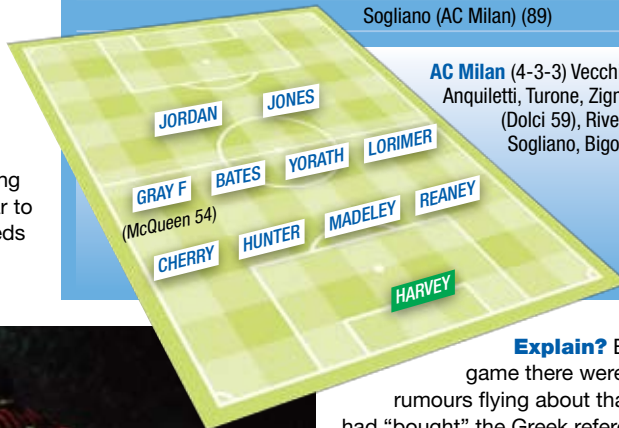
The embarrassment of the Sunderland FA Cup final defeat pales into insignificance compared to the anger I feel about this game. Something needs to be done because it was clear to everybody watching, neutrals and Leeds fans alike, that a sinister force was at work during this farcical 90 minutes.

Leeds United 0 AC Milan 1

European Cup-Winners' Cup Final Wednesday May 16, 1973, 7.45pm

Kaftanzoglio Stadium, Thessalonika, Greece **Attendance** 40,154

Goal Chiarugi (5) **Referee** Christos Michas (Greece) **Sent off** Hunter (Leeds), Sogliano (AC Milan) (89)



AC Milan (4-3-3) Vecchi, Sabadini, Anquiletti, Turone, Zignoli, Rosato (Dolci 59), Rivera, Benetti, Sogliano, Bigon, Chiarugi



Explain?

Before the game there were numerous rumours flying about that Milan had "bought" the Greek referee Christos Michas. At that stage it was easy to dismiss, but throughout the game there was plenty of evidence to support this. Leeds were kicked, pushed and abused without Milan being penalised once, while several innocuous free-kicks were awarded against us to the bewilderment of everyone.

But you can say that about most games, though? I can assure you this

is not a blinkered view. We had three blatant penalty appeals waved away, fouls all over the pitch ignored and Milan just got every decision, and I really mean every decision.

Okay, got that, so how did the game go? The thunderstorms before kick-off shrouded proceedings in an appropriately dark air of menace and I wasn't confident pre-match anyway. Even without the disruptive rumours of Don Revie leaving for Everton, Giles was injured and Clarke and Bremner suspended so we fielded a makeshift side. Frank Gray replaced Eddie for his European debut and the midfield duo of Bates and Yorath were always going to struggle against a strong Milan side, even without the ref's assistance.

It started badly, didn't it? Yeah, Madeley eased Rosato off the ball with a "nothing" challenge but was penalised on the edge of our box in the fifth minute. Chiarugi beat the wall with a wicked, dipping shot which Harvey tipped onto the post. Unfortunately it bounced in, but it doesn't matter because the ref would have just said: "Hitting the post counts as a goal tonight."

After that? The early goal just played into Milan's hands, prompting an archetypal Italian performance; shut up shop and soak up the pressure. Mick Jones had his legs taken away by two, yes two, defenders, Lorimer was also pole-axed clumsily in the box and, skipper for the night, Reaney had a cross clearly hand-balled by Benetti in the area – our appeals were all to no avail. We toiled relentlessly and missed some decent chances but it was not to be.

Norman lost his rag eventually, didn't he? You couldn't blame him.



Top left: **Captains Gianni Rivera and Paul Reaney lead the teams out.**

Above and bottom left: **Mick Bates.**

Below: **Captains and the match officials.**

Bottom: **Mick Jones complaining after Joe Jordan had been felled.**

In fact I'm surprised it took him so long. He was acting for all of us when his ankle was clipped very late on by Rivera and he clearly thought "enough is enough" and his temper just snapped. He turned round to push Rivera, then Sogliano appeared from nowhere with a flying karate kick to Norman's chest. The ref sent Norman off and, as it was the 89th minute and made no difference whatsoever, he sent off Sogliano as well.

How were the Leeds fans? In decent numbers they just watched in shock at what was happening before them. The majority of the crowd were Greek and they booed throughout at the performance of their officiating compatriot Michas. At the end they chanted "Shame!" in Greek, booed Milan as they paraded the trophy before them and cheered and clapped Leeds, which says it all.

Best Leeds player? Jordan lead the line like a savage barbarian against the Italians' crude tactics, Lorimer showed some great touches and could have scored, but anyone in a white shirt playing well would not have affected the result, simple as that.

In a nutshell? Criminal investigation please, UEFA?

1 Tragic Number

Goal conceded, man sent off, brown envelope

