

Classic Match

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

Is that a tear in your eye? I think we're all a bit emotional right now. I've read a lot about matches like this, but I'm too young to remember them. It's like they happened to another club. Today I have seen for myself what completely unconfined joy football can provide, and days like this don't come along too often. This was for West Brom in '82, Shrewsbury in '83, Stoke away last season and this season. This was for all the numbing pain, rank ineptitude and wretched misfortune that people my age have experienced following Leeds. It's all we've known, but today that changed.

You've seen us win before though, right? Of course – but this was different. This meant something, this was a statement, this was Leeds showing the world what they can be. After years of meekly accepting our decline this was Leeds showing their teeth, rolling up their sleeves and snarling, "Watch out, we're on our way back!"

I'll have some of that. This was against the odds, too... Hugely. First Division QPR are a classy side with a very attacking formation. We haven't faced a team of this pedigree for years and so we played to our strengths; chasing, harrying and attacking on the break when we could. With Bobby McDonald being cup-tied, manager Billy Bremner had to change our formation, with Micky Adams moving to left-back, but it probably helped us because we had a strong midfield three. But in truth, Bremner had us fired up from the first whistle because every man ran himself into the ground.

The goals? After a deafening start – where our constant pressure on the man in possession led to nervousness in the QPR ranks – we took the lead on 18 minutes. Micky Adams crossed a beauty in from the left, which John "Big Bird" Pearson managed to re-direct into the box at the back post. Amid several boots aiming to clear the ball from the six yard box, Ian Baird just dived full length and nodded the ball home. Andy Ritchie had several chances to extend the lead and Mervyn Day made a great save from John Byrne on 58 minutes, but

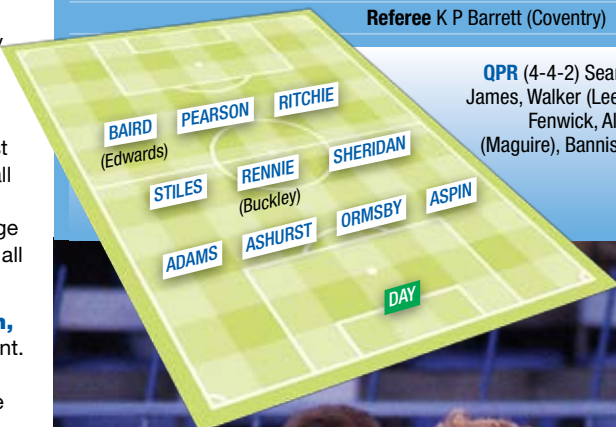
Leeds United 2 Queen's Park Rangers 1

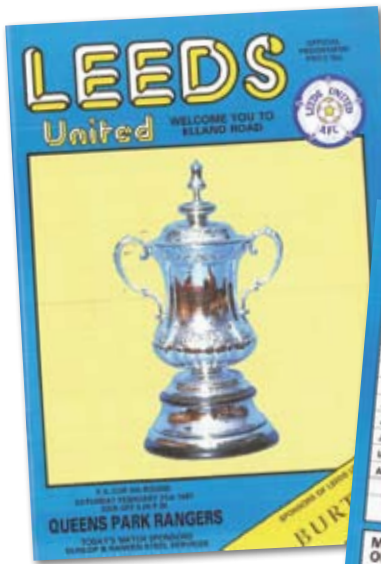
FA Cup Fifth Round Saturday February 21, 1987, 3pm Elland Road

Attendance 31,324 Goals Baird (18), Rennie og (64), Ormsby (85)

Referee K P Barrett (Coventry)

QPR (4-4-2) Seaman, Neill, James, Walker (Lee), Chivers, Fenwick, Allen, Fillery (Maguire), Bannister, Byrne, Fereday.





5 Magic Number

Years since we beat a team from the First Division

| UNITED | | QUEENS PARK RANGERS | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1 NERVYN DAY | 1 DAVID BEAMAN | 10 GARY BANNISTER | 10 JOHN BYRNE |
| 2 NEIL ASPIN | 2 WARREN NEILL | 11 WAYNE FERGAY | 12 |
| 3 DAVID RENNE | 3 ROBBIE NELL | 14 | |
| 4 JACK ASHLIST | 4 CLYVE WALKER | | |
| 5 BRENDAN ORMSBY | 5 ALAN MACDONALD | | |
| 6 JOHN STILES | 6 TERRY FENWICK | | |
| 7 JOHN SHERIDAN | 7 MARTIN ALLEN | | |
| 8 JOHN PEARSON | 8 MIKE FILLERY | | |
| 9 IAN BAIRD | 9 GARY BANNISTER | | |



Left: Ian Baird
Below: Brendan Ormsby
Right: John Sheridan



the roof of the net and carried on his run, leaping like a frenzied wolf onto the fence to soak up the explosion of ecstasy that had taken over the Kop. I've never seen anything like it; heart-stopping, demented

six minutes later David Rennie somehow re-directed a loose ball into his own net from just inside the box. The ground instantly fell silent.

The dream over? That's what it felt like. For 64 minutes we had hope, now we just saw defeat or at best a replay on QPR's appalling plastic pitch. We had half-chances and applied all the pressure, but no one thought this would end how it did. That's just not the Leeds way, is it?

But on 85 minutes? Sub John Buckley forced a corner on the side which John Sheridan took. It floated to the front post where Pearson flicked the ball over the static QPR defence and arriving at the back post, like a bull at a matador, was Brendan Ormsby. He thundered his header into

hysterics, a roaring sea of arms and legs and I don't know how I survived it. It was like suddenly the clouds had parted and you could see the sun and the stars all at the same time. I've no idea what happened in the last five minutes, the ground was a maelstrom of noise and breathless confusion. This was indescribable rapture – and somehow we hung onto the lead.

Comedy moment The Kop singing "Car park, car park give us a song!" to the hundreds of unlucky Leeds fans on Wesley Street who couldn't get in after the gates were shut at 2.20pm.

How were the Leeds fans? Delirious, stunned, dizzy, gasping for air...

Best Leeds player? Aspin was dogged, Sheridan gave a masterclass in midfield, Baird was a warrior, Pearson set up both goals, but for a career-defining moment it has to be Brendan Ormsby.

In a nutshell? The beast has awoken.