



Matches - 26 August 1964 - Leeds United 4 Liverpool 2

First Division - Elland Road - 36,005

Scorers: Yeats (og), Weston, Bremner, Giles

Leeds United: Sprake, Reaney, Bell, Bremner, Charlton, Hunter, Giles, Weston, Storrie, Collins, Johanneson

Liverpool: Lawrence, Byrne, Moran, Milne, Yeats, Stevenson, Callaghan, Hunt, Chisnall, Wallace, Thompson

For Don Revie's Leeds United, the acquaintance with the big time kicked off in earnest on Wednesday, 26 August 1964. Their first game back in Division One the Saturday before had brought a promising 2-1 w in away to Aston Villa, but the Midlanders were limited opponents.



Liverpool 1963-64 with the championship trophy - Back: Milne, Byrne, Lawrence, Moran, Stevenson, Paisley (Trainer) - Front: Bennett (Coach), Callaghan, Hunt, St John, Williams (President), Yeats, Arrowsmith, Thompson, Shankly (Manager)

They had been down among the dead men the previous season, and were still coming to terms with life after the departure of manager Joe Mercer. Rookie boss Dick Taylor. Mercer's assistant, had taken charge.

United's second game was a far more imposing test, as they welcomed the reigning League champions, Liverpool, to Elland Road. As Byron Butler remarked in the official illustrated history of The Football League in

1988, the Liverpool side "was full of thoroughbreds, Ian St John, Roger Hunt, Ian Callaghan, Peter Thompson and Ronnie Yeats among them, but most of all it had Bill Shankly. 'Shanks', with his cocky strut, crew cut hair and gravel voice, was all Scot and all Scouse - a manager who turned a game of blood and sweat into a faith. He understood players as few others did; and as a motivator, said one of his players, 'he'd have been great in the war, another Winston Churchill'. Shankly was a showman, a spinner of dreams and a master of what he called 'the true joke' - a wicked mixture of exaggeration, whimsy and ego. He was a man of simplicity but never a simple man. 'Me havin' no education,' he once said, 'I had to use my brains.' He was hugely successful and hugely loved."

The Scot was always ready with good quote, and many of his witticisms have passed into the folklore of football. Here are just a few of his pearls of wisdom:

"The trouble with referees is that they know the rules, but they do not know the game."

"He has football in his blood," said a scout who was trying sell a player to Liverpool. "You may be right," Shanks said, "but it hasn't reached his legs yet"

"I told this player, 'Listen Son, you haven't broken your leg. It's all in the mind.'"

To a barber, who asked "Anything off the top?" "Aye, Everton."

"People say football is a matter of life and death. I'm disappointed by that approach, I believe it is much more important than that."

"Of course I didn't take my wife to see Rochdale as an anniversary present. It was her birthday. Would I have got married in the football season? Anyway, it was Rochdale reserves."

Liverpool had lost their First Division status in 1954, and in December 1959, a month after sacking manager Phil Taylor, they persuaded Huddersfield Town boss and former Scotland wing-half Shankly to take up the reins at Anfield on a £2,500 salary. Over the next few years he rebuilt the team around players snapped up at bargain fees, including Ron Yeats from Dundee United and Ian St John from Motherwell. On signing the gigantic Yeats, Shankly invited the press to walk around him, saying, "With this man in defence we could play Arthur Askey in goal."



The inimitable Bill Shankly

The Reds secured the Second Division championship in 1962 and spent a year consolidating their Division One status before becoming League champions in 1964. Liverpool took 47 points from 30 games after a slow start to secure their sixth championship title.

Liverpool had kicked off the new season on 15th August when they drew 2-2 with West Ham in the Charity Shield curtain raiser. A couple of days later they returned from Iceland's Reykjavik with an easy 5-0 win in their European Cup debut, and then enjoyed a 3-2 home League win against Arsenal. This was the first game to be featured on BBC TV's new Match of the Day programme, screened at 6.30 on BBC 2 and attracting just 20,000 viewers.

Don Revie, who was to develop a lasting and close friendship with Shankly, born of a deep and mutual respect, acknowledged the scale of United's task: "It was a very good result at Villa Park, but don't let us get carried away. I'm just taking each match as it comes, like we did last season. The next is with Liverpool and Liverpool are a very hard side indeed to beat."

Billy Bremner later recalled: "Our win at Villa Park had definitely convinced us that we could get results, but we wanted more than that. Our sights were firmly set a lot higher than just survival. Liverpool were a magnificent side. Bill Shankly had transformed them into a very special outfit and we knew they were coming to Elland Road intent on securing maximum points. We had also been made aware that a part of Shankly's psychology was to convince his players that they were playing against a bunch of nobodies, half of whom were limping. He was a canny guy

and a brilliant manager and everyone respected him tremendously, but we also rated our own manager and we knew that he would have us prepared to take on and beat anybody."

Leeds had played well, after fighting back from a goal down at Villa, but the popular view among the critics was that United would do well to avoid relegation. They predicted that the limitations of the Whites' hard working game would be badly exposed by the classier opposition they now had to face. Shankly's Liverpool represented the acid test for Revie's young guns, still without England international Alan Peacock, sidelined by a knee injury.

Revie gave the nod to the same eleven who defeated Villa, with Don Weston continuing to deputise for Peacock. He formed a twin spearhead with Jim Storr, supplemented by the trickery of Albert Johanneson and the guile of Johnny Giles on the wings and prompted by skipper Bobby Collins, the aggressive midfield general. The first choice defence of Sprake, Reaney, Bell, Bremner, Charlton and Hunter was all present and correct after providing the reliable backbone to United's Second Division triumph.

The visitors were without the brilliant St John, recovering from having his appendix removed, and the injured Alf Arrowsmith, a fine inside-forward (13 goals in 20 games in the championship year). But Phil Chisnall, recently signed from Manchester United for £25,000, and the Scot, Gordon Wallace, had done well in the win against Reykjavik, netting three goals between them.

The Reds travelled across the Pennines in confident mood, convinced they would put Leeds United firmly in their place.

Don Revie was determined to do everything in his power to guarantee a good start to life in the First Division, and the Liverpool side was one of the first to be dissected in the dossiers that were soon to become so infamous.

Liverpool's performance in the Charity Shield encounter with West Ham was analysed thus:

"Liverpool took the field first and proceeded towards the Spion Kop end. This being the end they prefer to defend in the first half, an advantage may be gained by getting out first when we play there. Use the right-hand goal for warm-up and should we win the toss elect to stay as you are at K.O. Shankly has devised his team tactics to cover some deficiencies in his playing strength. Both full-backs lack pace and our wingers must seek the ball behind them. Liverpool depend a great deal on centre-half Yeats, who sticks like glue to the centre-forward and clears his lines decisively at all times. In this game both wing half-backs played a very stereotyped game and should one go on attack, the other stays back, even when an opportunity may arise to move with ease into a position



Giant Liverpool skipper Ron Yeats with the championship trophy

to change the point of attack. The majority of Milne's service goes towards outside-right, Callaghan, and usually consists of a short crisp pass.

"The forward line missed the constructive ability of St John, and his deputy Arrowsmith was carried off the field after ten minutes, with a twisted knee. Hunt moved to centre-forward, but was unable to free himself from the close attention of West Ham's Brown. Chisnall substituted for Arrowsmith but on this display lacked the sharpness and guile to be creative. Wallace at I-R was aggressive and grafted throughout, always on the look out to shoot when half-chance arose.

"The Liverpool defence play square with both full-backs endeavouring to keep close to the wingers even when a strike is made through the inside positions. It was noticeable that West Ham's inside-left, Hurst, was on to a number of balls behind the Liverpool right-back in the first fifteen minutes and I could not figure out why this approach was not sustained because it proved highly dangerous in the early period.

"Balls into this area will probably be more productive because of the two wing half-backs. Right-half Milne tends to advance more than Stevenson. It was Yeats who was having to move out to challenge Hurst on most occasions.

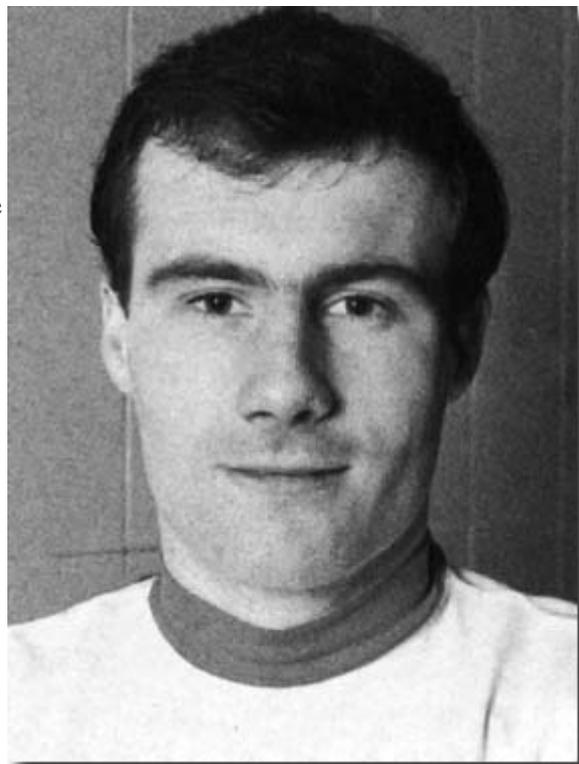
"After this early period I consider West Ham played to Liverpool's advantage by building up attacks slowly, and neither Sissons nor Brabrook would seek the ball behind the full-backs or attempt to run without it to enable colleagues from behind to carry the ball into an attacking position. Once West Ham had gained possession Bobby Moore, playing in a position between C-H and L-B, was usually served with the ball by his colleagues, to distribute elsewhere.

"Thompson at O-L, has speed and ball control, and invariably takes on anybody in line with his striking runs. I feel there are times when he had the chance to cross balls from the wing but even so he elected to take on his opponent to get in on goal. Thompson tends to go inside or across the front of his full-back because he favours his right foot.

"The cross-over was operated on the right wing a number of times. Callaghan already in the corner, coming out to take over the ball from the man carrying the ball in his direction. Callaghan then proceeds to strike through the I-R position towards goal, but he has difficulty in this situation because it demands using his left foot with the L-B running in close proximity.

"It was in such a situation that left-back G. Byrne scored with a thirty-yard left-foot shot. Callaghan was forced to pull out of a run, turned the ball back in Byrne's direction, whose shot went across Standen inside the far post.

"Wallace's goal was due to a mistake by Moore, who allowed a slow moving ball to pass under his boot to Liverpool's I-R, whose first-time right-foot shot hit the far post before crossing the line.



Phil Chisnall, newly signed from Manchester United, deputised for Ian St John, but was criticised in the dossier

"West Ham's two goals resulted from practices we have done on numerous occasions, e.g. forward coming off for ball to feet, and laying it to R-H, who hits forty-yard ball through I-L position to advancing forward running through defence, who helped ball into net as keeper advanced.

"Second goal: Hurst followed in a hard-driven ball from Brabrook who shot with his left foot from I-R position. Lawrence palms ball. Hurst nets from four yards. This incidentally was the only shot West Ham had at goal in the second half.

"Yeats came into the area for corner kicks, taking up a very wide position to enable himself to have room to adjust in relation to the kick. At free kicks for them, Liverpool had players moving around in different directions seeking to lose defenders in an effort to enable the two players on the ball to select 'what's on'."

The anorakish level of detail in the report appealed deeply to Revie, with his obsessive concern for leaving nothing to chance. He wanted his inexperienced players to be thoroughly prepared for each and every game and insisted on them rehearsing tactics to nullify their opponents' strengths. In the years to come, the over cautious approach would become the scapegoat for many of United's failures, but in this first season in Division One the attention to detail proved invaluable for Revie's hopes.

The superstitious manager's pre-match motivational antics that day also included bringing a clutch of four leafed clovers into the dressing room, but it's difficult to know whether that had any lasting effect on the team!

Off the field, chairman Harry Reynolds was hoping for a bumper day at the turnstiles.

Rob Bagchi and Paul Rogerson: "While the team was learning its lesson, Harry Reynolds had not yet learned his from the Charles fiasco. He couldn't help getting carried away, and ... gleefully prepared for the first capacity crowd at Elland Road since the 1920s. The club had reverted to their 'premium' pricing policy, and this time the lack of protest seemed to indicate that the increases were thought justified. No one got rich, however, betting on the Leeds public's enthusiasm ... the ground was 19,000, one-third short of capacity ... it was an unambiguous indication of the real strength of football in the city. This reluctance of the floating core of Leeds supporters to show up in numbers is the fundamental reason why the club's credibility as a 'big' club was so regularly questioned. For far too long, whatever roots the club had laboured to establish still lay in shallow soil.



England forward Roger Hunt was Liverpool's key forward

"Even so, Reynolds' misplaced optimism had potentially disastrous consequences for the fans that did bother to turn up. His expectation of at least a 50,000 attendance led to the paddock stands being crammed full while vast swathes of terracing behind the goals were left vacant for all the non-existent latecomers. One fan complained that the crush was so intense he feared for his life; conditions, others claimed, were 'like the black hole of Calcutta'. Luckily for a penitent Reynolds, there were no major casualties."



The teams were blissfully unaware of any problems in the crowd and when play kicked off, Liverpool adopted their normal approach, with the No 9, Chisnall, taking St John's customary deep lying role, leaving Hunt and Wallace to forage up front. According to the Yorkshire Evening Post's Phil Brown: "Liverpool opened with the supreme confidence they quite rightly could feel, and also with a lot of the splendid football they were expected to show." The wingers, Ian Callaghan and Peter Thompson, had some early success and were a constant threat to Paul Reaney and Willie Bell.

Yorkshire Post 27 August 1964 - featuring United's 4-2 win against Liverpool, with Charlton and Weston beating Yeats in a heading duel from a Johanneson corner

Leeds, however, were well up for battle and worked hard to get into the contest with Billy Bremner and Norman Hunter showing strongly, and Bobby Collins creating havoc. According to the Yorkshire Post's Eric Stanger, Collins "made Milne, the current England right-half, look a plodder".

In Stanger's view it was the respective pace of the two teams that really set them apart - Liverpool "played rather too studiously, often too short and too square", while "Leeds used the longer ball for the most part and by constantly switching the direction of attack often pulled a slow moving Liverpool defence out of position".

Liverpool were exhibiting the calm assurance of champions, confident that they would weather the early storm and emerge victorious in the long term, but were undoubtedly troubled by dynamic opponents.

The Reds had already had a lucky escape before United took the lead in the 16th minute: full-back Gerry Byrne attempted a back pass under pressure from Don Weston, but goalkeeper Tommy Lawrence could do nothing as the ball struck a post. The Scottish custodian was similarly helpless when Albert Johanneson's shot from the edge of the 18-yard box hit Ron Yeats on the shoulder and kicked up and under the bar to register a fortunate opener. The 1-0 advantage was, however, no more than United merited for their positive approach.

Their hopes were somewhat dimmed eight minutes later when their defence was undone by a quick Liverpool combination across the field. Sprake caught a downward header from Hunt after the

England man connected with a short centre from Callaghan, but the keeper collided with Reaney as he fell and spilled the ball into the net.

Liverpool continued to play as if it was only a matter of time before class would tell and exuded confidence, but they really were being comprehensively outfought and outplayed.

With five minutes remaining before the break, the Merseysiders' defence was slow to react to an attack and Weston nodded Storrie's centre into the goal to give Leeds a 2-1 lead at the interval.

Don Revie made the most of his half time team talk and the excitable crowd were driven into ecstasy as the ten minutes after the break saw their heroes assume an emphatic 4-1 lead.

Both goals came from combination work by Bremner and Giles. First the Irishman pulled the ball back for Bremner to beat Lawrence with a powerful drive and then the Scot rolled a free kick to Giles to hammer home from 30 yards.

This was incredible stuff and the fans were in delirium, chanting, "We want five".

They were, if truth be known, never going to get a fifth, but certainly their men had made Liverpool second best on the day.

There was some uncertainty as the minutes ticked by, with the Reds pulling one goal back in the 70th minute. Gordon Milne managed to force home the rebound after Gary Sprake pushed his initial penalty kick onto a post after Bremner's foul on Hunt, but it was surprisingly Bill Shankly's men who became the more ragged outfit in the closing stages.

There were near misses and close calls, but United, with Jack Charlton calm assurance itself, saw out the threat to secure a historic 4-2 triumph.

Billy Bremner: "Don Revie told us to go out and prove that we were a match, and more, for them. His words inspired us and put us in exactly the right frame of mind for the task ahead. It was quite a task, of course, but we settled quickly and played the way we had performed in the second half against Villa. Liverpool were excellent -- as good as we had expected -- but we were not going to pay them too much respect and I think they were uneasy long before we were because the unflappable Ron Yeats scored our first goal for us. I pulled his leg about that later. As a fellow Scot



The Yorkshire Evening Post of 27 August 1964 carries the story of Leeds United's wonderful 4-2 victory against champions Liverpool the previous day

I got away with it. He opened the floodgates with that own goal ... our supporters certainly celebrated after that!"

Norman Hunter: "I remember our performance that day as being very much a team effort. Everyone put in the extra effort but we also played some neat and creative football ... we deserved to be the glory boys on this occasion. We never allowed ourselves to feel inferior to anybody for the simple reason that we didn't think we were. No one had done us any favours. We were there because we were good enough."

Eric Stanger: "It was Leeds United's wonderful team spirit ... which saw them through, but they also showed a considerable amount of skill. At times Leeds played really fine, imaginative football and had Liverpool struggling for most of the game."

Phil Brown: "United beat the pride of Merseyside, England's European Cup team, fairly and squarely on all points of football in a high level game ... It was United's night in attack and defence. I do not think any United side since the war, remembering the quality of the opposition, has played such incisive football as United did last night ... It must have been fine reward for the board and Don Revie after all their efforts to give this city a club and a side to go with the best in the land."

These were extremely early days in a momentous season, but United were now one of just five teams with maximum points after the first two rounds of fixtures. As Phil Brown remarked: "Only time and a few more results to match, of course, will really tell, but last night's match could set even this fickle city alight." How right he was!



The Leeds squad with the Second Division Championship and West Riding Senior Cup 1964. Back: Willie Bell, Paul Reaney, Fred Goodwin, Gary Sprake, Brian Williamson, Norman Hunter, Ian Lawson Front: Johnny Giles, Billy Bremner, Jim Storr, Bobby Collins, Don Weston, Jimmy Greenhoff, Jack Charlton. Insets: Albert Johanneson, Alan Peacock