



Matches – 7 October 1972 – Leeds United 5 Derby County 0

First Division – Elland Road – 36,477

Scorers: Giles 2, Clarke, Bremner, Lorimer

Leeds United: Harvey, Madeley, Cherry, Bremner, Charlton, Hunter, Lorimer, Clarke, Jones, Giles (Bates 51), E Gray
Derby County: Boulton, Robson, Nish, Durban, McFarland, Todd, Daniel, Gemmill, O'Hare, Hector, Hinton

After the circumstances in which Leeds United lost out on the League championship to Derby County in May 1972, Don Revie and his men were desperate to gain some sort of payback, and were given the perfect opportunity when the Rams visited Elland Road five months later.

On 8 May 1972, two days after beating Arsenal to win the FA Cup, United required just a draw at Wolves to secure the championship. They lost 2-1, allowing Derby, on holiday in the Scilly Isles, to claim the title almost by default. The failure was all the more galling for Revie because County's manager was the outspoken Brian Clough. The Rams boss was a regular and vitriolic critic of the approach espoused by Revie and his team.

Clough wrote in later years, "On one occasion I was so incensed by their flouting of the rules that I went on record saying Don Revie should be fined and his team kicked out of the First Division and dumped in the Second. They didn't like that at Elland Road. They gave the impression that they were prepared to trample on anyone who attempted to criticise their flawed talents.



The Yorkshire Post of 9 October 1972 carries the story of United's 5-0 rout of Derby two days earlier

"Leeds had been the dirtiest and most cynical team in the country in the late Sixties and early Seventies, and from my soap box as manager of Derby and the best pundit on television I had said so on numerous occasions. I prided myself on producing teams who didn't argue with referees and linesmen, who didn't blatantly waste time, and who could anticipate a bollocking and a fine from me if they resorted to any form of dissent. Derby County and, later, Nottingham Forest were the best friends English referees ever had. So many of them told me my teams were the easiest and

most pleasurable of all to control. I can say, without fear of contradiction, that no referee ever said that of Leeds in the Revie era.

“I despised what they stood for - systematically putting referees under intolerable pressure with their violent behaviour, both physical and verbal, their overreactions, and the unsavoury spectacle of skipper Billy Bremner running alongside the harassed referee, constantly yelling in his ear. They angered and offended me to such an extent that I took every opportunity to condemn their cynicism which, for me, devalued so much of what they achieved and the marvellous football of which they were capable - a high level of skill and organised teamwork that I, like millions, admired. Leeds, in those days, cheated - and I was more than happy to draw people’s attention to the fact.”

Don Revie: “It must be abundantly clear to most soccer followers that Derby County manager Brian Clough and myself are not exactly the best of friends. As our relationship stands at the moment, he is the last person with whom I would wish to be stranded on a desert island, and no doubt he feels the same way about me.

“Why? From my point of view it all boils down to the fact that I dislike the way Clough repeatedly knocks other personalities in the game – especially rival managers. I think it is wrong to criticise your colleagues as Clough does, because the job is difficult enough without any of us slitting each other’s throats. Sir Matt Busby, Sir Alf Ramsey, Malcolm Allison and Allan Brown before he lost his job at Sunderland have all had verbal lashings from him.



Brian Clough and Don Revie during an infamous TV confrontation in 1974

“Generally, there is a tremendous spirit of good fellowship among the League’s managers, but that wouldn’t be the case if we were all like Brian Clough.

“I find it surprising that he should appear to be so indignant about teams going in hard for the ball. No matter what he might say to the contrary, you can take it from me that Derby are as physically intimidating as anyone when the need arises.”

Peter Lorimer: “I first came across (Clough) and discovered his true feelings when, in the early 1970s, I won the Sports Personality of the Year award at the Yorksport dinner under the auspices of Yorkshire Television at the Queens Hotel in Leeds. This was a prestigious award, voted for by Yorkshire Television viewers, that had previously been won by the Formula One racing driver Jackie Stewart.

“There was a lot of kudos attached to it and there were always important figures invited to present the awards. On this particular occasion, the man handing over the trophies was no less than the prime minister of the day, Yorkshireman Harold Wilson. The guest speaker was Brian Clough.

“I duly received my award from the Prime Minister but missed out on the pleasure of listening to Old Big ‘Ead on this Sunday evening because we had a Cup replay against Manchester United at Villa Park the following evening, and while Don kindly allowed me to collect the award, he ensured that there was a car waiting outside to whisk me straight to Villa Park to join up with the rest of the squad.

“I was therefore in blissful ignorance about what was such a diatribe that it quickly gathered notoriety for its ridiculous content. These were the days when there were no mobile telephones, of course, and thank goodness for that, because that night the phone at our team hotel never stopped ringing with requests from reporters wanting to speak to someone about Mr Clough’s outburst concerning Leeds United and me at the dinner in Leeds.

“Even before he was due to make his scheduled speech, he got up and told a packed auditorium that he had sat there and listened to a load of codswallop about the greatness of Leeds United and the brilliance of Peter Lorimer. It was time now, he asserted, that he had his say. He had had enough of being made to sit through all this bulls**t. But before he embarked on his speech, he said, the audience could sit there and wait patiently, just as he had done, until he had paid a visit to the lavatory.

“Well, of course, with the Prime Minister and all the local dignitaries of the city of Leeds being there, this sudden announcement of an unscheduled break in the proceedings did not go down too well. When he returned, he launched full throttle into an undisguised attack on Leeds United.

“Calling us cheats, he said that we had never won anything fairly. As for me, he held that the Sports Personality of the Year award had gone to the wrong man. I wasn’t a sportsman, he said. I was a cheat. I was always diving. Always trying to get the opposition into trouble with the referee.

“It amounted to a full frontal assault on both the club and me, in front of a largely partisan audience in our home city. Of course, he got shouted down. People were on their feet and telling him to sit down. The boos started and he never got to finish his speech.

“It must have been quite funny on the night. I wish I’d been there. I quite enjoy a bit of banter and, of course, people are entitled to their opinions. There is no way I would have responded, however. I would merely have enjoyed the surrealness of it all.”



Brian Clough was always a forthright critic of Leeds United

A few weeks before the Elland Road clash between Leeds and Derby at the beginning of October 1972, Clough was publicly berated by the Football League, with Derby being warned that, unless he refrained from some of his more controversial comments, disciplinary action would be taken against the club.

Derby had not started well in their defence of the title: they were fourteenth in the table with just two goals and two points gained away from the Baseball Ground.

United themselves had been below their own customary standards. They had lost two games on the bounce in the League, the second the previous weekend a 2-1 defeat to League leaders Liverpool. That ended an 18-month unbeaten record at Elland Road.

In the days before they hosted Derby, Leeds had struggled to snatch a draw from a testing League Cup-tie at Villa Park.

Scottish international winger Eddie Gray, who had made only seven first team appearances all season because of a thigh injury, returned to the side against Derby, as did midfield general Johnny Giles, recovered from the back injury which kept him out of the Villa game.

Derby were at strength, although their team showed one change from the side held to a 0-0 draw by Chelsea in the League Cup. Steve Powell, their highly rated youngster, was rested, and John Robson came back into a defence which included England internationals Roy McFarland and Colin Todd. David Nish, an expensive recruit from Leicester, completed the rearguard, and Leeds-born Kevin Hector was on duty up front.

Derby's position in the lower half of the First Division was acknowledged by Revie as misleading: "Over the last two or three seasons Derby have proved themselves to be a great side, and they have too many good players to remain down the table. There is no doubt that they will soon begin to climb, though we shall be out, of course, to see that their progress does not begin tomorrow."

Great teams do not become bad teams overnight and Revie was well advised to be cautious, though some of his anxieties were dispelled by a United goal in the third minute.

Leeds had started on the front foot with Mick Jones climbing to meet Eddie Gray's centre, but his header cleared the bar. It was but a temporary reprieve for the visitors, who had more defending to do after Bristol referee Harry New penalised Derby skipper McFarland for bringing down Allan Clarke out on the right, 35 yards from goal.

When Peter Lorimer threw the free kick high into the heart of the Derby area, McFarland rose unchallenged to head it away. He should have done better and his clearance had more height than distance as it looped towards Johnny Giles, lurking 25 yards from goal. The Irish schemer steadied himself and sent an instant volley soaring high over the onrushing Derby defenders before it dipped viciously under goalkeeper Colin Boulton's crossbar.



Johnny Giles lashes in his second goal against Derby

There might have been a hint of speculation about the effort but it was certainly precise, alighting sweetly between Boulton and the woodwork.

Despite being in arrears, Derby had as much of the play in these early stages as United, who seemed a little unsure of themselves. The visitors responded to the early concession by winning a corner after Durban made a good run forward.

County then inexplicably allowed Leeds to settle into their game. John O'Hare started very well and Kevin Hector was a constant thorn in the United flesh, but the Rams had few other major

contributors. It was almost as if they went into the game expecting to be second best.

There was a lull before the next goal, coming after 27 minutes had elapsed. Trevor Cherry brought the ball out to play a one-two with Gray at half way before making his way at pace towards the area. He tried to feed a killer through pass to Allan Clarke on the left, but the ball was blocked by Alan Durban, and ran inside to Giles, 25 yards from goal. Confidently, the Irishman took possession and got the ball out of his feet to fire a screamer past the diving Boulton, just inside the left hand post, a stunning strike.

The goal brought strong Derby protests for offside against Clarke, but the referee would have none of it and booked McFarland for too vigorous a protest.

United were firmly in control of the game now and increased their advantage eight minutes before the interval.

Giles fired a long ball from deep inside the Leeds half forward to Jones, five yards outside the Derby area. He took the ball with his back to goal and held play up long enough to allow Paul Madeley to come storming up on the overlap down the right. The elegant utility man sent over a first time cross which soared to the back post. Clarke climbed above his marker to loop a header inside the angle of post and crossbar from eight yards out.

Just before half time, Durban went into referee New's notebook for bringing down Bremner who needed treatment for a leg injury. McFarland and Lorimer also received cautionary words when the United man was felled and retaliated.

After the restart, Gray probed hard at the Derby rearguard as United sought to rub in their superiority, but his efforts came to naught.

After 51 minutes Giles had to go off after sustaining a leg injury when challenging a Derby man. The playmaker went off to loud applause as Mick Bates came on to replace him.

If Derby saw the loss of their two-goal tormentor as a reason for fresh hope, their ambitions were soon destroyed as their arrears grew on the hour.

Madeley fed Bremner five yards into the Derby half. The space opened up as County players retreated before him and the United skipper took the ball on twenty yards leaving opponents in his



Allan Clarke nods home United's third goal

wake. As Bremner reached the 25-yard point, he noticed Boulton advancing off his line. The Scot promptly lashed in a shot, again just inside the top angle; this time Boulton was transfixed on the six yard line and could only watch helplessly as the shot billowed the net.

Despite the yawning gulf of the 4-0 scoreline, there was still enough feeling in the contest for some nasty transgressions to hint at the rancour between the sides; Hunter was booked for fouling O'Hare and Colin Todd followed him when he felled Jones.

Two minutes from time, United crowned a memorable afternoon for their gleeful supporters with a fifth goal.

Clarke got possession ten yards into Derby's half and pushed the ball forward down the left flank for Cherry to chase. The left-back easily rounded Durban and fired a low cross back towards the penalty spot where Lorimer came sliding in to drive it inside the far post.

That was the last meaningful action of the afternoon and United went off to thunderous applause.

Asked afterwards what had gone wrong, a morose Brian Clough would only shake his head sadly as he muttered, "Five brilliant goals."



Billy Bremner is about to lash home United's fourth

Richard Ulyatt in the Yorkshire Post: "No visiting team ought these days to be caught napping, for all of them pack the defence monotonously with all sorts of players who seldom get a chance on their own grounds. For example, Derby had Daniel, never a winger normally, at outside-right, just as Leeds recently played Yorath, a centre-half, at outside-left.

"Leeds United's outside-left this time was the adroit Eddie Gray who has been nagged by a deep seated injury which made him a doubtful starter. He showed no sign of it. He completed the team's balance so that the attack was not all down the right wing, and after the match reported himself fit to play again, though I understand his troublesome thigh was sore yesterday.

"Gray, Bremner and Giles at times toyed with the Derby defence in which their star players, McFarland, England's centre-half, Nish and Todd were less factual value than their billing, but one of the main reasons why Derby did not really get into the game was the ineffectiveness of Archie Gemmill, without whom they are poor as Arsenal used to be in their championship years when Alex James was missing or Huddersfield Town were when Clem Stephenson had an off day.

"Derby's success has been built largely round the consistent ability of Gemmill to do the unexpected which usually proves the right thing to have done. This time Bremner did not let him get away with anything and Kevin Hector strove without help to get the line moving. The effect was rather like Leeds United, as has happened recently, finding both Giles and Bremner off form.

"This time both those two smart midgets dovetailed smoothly and the combination of their success,

plus the failure of the Gemmill-Hector blend brought about this devastating result, which on the basis of possession of the ball and endeavour was not otherwise justified.

“With Gemmill’s plots misfiring, the ball was pumped back and back into the Derby defence so that in the end McFarland, who was not notably happy at the start, was in some distress by the end. Derby on another occasion might have saved Giles’ two goals and the one that Bremner scored by driving through the middle.

“They might, on another occasion, have stopped Cherry’s caper down the left wing at breakneck speed which enabled Lorimer to score the fifth goal, but I doubt whether any defence would have stopped the third goal, just before half time, headed by Clarke. It was one which ought to be drawn or set to music; it was an outstanding effort of timing, accuracy and speed which Jones, Madeley and Clarke shared with equal merit.”

Paul Fitzpatrick in the Guardian: “Don Revie, the Leeds United manager, scarcely could conceal his delight after his side had given their most impressive performance of the season and humiliated Derby County on Saturday at Elland Road.

“After all, what more could a manager ask of his team? Life is good when you have just gathered two good points, scored five first class goals and given a display as convincing as this. Mr Revie clearly was going to enjoy his Sunday golf in the Leeds and District knockout – and his enthusiasm and happiness were justifiable and understandable. Somehow, for the uncommitted observer at least, it was not possible to share them.

“For a start, Derby were so ineffectual as to cast doubts on their authenticity as champions of the First Division; more importantly, there was a sinister side to the game which overshadowed all. The forces of evil were greater than those for good so that at the end one was left not savouring the quality of so much fine Leeds football but rather contemplating sadly the deplorable cynicism with which one footballer can treat another.



Allan Clarke celebrates his goal with Billy Bremner

“Four names taken, even if a booking is devalued currency these days, represents an afternoon of anxious activity for the referee. Yet justice should have been harsher. McFarland, who almost sliced Lorimer in half; Todd, for a squalid foul on Jones; and Hunter, who, while lying on his back, did a sort of bicycle exercise into O’Hare’s stomach, were lucky indeed to remain on the field. Durban also had his name taken, although to categorise him with the other three would be as unfair as putting a petty thief in a cell on Death Row.

“Brian Clough, the Derby manager, repeatedly has said that a manager should be held responsible for the onfield actions of his players and no doubt Durban, Todd and McFarland will be made to pay for their sins. The outlook could be particularly bleak for McFarland, this being his fifth booking this season, although the greater pity, as one Derby journalist said, would be for him to lose his reputation as a footballing centre-half.

“The first half was distinguished by much excellent penetrative football by United and two remarkable goals by Giles who is noted for his masterful activities in midfield and his prowess from the penalty spot but not for scoring goals of these dimensions. His departure in the fiftieth minute with tendon trouble deprived the game of its most accomplished player. Derby’s misery in the first half was completed by a beautiful header by Clarke from Madeley’s precise centre.

“After half time, Derby moved Nish from the back into midfield, a move which achieved nothing, and rendered the player even more anonymous than before. And while Derby fretted, Leeds went on their destructive way, scoring two more fine goals through Bremner and Lorimer, the last goal being made by Cherry, who for the most part was the one Leeds misfit.”

It was a blinding performance by Don Revie’s men, far and away their outstanding display of the season. It was not that they had that many chances in the game, with one Derbyshire paper claiming they only had eight genuine attempts on goal, but their accuracy from distance was astonishing, with three of the goals coming from well outside the penalty area.

The result represented some restitution for having the League title snatched from within their grasp the previous May and presented clear evidence that United were still a force in the championship race. As a consequence of the result they were restored to fifth place in the table, three points behind pacesetters Liverpool with almost a third of the season gone.



Johnny Giles celebrates his second goal - "His departure in the fiftieth minute with tendon trouble deprived the game of its most accomplished player"