



## Matches – 9 May 1973 – Leeds United 6 Arsenal 1

First Division – Elland Road – 25,088

Scorers: Lorimer 3, 1 pen (23 mins, 27, 65), Bremner (78), Jordan 2 (80, 81)

Leeds United: Harvey, Reaney, Cherry, Bremner, Yorath, Hunter, Lorimer, Clarke (Jones 40), Jordan, Giles, Madeley

Arsenal: Wilson, Batson, McNab, Storey, Blockley, Simpson, Armstrong, Ball, Radford, Kennedy, Hornsby (Price 45)

1972/73 had been in many ways a re-run of the nightmares of 1970 for Leeds United; within the space of a fortnight, their pursuit of the League title ran into the sand and they suffered the ignominy of losing the FA Cup final to Second Division Sunderland in one of the biggest Cup upsets of all time.

Four days after their debacle at Wembley Stadium, United had the chance to recover at least some of their lost pride, as they hosted First Division runners up Arsenal in their final League game of the campaign.

United still retained strong hopes of some silverware in the form of the European Cup Winners Cup. Leeds had reached the final against AC Milan, but it was important to Don Revie and his men to end their Division One season on a high by beating the Gunners. It wouldn't make any difference to final placings in the table, as Arsenal were certain of second place behind Liverpool with United guaranteed third spot ahead of Bobby Robson's Ipswich, but Leeds were hungry for victory.

The only changes to United's Wembley line-up saw Terry Yorath in for Eddie Gray and Joe Jordan replacing Mick Jones, named sub. For the Gunners, Pat Rice and Charlie George were both unavailable through suspension; 18-year-old Brian Hornsby came in for his debut with 20-year-old Brendan Batson at right-back. 17-year-old David Price was on the bench. Otherwise, Arsenal were at strength.

Both sides had suffered a disappointing loss of form in the season's closing weeks: United hadn't won any of their five games since they beat Crystal Palace 4-0 on 21 April, registering just two goals in that time. For their part, the Gunners had won just once since their own defeat of Palace on



Bob Wilson congratulates Sunderland keeper Jim Montgomery following the Wearsiders' Cup semi-final defeat of Arsenal

26 March. During that time, they had also gone out of the FA Cup to Sunderland, losing 2-1 in the Hillsborough semi-final.

Games between the two sides had long been characterised by tenacious football and fiery tempers; the League Cup final contested by the clubs in 1968 had been a dour and bitter battle, one of the poorest in Wembley's history.

The League clash in December at Highbury had seen six men booked, five of them from Leeds, though some of the blame for that was undoubtedly down to the somewhat officious refereeing of Clive Thomas.

A number of United's cautions had been awarded for dissent. Following the game at Highbury, Don Revie decided enough was enough. He decreed that captain Billy Bremner should sport an armband indicating his status and gave instructions to the other players that only Bremner should approach referees. He indicated that anyone breaking the rule would face disciplinary proceedings.



An ugly brawl between the two sides during the League Cup final in 1968

Revie: "The number of Leeds United players booked for dissent has become critical. For example, five of our players had their names taken at Arsenal recently – three for disputing the referee's decisions. The offence carries a four point penalty under the new disciplinary code and our inability to avoid it has resulted in Billy Bremner, Trevor Cherry and Allan Clarke facing two-match bans.

"I have mixed feelings about this business of punishing players for appealing against decisions which they believe are wrong. For one thing, dissent is a relatively minor offence and I feel it is wrong that the penalty is the same as that meted out to a player who commits a deliberate foul.

"In addition, I believe all referees should be prepared to listen to a protest by a team's skipper, providing it is made in a constructive manner. In fact, we are going to write to the FA, the League and the Referees' Association suggesting a rule to this effect.

"I admit that some of our players have allowed themselves to be carried away and I have now invoked a rule whereby only Bremner is allowed to approach the referee. Anyone who disobeys will be disciplined by the club.

"In turn, referees should adopt a more lenient attitude and not be so sensitive. It is easy for outsiders to say players should accept the referee's decisions. These people clearly don't appreciate the pressures of the game."

Revie's move cut no ice with the powers that be, with Vernon Stokes of the FA telling him sharply

that the captain had no more right than any other player to dispute a decision.

The early stages of the game at Elland Road offered clear signals that this latest fixture would maintain the trend of bitter clashes between the two clubs. During the opening minutes, Arsenal's £200,000 centre-half Jeff Blockley and midfield destroyer Peter Storey were typically forthright in their tackling as they sought to unsettle Leeds. They could justifiably claim, however, that United started it all with Norman Hunter flattening Storey in the opening minutes.

Blockley was the first man in the notebook of referee Bob Matthewson after 20 minutes when he attempted to bring Jordan down with a Rugby tackle as the Gunners sought to resist United's opening burst. The home outfit had started the game well and seemed to have got the Wembley experience out of their systems.

Three minutes later Leeds opened the scoring. Jordan had already shown impressive form, giving both Blockley and Batson a bit of a chasing in the early minutes and when the Scottish striker sought to make an opportunity for himself in the area, Batson wrestled him to the ground and the referee had little hesitation in awarding the penalty.

Arsenal's players were far less convinced and protested furiously, insisting that the referee consulted his linesman. There were two minutes of heated arguments but Matthewson did not change his decision. When he was finally able to recommence proceedings, Lorimer coolly despatched the spot kick to give United the advantage, smashing the ball spectacularly into the top left hand corner to leave Bob Wilson helpless.

Lorimer added a second goal four minutes later, capitalising on some nice build up play. Allan Clarke was the architect of the goal, making good progress down the right to round Bob McNab before playing in a nice cross to Billy Bremner. The Leeds skipper collected the ball, held up play for a vital split second and then slipped it out to the left for an onrushing Lorimer to smash home from 18 yards. It was a perfect lay off by the Scotland skipper and Lorimer was able to launch into his strike without breaking stride.

Ray Kennedy had two opportunities to get the Gunners back into the contest after some nice build up work from Armstrong and Ball, but could not convert on either occasion and United's lead remained intact.

Clarke pulled a hamstring five minutes before the break and limped off, giving Mick Jones the opportunity to leave the bench and get into the action.



The Yorkshire Post of 10 May 1973 features United's crushing defeat of Arsenal the previous evening and the part played by Lorimer and Jordan therein

After 50 minutes, the Gunners registered on the score sheet. Ball had a shot blocked and then Kennedy suffered the same fate; the ball ran loose to George Armstrong 20 yards from goal. He fired in an instant shot, low into the corner of the net. That effort seemed to inspire Arsenal, for whom John Radford twice went close in the aftermath.

The shock of Armstrong's strike cleared United's half time heads and provoked them into fierce retaliation and after 65 minutes they restored their two goal advantage. Joe Jordan bypassed Batson and made his way along the goal line before laying the ball into Lorimer's path. The Scottish wide man completed his hat trick with a lethal and unerring accurate finish.

That was only the preliminary, however, for United went goal crazy over the final quarter of an hour after Arsenal keeper Bob Wilson held them at bay for fifteen minutes with some brave goalkeeping, though he admitted later that "United were unstoppable".

After 78 minutes Bremner scored with a remarkable backwards header from Giles' telling cross into the box.

Joe Jordan got his reward for another hard working evening by snatching two further goals: after 80 minutes, he completed a move begun by Yorath, who broke through and found Jones who supplied a telling ball to Jordan; a minute later the Scot secured United's sixth goal of the night, rising magnificently to nod home a cross from Lorimer. Arsenal's only touches of the ball between Jordan's brace came when they restarted the game. They simply had no answer to such incisive attacking play.

It was the finest performance by Leeds for a number of weeks, mystifying many as to exactly how such form had escaped the team when they desperately needed it. Arsenal might have been off colour, but it had been no cheap surrender on their part, they had simply not been allowed to get into their stride.

As noted by Mike Casey in the Yorkshire Evening Post, "Leeds United's players – the men who trudged dejectedly from the Wembley pitch two days ago after losing the FA Cup to Second Division Sunderland – can hold their heads high again today. Their marvellous 6-1 thrashing of League runners up Arsenal at Elland Road had the fans shouting for more. And but for splendid work for Bob Wilson in the Londoners' goal, they might have had their wish. This was the night United regained their self-respect.

## SPORT

### Football

# Pressure came off Leeds and six goals deserved lap of honour

By Gerry Harrison  
Leeds Utd 6

Arsenal 1

A rare occasion at Elland Road last night was the springboard for a rare treat for the 25,000 Leeds supporters who ventured out on a wet night to see the last first division match of the season. Here was a confrontation between two of England's most talented and successful sides, which, strangely, had no bearing on championships, cups or even league positions. Meaningless it might have been, but it was anything but valueless as Leeds delighted their supporters with a thrilling display of the arts and crafts of the game which staggered Arsenal and then threatened them, particularly as Leeds

and rarely put a foot right; and McNab was consistently by-passed down his flank. Without Simpson and Wilson it could have been 10.

It was not entirely painless for Leeds or, indeed, for Sir Alf Ramsey. Alan Clarke limped off in the first half with a hamstring injury which makes him doubtful for England's first game in the home international championship. Make no mistake, however, this was far from a one-sided affair. The character of Hunter's tackle on Storey in the first few minutes emphasized that.

It took Leeds 21 minutes to break down the Arsenal defence. When they did they scored twice in five minutes and got the taste for a night out. Full back Bates

cross was headed in by Bremner. Ninety seconds later, after good work by Jones, Jordan scored the fifth and it was Jordan who completed the scoring in the 80th minute after Arsenal's only touch between his first and second goals had been the action of re-starting the game.

A tremendous ovation for Leeds at the end was natural and while they did a lap of honour those who were not too busy singing their praises were surely asking how it is that a side with this quality up their sleeves at the end of a long season could fail to win any of the major English trophies—and, indeed, could manage to lose to Sunderland in the FA Cup.

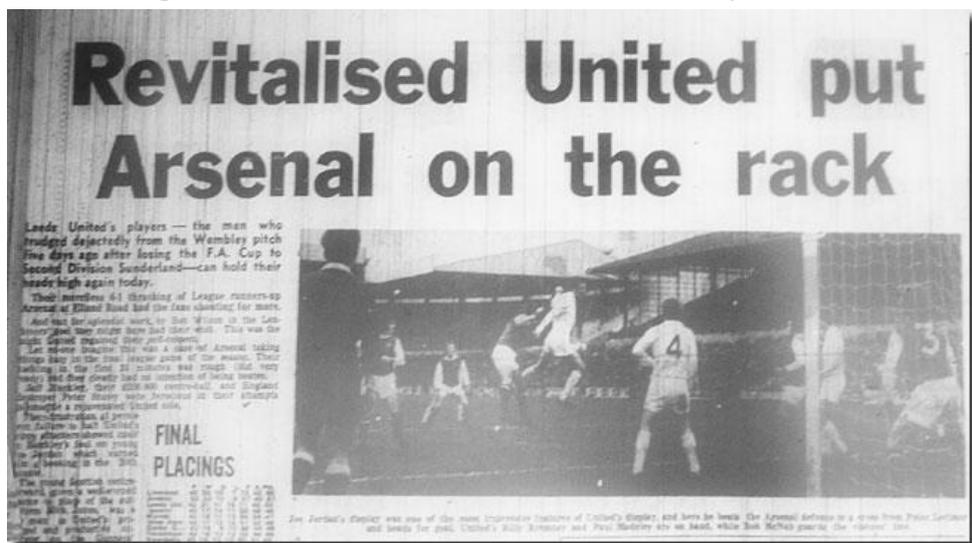
There was a sting in the tail of

The Times features United's end of season feast

“Peter Lorimer atoned for a lean season with his first hat trick since the 7-0 defeat of Southampton at Elland Road in March 1972. And skipper Billy Bremner, bubbling with energy, besides scoring United’s fourth goal with a spectacular back header, linked effectively with Johnny Giles in midfield, limiting the ball supply to Arsenal’s powerful front runner, John Radford and Ray Kennedy.

“But this was essentially a team effort – one which made me ponder what might have happened at Wembley last weekend had Don Revie’s men played for even ten minutes as they did against Arsenal.

“United, stroking the ball over every inch of the pitch, gave a superb display of entertaining soccer.”



Gerry Harrison in the Times:  
“A rare occasion at Elland Road

last night was the springboard for a rare treat for the 25,000 Leeds supporters who ventured out on a wet night to see the last First Division match of the season. Here was a confrontation between two of England’s most talented and successful sides, which, strangely, has no bearing on championships, cups or even League positions. Meaningless it might have been, but it was anything but valueless as Leeds delighted their supporters with a thrilling display of the arts and crafts of the game which staggered Arsenal and then threatened them, particularly as Leeds made for the tape at full speed, scoring three goals in less than three minutes near the end.

“Leeds emphasised, not for the first time, that once the pressure is off them and they express themselves more naturally they can be as attractive as anyone with just as much professionalism. The inclusion of Madeley in midfield helped, so too did Giles’ inspiration, so lacking at Wembley, the exciting forward play of Jordan and Lorimer’s powerful shooting.

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Don Revie had instructed his players to take a lap of honour after the game, saying later: “Our fans have been wonderful to us this season, particularly this week after the disappointment of Wembley. Thousands of them turned out to welcome us home from London on a very wet Sunday afternoon even though we had no cup to show them.

“There were 34,000 at Jack Charlton’s testimonial match on Monday and then we were spurred on by our fans against Arsenal. It was our way of saying thank you. And I’m glad we gave them plenty to cheer.”

It was a breathtaking finish to what had been, in the end, a disappointing League campaign where they had never fully convinced anyone of their title credentials.