

ISSUE SIX

FAIR

THE  
**SQUALL**

— BLIZZARD'S BREEZY BROTHER —



# THE SQUALL

Matt Thacker

**It's six and out for *The Squall*. This will be our final issue although if circumstances demand that it returns at some point, we will be back if we can make it work. We set up *The Squall* six long lockdown months ago as a digital football magazine to give freelance writers a forum for their work. Not just so they could get paid to write, but so they had something to aim for, a sense of job satisfaction at a time when such satisfaction was in short supply. The return of football, however fragile, has meant more work for freelancers.**

We hope that *The Squall* has managed to showcase great football writing on subjects you are unlikely to read about anywhere else, and that you enjoy our final offering, the "Fair" issue.

Initially *The Squall* was supported by *Blizzard* writers waiving fees as well as by generous contributions from readers, supporters and quizzers. Over the last two months this revenue has understandably dried up and we are no longer in a position to produce *The Squall*.

**We would love it if you would give one final push, to enable us to pay the writers of this issue without jeopardising other ventures.** If you are happy to do so, please pay into our bank account with

sort code 40-05-17 and account number 71515942, or you can pay via PayPal to [paypal.me/thesquall](https://paypal.me/thesquall). Any money paid into either of these accounts will be used for the sole purpose of paying writers who have written for *The Squall*.

**October 2020**

We are very grateful to all of the people who have waived fees and donated to *The Squall* since we announced the project. Special thanks go to: Nick Ames, Philippe Auclair, John Brewin, Kieran Canning, James Corbett, John Cross, Martin da Cruz, Miguel Delaney, Andrew Downie, Peter Drury, Ken Early, Emmet Gates, Sasha Goryunov, John Harding, Simon Hart, Gary Hartley, Ian Hawkey, Frank Heinen, Tom Holland, Adam Hurrey, Elis James, Neil Jensen, Samindra Kunti, Jonathan Liew, Simon Mills, James Montague, David Owen, MM Owen, Simone Pierotti, Jack Pitt-Brooke, Gavin Ramjuan, Callum Rice-Coates, Philip Ross, Paul Simpson, Marcus Speller, Jon Spurling, Seb Stafford-Bloor, Ed Sugden, Jonathan Wilson, Suzy Wrack, and Shinobu Yamanaka. And huge thanks to Getty Images, for use of the photos.

# EDITOR'S NOTE

Jonathan Wilson

**For now at least, this will be the final issue of *The Squall*. We set up at the beginning of lockdown to try to provide work and revenue for freelancers in unprecedented and confusing times and, thanks to the generosity and hard work of a lot of people, we were able to help at least some journalists and photographers. So a huge thank you to those who waived fees and worked for free to give us the liquidity to keep going. And thank you as well to everybody who donated and paid for their copies or joined in the weekly quiz.**

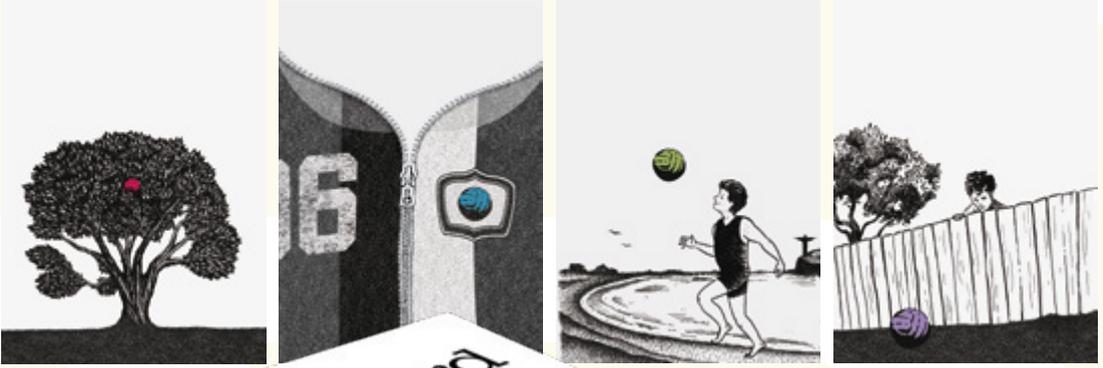
Life has not returned to normal and, certainly in the UK, it seems more likely that in the next few months restrictions will be tightened rather than loosened. Football, though, is back – sort of – and while nobody could say the immediate future looks anything other than bleak for football writers, there is at least a level of certainty about where we're going.

We said when we launched that *The Squall* was a temporary initiative, and we also said that ultimately it would have to be money-making. It's just about held its own, but no magazine, not even one with a charitable function, can exist forever on goodwill and favours. So we're closing down for now. It may be that as the virus develops, if there is another lockdown, that it makes sense to return, but currently it makes more sense for us to focus energies and resources on *The Blizzard*.

Issue Thirty-Eight is out now, with features on BeoutQ, South Africa, Carlos Tévez, Néstor Ortigoza, Carlo Carcano, Fulham and Birmingham City [<https://www.theblizzard.co.uk/shop/product/issue-thirty-eight>] and Issue Thirty-Nine will be out in December. Never forget that a subscription makes a perfect Christmas gift. The Greatest Games podcast will return soon, and we're hoping to expand our audio offerings.

So, once again, many thanks for your support. The sense of community, of writers and readers pulling together in the early weeks of the crisis, was both touching and encouraging. Please continue to support *The Blizzard* and our sadly rather uncommercial sense of what journalism can be, and enjoy this final issue of *The Squall*.

**October 2020**



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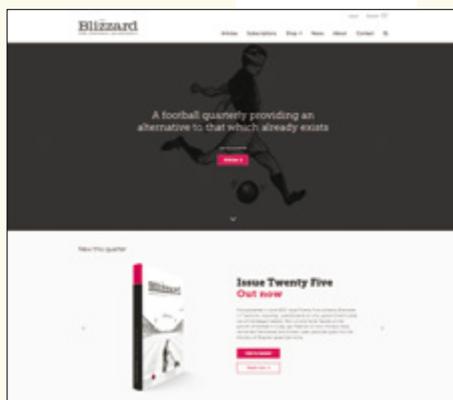
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# WHAT IS FAIR PLAY?

Is football fair, can it be fair, and what do we even mean by 'fair'?

*BY JOHN IRVING*

*Paolo Di Canio receives an award from Paul Gerrard for his show of sportsmanship earlier in the season, 2001*



**“Winning isn’t important, it’s the only thing that counts.”** Attributed to the former Juventus captain and president Giampiero Boniperti, the tag has been adopted as the club’s unofficial motto. It conveys a conception of sport at odds with the De Coubertian credo “The most important thing ... is not winning but taking part,” but it dovetails with the Machiavellian “The end justifies the means.” Boniperti’s words may well be rhetorical bluster, but they do raise the issue of what methods are legitimate in the pursuit of sporting success.

What is fair and what isn’t? In many European languages, the English term ‘fair play’ is left untranslated. Sepp Herberger wrote of Paul Janes, captain of Germany in the 1930s, that his every match was “*ein Sieg des fair play*”, a victory for fair play. In football fair play has always been associated with the British tradition of sportsmanship. As Simon Kuper writes in *Ajax, the Dutch, the War*, “football had reached the Continent late, and with its Victorian wrapping intact.” As a result, he says, there was “an Anglophile school of thought in Europe that regarded sportsmanship as more important than winning matches.” In 1945, no less a figure than Pope Pius XII said, “From the birthplace of sport came also the proverbial phrase ‘fair play’”, and Italians speak explicitly of ‘*fair play inglese*’.

References to fair play abound in the statutes of football’s national and international governing bodies. In the Introduction to the Laws of the Game 2020-21, the International Football Association Board states that “a crucial foundation of the beauty of the ‘beautiful

game’ is its fairness.” The English is dodgy but the message is clear.

Fifa promotes fair play to prevent off-the-field issues such as corruption, doping and match manipulation through Article 2, paragraph g) of the General Provisions of its Statutes and Uefa has its own Financial Fair Play Regulations. But it’s fair play on the field that I wish to explore here.

The only body to attempt a definition of fair play is Uefa, at point 7 of its statutes: “‘Fair play’ means acting according to ethical principles which, in particular, oppose the concept of sporting success at any price, promote integrity and equal opportunities for all competitors, and emphasise respect of the personality and worth of everyone involved in a sporting event.” Perhaps that goalkeeper Albert Camus meant something similar when he wrote that he learned all he knew about ethics from sport.

A famous Monty Python sketch shows ‘The Philosophers’ Football Match’ between teams from Greece and Germany. Footballers, of course, don’t need to be philosophers, but philosophers have a lot to say about sport, hence football, and fair play. In his *A Theory of Justice*, the US moral philosopher John Rawls suggests that “a good play of the game is, so to speak, a collective achievement requiring the cooperation of all,” and that “a good and fair play of the game must be regulative and effective if everyone’s zest and pleasure are not to languish.” A football match, therefore, is at once a competitive and a cooperative activity in which each side seeks to prevail over the other, while sharing the same rules and ends.

In his essay "Sportsmanship as a moral category", another American, James W Keating, writes that fair play depends on the commitment of all competitors not to ignore the rules or consciously break them. Just as criminal law is designed to prevent people from committing crimes, so football involves a set of rules of conduct that fix sanctions against players to prevent unfair behaviour on the field. If the ideal society is a society without crime, the fair football match is a match without fouls. But fair play means more than just sticking to the rulebook. Insofar as they are neither morally just nor morally unjust but merely functional to the game, rules do not *determine* fair play. Fair play is, rather, a cooperative ethical principle that exists *within* the rules of the game. There are written rules and there are unwritten rules.

So much for the theory, what about the practice? If, for whatever reason, players fail to share the same rules and ends, football becomes anarchy and fair play is conspicuous by its absence. Football's proverbial 'battles' – Highbury in 1935, say, or Bern in 1954, or Santiago in 1962 – are cases in point. In Intercontinental Club Cup finals such as Racing v Celtic in Montevideo in 1967 and Estudiantes v. AC Milan in Buenos Aires in 1969 – also battles – competition so overrode cooperativeness that the tournament had to be abandoned altogether.

In universally acknowledged examples of fair play, it is cooperativeness that prevails. To cite just two of the many: in 2000, alone in front of goal and with the Everton goalkeeper Paul Gerrard down injured, West Ham's Paolo Di Canio caught the ball to stop play and

allow Gerrard to have treatment; in 2012, Miroslav Klose was congratulated by his opponents for admitting scoring a goal with his hand for Lazio against Napoli. More than playing to the codified rules of the game, the players involved were obeying the ethical principles invoked by Uefa in its definition of fair play. As yet another US philosopher, William JJ Morgan, puts it in his *Ethics in Sport*, fair play is more than "an aggregate of moral qualities comprising a code of specialised behaviour: it is also an attitude, a posture, a manner of interpreting what would otherwise be only a legal code."

The Di Canio episode evokes a dilemma faced by footballers and their managers virtually every week. How to behave when an opponent is down injured? An extreme case occurred in Leeds United against Aston Villa in April 2019, during which the Leeds manager Marcelo Bielsa ordered his players to let Villa equalise after they had gone ahead through Mateusz Klich, with Villa's Jonathan Kodjia lying hurt in midfield. Bielsa duly won that year's Fifa fair play award. "What happened, happened," he said. "English football is known around the world for its noble features." It's as if he was adapting to a culture.

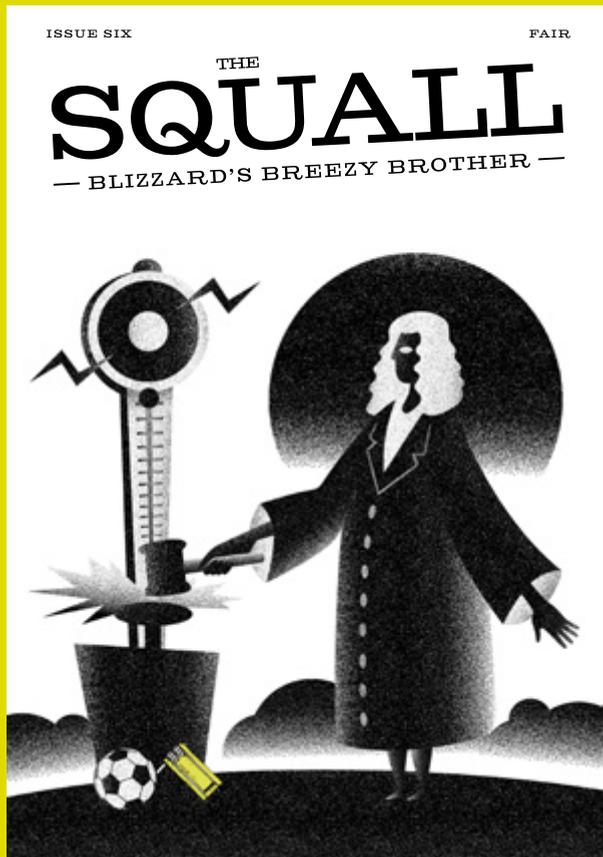
Cultural factors certainly intervene in our interpretations of fair play. "It's in the nature of football that things are done differently in different countries," writes Gianluca Vialli (with Gabriele Marcotti) in *The Italian Job*, and fair play, like a raw material or a commodity, can be exported or imported. Take the tactical foul, once known as the professional foul, which, according to Vialli, is "something imported into the English game."

Stopping one's opponent by intentionally committing an act banned by the rules to gain a strategic advantage is obviously not fair play. The practice used to be described as cynical, despicable even. Again according to James W Keating, anyone who does not abide by the rules, hoping not to be found out, is not giving an example of fair play and their victory is not to be considered 'honourable'. Today players are willing to 'take a yellow card for the team'. It's a cost they pay to avoid paying the higher one of conceding a goal. Footballers may not need to be philosophers, but they do have to be cost-benefit analysts.

The tactical foul, a case of non-cooperation that bends the rules to slacken restrictions on the means accepted and acceptable to achieve victory, is now part of the world game. But another practice, simulation, also an intentional distortion of the rules, hence not an example of fair play, has yet to be universally accepted. In some cultures, divers are seen as playing to win, in others they are branded as cheats. Conceptions have evolved

according to time and place, and globalisation may have brought a degree of homogenisation. But it's likely that fair play will always mean different things to different people. Today it's arguably more talked about than practised.

I began with Juventus and I'll end with Juventus. Playing for them in a Turin derby in 1957, John Charles clashed heads with the Torino defender Ivo Brancaleoni and sent him crashing to the ground, together with the goalkeeper Vincenzo Rigamonti. Instead of scoring the open goal, Charles kicked the ball out of play and went to the aid of his opponents. The gesture has gone down in Italian football folklore as the height of fair play. Commenting on the episode two decades later, Michael Parkinson said, "Even in those days, it was a remarkable act of sportsmanship. Nowadays he would be bollocked by his manager, derided by his fans and lampooned in the media for doing such a silly thing." Maybe, but it's likely that Charles's captain, who just happened to be Boniperti, bollocked him even then. 🗨️



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# THE WORLD'S FAIR

How a small team  
from Canada took  
gold in the football at  
the 1904 Olympics

*BY LUKE ALFRED*

*The ferris wheel at the 1904  
St. Louis World's Fair.*



**In early November 1904, a football team from Galt in Ontario climbed aboard a train bound for St Louis, Missouri. Expectations within Galt FC contingent were high, so high, in fact, that they were joined for their 1100km journey on the Grand Trunk Railway by the Galt town mayor, Mark Munday, and an entourage of 50 or so fans.**

Another Canadian team, from the University of Toronto, might also have made the trip to St Louis, except that in early November they lost on aggregate to the men from Galt in a two-legged friendly. They weighed up the options, realised that Galt were probably the better team and reckoned that an expensive trip across the border wasn't worth the trouble. They would be better advised to apply themselves to their studies.

Little did they know it then, but with a restricted field in St Louis they might well have done better than they thought. Unwittingly, the University of Toronto's football team had bumbled down one of history's heavily wooded branch lines.

Galt FC were less timid than the boys across in Toronto. They weren't Canadian champions that year, but had been in each of the the three years before that. By now they were widely acknowledged as a pedigree side with a reputation which extended well beyond Ontario's borders. Their team contained stars of the Canadian game in skipper John Gourlay, a rousing motivator and something of a tactical wizard at right-back, the keeper Albert Linton and barnstorming centre-forward, Alexander Hall, whom Galt had recruited from the Toronto Scots.

Galt's round trip on the Grand Trunk cost \$10.70 and the train's carriages were festooned in banners, flags and red and white bunting – the club colours. It promised to be a stupendous adventure indeed.

The team from Galt were travelling to St Louis because St Louis was the third city after Athens (1896) and Paris (1900) to host an Olympic Games. The St Louis fathers had held off a bid by Chicago to host the Games, with their hand strengthened by the fact that the Games ran concurrently with the 1904 World's Fair, sometimes called the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition.

In 1803, the United States had purchased a thick swathe of formerly French territory, running from Montana in the north to Louisiana in the south. The Americans' maths wasn't without its idiosyncrasies but in 1904 it was decided to celebrate the centenary of the purchase – and so the St Louis World's Fair was born.

Although the World's Fair put on sporting events of its own (some marginal, such as "Anthropology Days" in which indigenous people recruited from the Fair's international villages went mud-slinging and greased-pole climbing) they didn't compare with the Olympics' more conventional roster. Here athletes sprinted, ran middle distance and jumped water traps in the steeplechase. Swimmers swam in a hastily dug pond. Baseball and basketball were both featured as demonstration sports, the category football had found itself in Paris four years previously.

In St Louis, though, football was accorded status at the top Olympic table. Across the world, the sport was growing quicker than you could say "Alphonso Davies". To neglect it was tantamount to burying your head in the sand.

The cost of trans-Atlantic travel proved to be prohibitive for the European and British teams, however, and Galt found themselves as one of only three sides in a restricted Olympic field. Travel expenses weren't an issue for the other two competitors, because both were from St Louis itself. St Rose Parish and Christian Brothers College (CBC) were on their home patch playing in front of their home fans. From their perspective, the jackpot of a gold medal wasn't inconceivable – although they would need to get past the redoubtable Galt FC and their little army of travelling support first.

Sometimes called the 'Manchester of Canada', Galt (now Cambridge) was a mill and manufacturing town on the Grand River. Over the years it had attracted thousands of Scottish immigrants and the town's football club reflected both the Canadian and Scottish facets of the local population. Take Linton, for example, a machinist born in Scotland, or Hall, who was born in Aberdeen and raised in Peterhead in the far east of Scotland in 1883.

Football was the 1904 Games' last event and took place in the second half of November. All four matches (more on this in a minute) were played at St Louis's Francis Field, part of the city's Washington University campus. It was cold in November and clearly Galt took time to find their feet, because the

first 20 minutes of their opening game against St Louis' Christian Brothers College with the brothers John, Charles and Thomas January in their midst, remained scoreless.

At this point, reports of the game vary. Some say that a half at the 1904 Olympics was 30 minutes long, while others insist it was the full 45 minutes. This aside, Galt put their hesitancy and early nerves behind them to rack up a 4-0 half-time lead. With this healthy cushion behind them, they scored three more in the second half to gallop out 7-0 winners. Hall, the barnstorming Scot, scored three of them, while his inside-left, Gordon McDonald, scored two.

Team photographs of the time show many of Galt's players favoured external shin-guards over their socks. Shorts (white) tended to be conservatively long and Galt's jerseys were made of knitted wool with the name "Galt" in white lettering across the chest. Hall, who was to become the best-known player in Galt's team after the Olympics, eschewed shin guards and other such namby-pamby. The team photograph shows him in the front row, arms folded. He is looking at the photographer with what one fancies is the cold, deadly eye of the born goalscorer.

Returning to Britain after the Olympics, Hall turned professional, playing irregularly for Newcastle United, Dundee and Motherwell before finding his level at Dunfermline Athletic in the Scottish Second Division. In three seasons at Athletic – 1912-13 to 1914-15 – he scored 33 goals in 68 matches, a handsome return, as they finished second (to

Ayr United), fourth (with the best goal difference in the league) and sixth.

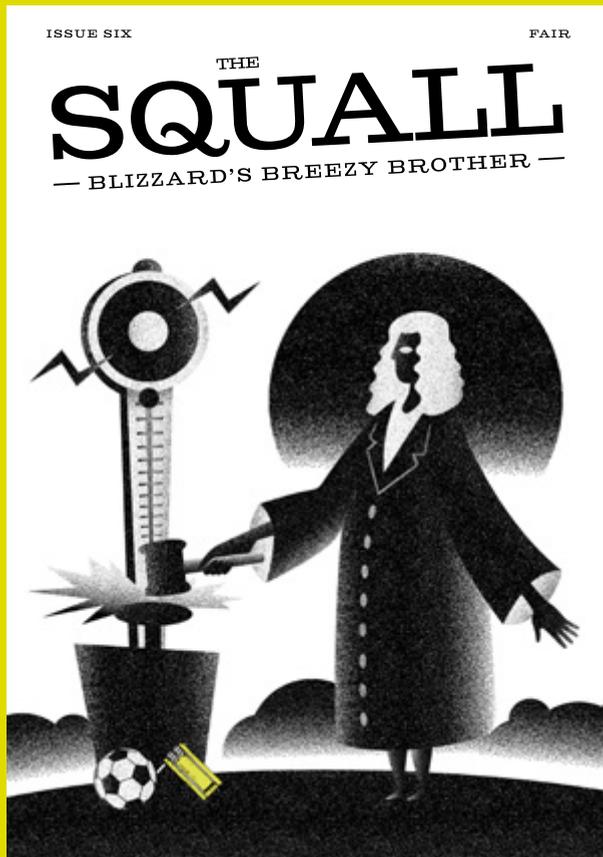
A day after their victory against Christian Brothers College, Galt played against St Rose Parish, the second of the home-town favourites. They made one change from the line-up against CBC, Albert Henderson coming in for McDonald. Galt were unable to repeat their freewheeling pyrotechnics of the previous day in the first half, and the teams went into the break at 0-0. An inspirational team-talk by skipper Gourlay changed all that, and Galt stormed to four second-half goals to take the match and the gold medal.

The silver medal match between St Rose and CBC was initially inconclusive, ending in a 0-0 draw. In the replay, however, CBC prevailed 2-0 (scorers unknown) to grab the silver medal from their St Louis neighbours. Before a crowd of unspecified number in the cold of

November, a Champions League final it was not.

Unfortunately, history does not tell us how, across the border in Canada, the silver medal match was greeted by those in the University of Toronto's football team, the very men who argued that a trip to St Louis wasn't worth making.

It proved money well spent for Galt's Mayor Munday because he was on hand afterwards to present the gold medals to members of the Galt team. They had scored 11 goals, beaten the best teams St Louis had to offer and thereby wrote a small – but intriguing – item in football history. It was more than a footnote but less than a chapter, for a brief and dizzy instant putting Canadian football at the summit of the world game, a position it has struggled to reach again. 🇨🇦



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# THE DELIBERATE MISS

Morten Wieghorst and  
how putting a penalty wide  
became the right thing to do

BY SAMUEL COX

*Morten Wieghorst celebrates  
a CIS Insurance Cup victory  
with Tom Boyd, 2000*



**In October 2000, the Denmark and Celtic midfielder Morten Wieghorst was struck down by a virulent disease which left him on a ventilator and battling for his life in a Glasgow hospital. A professional athlete in his physical prime, he had gone from throwing *rabonas* in front of packed Parkhead stands to staring up at a hospital ceiling, trapped in a body unable to breathe without assistance.**

Just two and a half years later, facing pandemonium in a steamy Hong Kong stadium, Wieghorst would be the calm rock amidst the breaking tempestuous storm of fans and opposition players. Faced with a technically correct but ethically wrong decision and a sporting event descending into chaos, the Denmark captain would draw upon all the challenges he had overcome to rise above the win-at-all-costs mentality sport so often demands and engage in a remarkable act of fairness which collapsed borders and boundaries. These two moments embody the path – the trials, the tribulations and the triumphs – of Morten Wieghorst.

Wieghorst's footballing journey began at Lyngby, a small club from northern Copenhagen. The club's second league triumph in 1992 would enable the precocious young midfielder to showcase himself on the continental stage in the first season of the newly rebranded Champions League. Although Lyngby were ruthlessly despatched by Rangers over two legs, a young Wieghorst was so impressed by the fervent Scottish support he promptly secured a move to Dundee United.

Wieghorst still carries the imprint of his time in Scotland in his accent but he

credits the impact upon his football as the most defining: he had to become stronger and mentally and technically quicker in response to the frenetic pace. However, it would only be after a move to Celtic in 1995 that the the richest dramas of Wieghorst's career would unfold. In Wieghorst's words the stage was simply grander: "We don't have clubs like Celtic in Scandinavia."

The midfielder spent much of his first two seasons at the club battling injuries. Meanwhile, Rangers would continue winning, equalling Celtic's record of nine successive title victories by the 1997-8 season, ratcheting up the pressure on their rivals to halt them. The arrival of the Dutch manager Wim Jansen would spark the beginning of a new wave of Scandinavian recruits, Henrik Larsson being the most prominent.

However, it was Wieghorst who would arguably have the greatest impact that year, as his teammate Craig Burley has said. The Dane would play 31 of 36 games as Celtic denied Rangers' record attempt by claiming the title before crying and jubilant fans. At 6'3", Wieghorst might have been warrior-sized but he was no wild berserker, rather combining long elegant strides with delightful technical ability and, behind it all, a cerebral disposition.

Ability and success secured Wieghorst a spot in a powerful Denmark side alongside Michael Laudrup at the 1998 World Cup, making three appearances as they reached the quarter-final. At 27, he was at the peak of his powers. But returning to training after a short holiday Wieghorst would suffer his worst setback yet, a severe ACL injury.

Just as Wieghorst was finding his feet again, he would contract Guillain-Barré syndrome. Afflicting perhaps 1 in 100,000 people, the rare disease causes the body to attack its own nerves. Temporarily paralysed from the neck down and able to breathe only with the assistance of a ventilator, Wieghorst was confronted by the brutality and transience of life, learning to be “very, very patient”.

This patience was won not just in a hospital bed but during a lengthy physical rehabilitation. Celtic produced a montage video of this process, which went viral in the early days of the internet. It begins with Wieghorst starting his rehabilitation in the gym, resembling an oversized child learning to control those long legs once again. The video concludes with Wieghorst’s triumphant return to the field on 6 July 2001, approximately a year after contracting the illness.

And yet it would be yet another six months before Wieghorst would make a serious contribution, playing and scoring in a cup game in early 2002. The Dane’s experiences with major injuries had steeled him for the fight of his life and the long road back. A video montage can only provide a glimpse from the outside of a journey which turned inward, the crystallising of a personal philosophy shaped by intense highs and lows.

Despite a contract offer from Celtic on the table, at 31 Wieghorst felt he had to seize his last opportunity to play football, wistfully leaving Celtic to join a new Michael Laudrup-led project at Brøndby. This move would bring about an unexpected return to the Denmark national team. His return was against

Scotland at Glasgow’s Hampden Park in August 2002.

Sustained form led to Wieghorst’s journey turning east, as he was selected to captain a Danish national XI of Superliga players to challenge for the Lunar New Year Cup in Hong Kong in February 2003, part of that city’s New Year celebrations since 1908.

On the doubly auspicious first day of the Chinese New Year, 1 February 2003, Denmark faced Iran. With the first half nearing its end and Denmark having largely dominated, Iran’s Alireza Vahedi Nikbakht mistook a whistle from the crowd for half-time and handled the ball in his own penalty area. The referee Chiu Sin Chuen felt compelled to give the penalty kick. The Iranian fans and players were furious, with their goalkeeper Ebrahim Mirzapour on the verge of storming off the field.

Wieghorst’s head was clear in the bedlam, and he ran straight to his manager, Morten Olsen, with whom he shared an animated discussion before jogging back to take the spot kick. Wieghorst would casually walk up and purposely push the ball six yards wide of the right post, drawing applause from onlooking Iranian fans and handshakes of solidarity from their players.

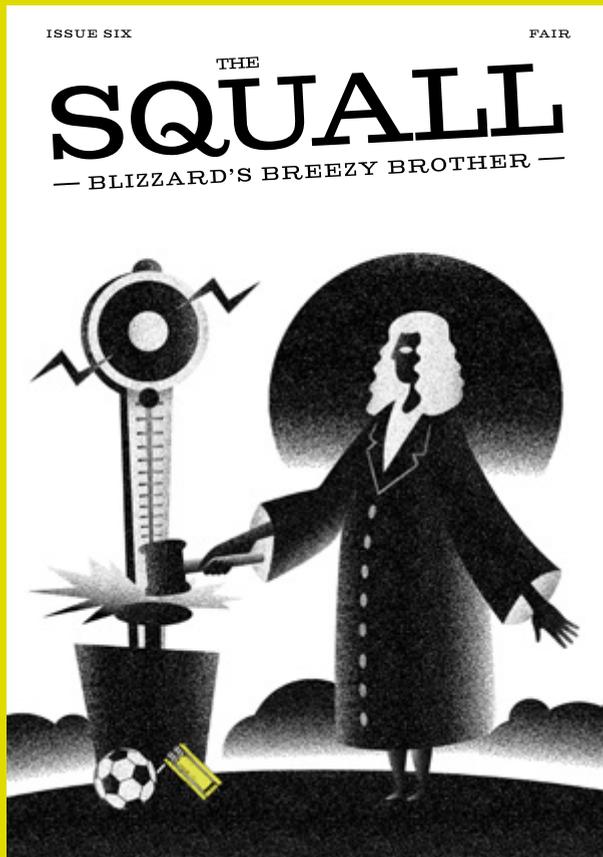
The decision would ultimately cost Denmark the match, but the game is now remembered for Wieghorst’s remarkable actions. Many think Olsen gave Wieghorst the instructions to miss but speaking after the game the Danish manager said, “It was fair play by our captain. He didn’t want to take that goal and well done to him.”

The moment transcended the tribal instincts and borders intrinsic to football and humanity. The Iran Football Federation wrote to Fifa after the game to declare, “the Danes did not win the match, but they earned our admiration,” while the Olympic Committee would honour Wieghorst with an award for fair play.

Just as both his injuries and on-field success had primed Wieghorst for the battle he faced fighting Guillain-Barré syndrome, so too had the disease and his triumphant return shaped him to be the rugged yet calm figure in the middle of the chaos at the Hong Kong Stadium.

Wieghorst, who had privately thought his Denmark career over following injury and illness, would go onto win Danish Player of the Year in 2003 before bowing out a year later.

At club level, Wieghorst, true to his path, would fight back from one last knee injury to win the double with Brøndby in 2005, retiring in May, just a month after his return to the pitch. He has remained active in football as a first team and assistant manager, passing the wisdom of his remarkable journey onto the next generation. 📖



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# EQUALITY

How a Spurs fan found  
joy and competitiveness  
in Belarus

*BY TONY RICHARDSON*

*BATE Goalkeeper Denis Scherbitski  
and defender Zakhar Volkov celebrate  
after victory against Arsenal, 2019*



**Fair and Belarus aren't two words that sit together very well. Sandwiched between Russia and Poland this unremarkable strip of central European plain is best known in recent years for being ruled by Europe's last dictator. Dig deeper and you find a region ravaged by the worst of the Second World War with a cultural identity pushed to the peripheries by Russian influence. I will add here that to Russian speakers written Belarusian does look, and there's no nice way of saying this, a bit 'yokel' – the spelling being almost entirely phonetic, making it look as if someone who doesn't know Russian has just transcribed what they've heard.**

However, during the Covid lockdown its football league was thrust into the global spotlight as one of the few to carry on. In fact, at no point have games even been held behind closed doors; although many fans have taken it upon themselves to avoid games – even including some of the ultra groups. With this being a summer league the supreme decision maker didn't waver and the league kicked off as planned in mid-March.

The league itself, on first glance, looks like a perfect example of Champions League money ruining a smaller domestic championship. The first game pitted BATE Borisov, recently regular group stage minnows, against some domestic small fry in Energetik-BGU – the team nominally representing Minsk University. The setting was somewhat less than low-key – with the inadequate 4G pitch dropped into an aptly post-Communist urban dystopia.

BATE, who beat Arsenal on Valentine's Day in 2019, were by far the better team

and despite BGU's keeper looking as if he'd only had vague instructions on how to play the game over a bad phone line, somehow the hosts ran out 3-1 winners – helped in no small part by the Uzbek striker Jasurbek Yakhshiboev (a Jamie Vardy-esque whippet of an attacker) and the creativity of the Liberian David Tweh. To help understand quite how big a shock this is, both of these players were picked off by relatively bigger clubs during the summer transfer window (Shakhtyor Soligorsk – potential opponents for Spurs in the Europa League qualifiers – and Dinamo Brest respectively).

As a Rusophile facing the prospect of no football of months and with a seismic "anyone can beat anyone on their day" shock to begin the campaign everything fell into place for me. The only thing left was to pick a team of my own. As a Spurs fan who still isn't really used to finishing in the top six I tried to find a dull mid-table team to fill the void left by my beloved 90s Spurs. BATE were far too big, Dinamo Minsk were fallen giants (they were the only Belarusian team to win the Soviet Supreme League – at a time when it was one of the best leagues in Europe) but had a whiff of fascism. The two Brest teams were rejected for being too successful (Dinamo won the league in 2019) or too new (Rukh) while Slutsk were attracting English-speaking fans, well, you can guess why.

Most of the other teams in the league were relatively newcomers, seemingly destined to disappear back down the leagues as quickly as they had risen. One name did stand out – that of Belshina Bobruisk who were frequently at the end of the "parade of clubs" as you loaded a

new game on Championship Manager 97-98, but their halcyon days of European competition were far behind them and this was their first season in the top flight for three years.

Finally I found Neman Grodno, located near the Polish border. Inoffensively mid-table with one championship play-off (lost, of course) in nearly 30 years of post-independence football. Oh, and one Belarusian cup final (won). Perfectly Spursy. Also we have the best kit in the league, yellow with green hoops, slightly off perpendicular, a manager who looks like a gangster and a technically gifted but inconsistent playmaker – the Armenian Gegham Kadymyan.

To begin with the matches weren't easily available although there were always streams if you could find them. But soon the Belarusian Football Federation decided to stream the games on their YouTube channel. This may have been influenced by other leagues coming back but having watched the Tajik and Guatemalan leagues they didn't have too much to worry about. They did take a leaf out of the Spanish league's book with all the games being shown consecutively and kick-offs tinkered with at the last minute but given the general standard of football administration it was nothing too glaringly incompetent.

The level hovers around League 1 standard, with BATE probably in the Championship and Smolevichi (rooted to the bottom) somewhat out of their depth.

My team, Neman, began slowly, unable to find the net but so found a Leicester-like formula to grind out 1-0 wins, propelling

us into a title fight. Other highlights include a couple of games being played in downpours that make the ones in Bilbao look like light drizzle. However, abandoning games doesn't seem to be the way things are done in this part of the world, much to the obvious annoyance of the local goalkeepers' union. During the strictest part of lockdown it was nice just to have a semblance of normality. Trying to explain the away goals rule to my boy (again) during the cup semi-finals being one example that stands out.

So, what have I learnt from watching one of Europe's minor league? Well, for one, you can appreciate just how great European football is for some of these teams. For BATE it's their one chance to fill their stadium and really be tested. For the rest it's a genuine shot at some sort of glamour away from the half-open Soviet-era multi-sports arenas that many of the teams use.

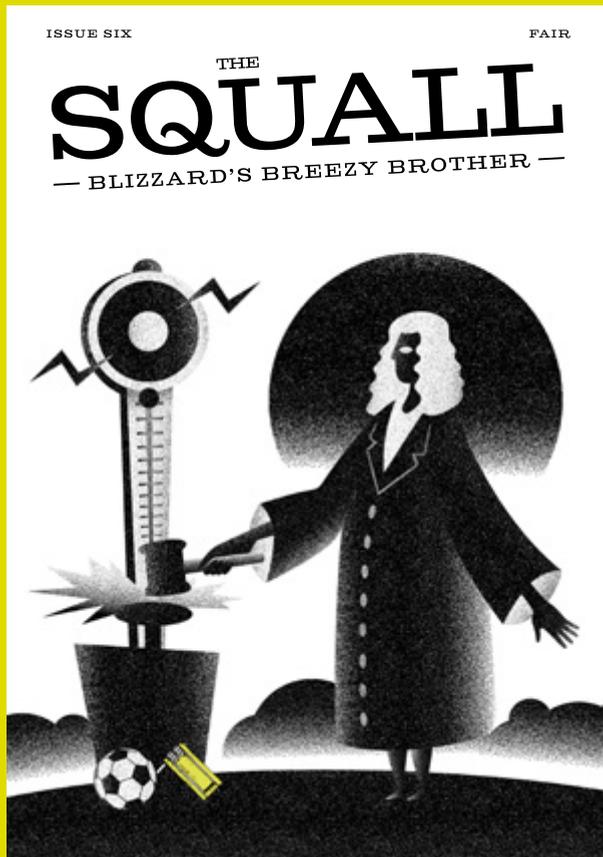
I've also been struck by the number of African players in the league. It's worth noting that this is even more striking in the women's championship. I was expecting a large cohort of players from the ex-Soviet republics but the fact that so many players – mainly West African – are willing to chance their arm in a country like Belarus is quite a damning indictment of the standard of domestic football in that part of the world at the moment.

Another key feature is accessibility. I'll admit my interest waned when the Premier League was being played every day but with the European competitions being unavailable to me (I have Sky but not BT) I've found myself more interested in the three-way title scrap rather than

which mega club comes out on top in empty stadiums.

But the key factor is that for a football league to be entertaining and absorbing the main criteria is, of course, equality. As American sports prove with their draft system the best way to sell the league

is to have as little as possible between the teams. As I write this, with 20 of 30 rounds completed, nothing in the league is even close to being resolved – even the relative might of BATE and Dinamo Minsk has counted for nothing as they sit 2nd and 8th respectively. Long may it continue. 🗨️



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# FAREWELL TO THE FAIRS' CUP

Barcelona v Leeds and  
a commemorative  
friendly in 1971

*BY TOM CLEMENTS*

*Billy Bremner celebrates winning  
the 1971 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup*



**Don Revie was nervous. The prospect of a midweek game always filled the Leeds United manager with dread. Memories of seasons past weighed heavy. 63 games in 1970 and no trophies. Only the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup to show for the 59 games the following season. For Leeds United, it was always the same. Competing on every front, turning teams over every week until they came unstuck in the final months of the season as the fixtures piled up and the league secretary Alan Hardaker, Revie's bête noire, refused to amend the calendar. In any other year, Leeds United would have turned down the mid-September trip to Barcelona.**

But this wasn't any other year. Leeds United kicked off the 1971-72 season with the ignominy of an empty Elland Road. The closure, a punishment for the crowd protests against the referee Ray Tinkler the previous season, deprived the perennially cash-strapped board of necessary income. The club needed the 30% of the gate receipts that the match offered. And there was the prestige. For this wasn't just a friendly. This was a match to decide the final ownership of a European trophy, a contest between the first and last winners of the Fairs Cup which was being retired to make way for the Uefa Cup.

The Inter-Cities Fairs Cup was a quaint idea. When it was established in 1955, it wasn't about football. It was about promoting international trade. Cities that hosted international trade fairs were invited to enter teams regardless of league position. This led to the first final being played between a Catalan XI, represented by Barcelona, and a London XI, made up of players from across the

capital's teams. The 60s, however, saw the tournament mature into an elite competition as clubs won qualification through domestic performance rather than the vagaries of international trade. This set the stage for English domination, led by Leeds United.

The success that Don Revie's Whites had enjoyed in the Fairs Cup was double-edged. Their two victories were less of a reason to celebrate than a temporary relief from the pain of the trophies that they failed to win. A consolation prize for failing to reach the European Cup or Cup Winners' Cup. The silver medals that Leeds United had accrued in the league, four times, and the FA Cup, twice, by 1971 were testaments to their destiny to always be bridesmaids. A curse that couldn't even be lifted by a Blackpool fortune teller, Rose Lee, urinating in all four corners of the Elland Road pitch.

The side that Revie had built deserved more success than the solitary league title, the two Fairs Cups and a single League Cup that they had won by 1971. Players like John Giles, Peter Lorimer and Billy Bremner were the envy of Europe, capable of completely eviscerating teams as the Norwegian amateurs Lyn had found out in Leeds's first foray into the European Cup. But it was the defeats, more than the victories, that bound this band of brothers together. Goal average denying them the title in their first season after promotion, an extra-time loss to Chelsea in the 1970 FA Cup Final replay, Tinkler's inexplicable decision to allow Jeff Astle's goal for West Brom that handed Arsenal the 1971 First Division. The collective spirit tightened with each heartbreak; somehow finding the energy to go again.

But for all of the brilliance of the players that he had assembled, Don Revie couldn't bring himself to relinquish control. He was the patriarch, the head of his Elland Road family in which rituals like Friday night carpet bowls and his lucky blue suit were superstitiously clung to. But it was his infamous dossiers that had the biggest impact. Painstakingly assembled by his loyal lieutenant Syd Owen, each dossier was a neurotic insight into every aspect of the team that they were about to play. Favoured feet, strength in the tackle, dribbling traits; no stone was left unturned in their desperation to win.

The game against Barcelona was no different, with Revie's assistant Maurice Lindley dispatched to watch them in action against Northern Ireland's Distillery in the Cup Winners' Cup the week before. The dossier led the Leeds manager to declare Barcelona to be "a great side" acknowledging that Leeds would have "to produce something against the odds" in order to win. But Revie had, not for the first time, overestimated the strength of his opponents.

The Barcelona that Leeds United were travelling to play were not the team that history would remember. This was not yet the team of Johan Cruyff and total football nor was it famed for producing players as it would with La Masia and Guardiola. Indeed, the club that Rinus Michels walked into at the start of the 1971-1972 season was still fighting to find its identity. Despite the decade starting with defeat in the European Cup final, the 1960s had been forgettable for Barcelona. The only silver lining, according to the official history, was that the club "increas[e]d its membership despite the

relative lack of success". Two Copa del Generalísimo victories were never going to make up for the league championship remaining in Madrid for the decade.

But it wasn't all doom and gloom; indeed, there were clear green shoots of recovery as the 60s became the 70s. In opposition to the obvious Madrid-bias of the Franco regime, Barcelona found its voice. When Narcís de Carreras, on becoming president, announced for the first time that Barcelona was "more than a football club", a popular chord was struck. When Vic Buckingham, Michels's predecessor as manager, insisted on a flamboyant and expressive approach to games, Carreras's words found an expression on the pitch. Added to that, he established the link between Catalonia and Ajax. One that not only led to his replacement by Michels but would eventually lead to the Cruyff revolution both on and off the pitch.

All of this meant, ultimately, that the Barcelona team that took to the field against Leeds was one in transition. Trained in the Buckingham way and with players like Rexach, Rife and Asensi who would form the backbone of the La Liga winning team, but missing players like Cruyff and Neeskens who would make it immortal. A good side but not a great side.

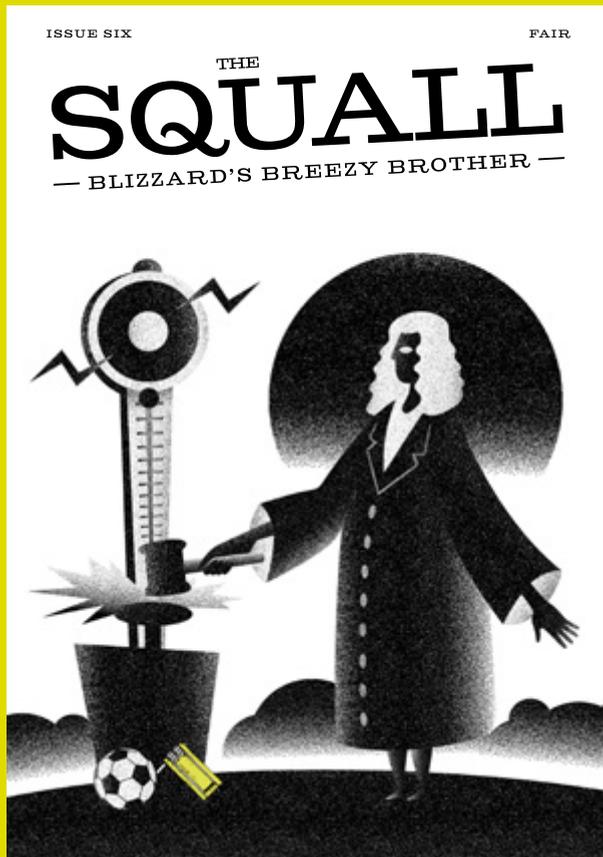
It was a much stronger side, however, than the one that Revie was able to put out. An injury crisis and fixture congestion – this game was one of ten that Leeds would play in September – meant that first-choice players like Allan Clarke, Eddie Gray and Terry Cooper were unable to make the trip. Revie was forced to field a handful of reserves in a game that should have been a crowning moment for

the club that he had built. Stars like Giles and Lorimer lined up alongside perennial reserves Rod Belfitt, Nigel Davey and, making his only appearance for Leeds United, Chris Galvin. "It could have been a real classic if we had had our full side out," said Revie before kick-off, waving the white flag.

The makeshift Leeds side did their manager proud, however, matching their hosts blow for blow in the early parts of the game. Despite it being essentially an exhibition, challenges were fierce and the referee was forced to speak to both sets of players before half-time. Barcelona were rewarded for their first-half superiority soon after the restart with a well-worked goal from Teófilo Dueñas. Although a debutant Joe Jordan soon equalised for Leeds, they were unable decisively to shift the momentum of the match away from their hosts and, in the 84th minute, Dueñas added his second to seal the title for Barcelona.

The success afforded Michels the time that he needed to build a team in his image. As for Leeds, their heroic defeat encapsulated much about the Revie era at Elland Road. In trying to win it all, they won the respect of their opponents but missed out on the crowning glory.

When Leeds eventually returned to Leeds-Bradford Airport after the game, they were forced to comply with an early variant of track and trace due to a cholera outbreak in Barcelona. Although none of the travelling party developed any symptoms, the effects of that one-off game would eventually bite on a Tuesday night in Wolverhampton. At the end of a 56-game season, with the FA Cup finally having been secured only three days earlier, Leeds were denied the double by a 90th-minute winner from Derek Dougan. The same old story for Don Revie and Leeds United. 



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# VIVEZA CRIOLLA

How the art of deception  
became central to  
Uruguay's football identity

*BY MARTIN DA CRUZ*

*An illustration of the River Plate (of  
Uruguay) forward Pablo Ducal from  
the Montevideo magazine La Semana*



Pablo Dacel  
Fowards del River Plate F. C.

Dacel, valiente fowards del team de combinados  
ha comprendido, que  
tanto á la patria se honra  
con una gran cabeza, como con un buen pié.

**Viveza Criolla, that 'native cunning', that cleverness used to gain any advantage over an opponent whether through a feint, a dribble or the more sinister act of the dive, holds a special place in *rioplatense* footballing folklore. And perhaps nothing reveals football's plasticity as clearly as Viveza. The art of deception, as perfected by Suárez and Maradona, can be seen as graceful or cynical, its protagonists lifted as selfless national heroes by some and castigated as footballing deviants by the rest.**

In the origin stories of Uruguayan and Argentine football, Viveza plays a role that is as convenient as it is necessary. They say the game began as a mere pastime of the British elite. These were serious men of the 'sensible' Anglo-Saxon race, gentlemen who upheld a morally pure sense of self and sport based upon respect for authority and the 'right way to play'. For them, this was *true* football.

But the game's amateur spirit was soon threatened by Latin involvement. In an act of ignorance or rebellion, the children of Italian and Spanish immigrants imagined a game diametrically opposed to that of the English gentleman. With the entrance of these new, local actors, football, as Uruguayan thinker Eduardo Galeano put it, "had escaped its high window box, come to earth, and was setting down roots". And from those remarkably fertile *potreros* sprouted a home-grown style of play, a creative yet combative game practised by humble Creole rascals who, free from the firm hand of a referee, privileged fantasy over discipline and victory over fair play. For the Creole, *this* was true football. And here Viveza was born.

In true Galeano fashion, however, the story is romantic and beautiful, but not entirely true.

The reality is that football's purity had been diluted since its beginnings in the Río de la Plata. Indeed, the Montevideo Cricket Club can be credited with Uruguay's first recorded acts of Viveza back in the 1890s, after not only sneaking a pair of expert, unaffiliated players into their side unannounced, but also secretly swapping balls mid-game to their advantage. Such behaviour from one of Montevideo's oldest and most important English institutions caused a stir in the British community, with the brazen acts of trickery swiftly denounced by the city's English-language press. Whether we should thank or curse the English for bringing footballing Viveza to Uruguay is a dilemma for another time. But what cannot be denied is that the Creole, as they did with other facets of the game, took the art of deception and made it their own.

And it was through River Plate (the now-extinct Uruguayan River Plate) where a truly national style came to the fore. In the words of one Uruguayan journalist, the club was an oddly harmonious grouping of "toffs, ruffians, intellectuals, gentlemen who exercised and others who had stopped, proletariats of various trades and idlers who did not want to hear about that ordinary and fatiguing thing called work." Founded in Montevideo's port area in 1902, River symbolised that masculine archetype of turn of the century Buenos Aires and Montevideo. "He is an elegant seducer whom no woman is able to resist," the Argentinian anthropologist Eduardo Archetti wrote of the

*Compadrito*. "He has been in prison and is admired because of his courage, his physical strength, and capacity to cheat where necessary." So River, with their own footballing *compadritos*, brought a distinctively loud and combative game to Uruguayan football, overcoming the traditional powers of Nacional and CURCC (from 1914 Peñarol) to win the 1908, 1910, 1913 and 1914 league titles.

And they did it with their own brand of Viveza, deployed most notably by Pablo Dacal and Vicente Módena. Playing on the right side of the front five, the two made deception an art-form, outwitting opponents with trickery on and off the ball. While the famous duo conquered the local game through their movement, combination play and individual dribbling, it was Dacal's extraordinary Viveza that became a thing of legend. One could safely describe Pablo Dacal as the original Luis Suárez, and not just for his beginnings at Nacional before an eventual move to River. A skilful but ruthless competitor, the inside-right sought any advantage he could with little regard for the game's moral conventions, his penchant for diving earning the scorn of opposition fans and players alike.

A typical reaction to Dacal's antics came in October 1915 when he, now back at Nacional, faced the tough Central FC. Born in the humble Montevideo barrio of Palermo, Central were led by Juan Delgado, Uruguay's black footballing pioneer and heir to John Harley in the coveted position of centre-half. A truly complete midfielder, Delgado was defensively solid, elegant and precise in the pass, rarely if ever deploying the violence so prevalent in that era. In

line with his clean reputation, Delgado possessed a more refined Viveza – the art of talking – his jokes and comments as much of an impediment to opposition attackers as his perfectly timed tackles.

And on that spring afternoon in 1915, Delgado's expert play was again on show as he frustrated Nacional's attack with ease. So with the game at 0-0 deep into the second half, Dacal, increasingly desperate and once again facing the impassable centre-half, took a tumble inside the area which was ignored by the referee. This time, however, Delgado was in no joking mood. Clearly offended by such an audacious, foolish attempt against his clean reputation, the normally cool Delgado stood over Dacal, still sitting on the ground. "Look, Gallego. If you dive for a penalty again we're going to stomp on your head. We will."

Yet Dacal's most significant act of Viveza had taken place for Uruguay against Argentina a few years earlier. The *Clásico rioplatense* was crucial to Uruguay's footballing identity, with Argentina representing that close Other from which they constantly sought to differentiate themselves. The image of a powerful, imposing Buenos Aires stretched back to colonial times, consuming the Uruguayan psyche to the point where victory – no matter how improbable – became a national obsession. Until the 1910s Argentina remained the dominant footballing force in the region. The country's superiority was epitomised by the legendary Alumni of the Browns, two of whom, cousins Jorge and Juan, were not only pillars of the *Albiceleste* defence, but also carried an aura of the 'right way to play', a legacy of the Buenos Aires English High School.

But Uruguay seemed to be closing the gap on their neighbours, thanks largely to the exciting wing play of Dacal and Módena. And this occasion was no different. With the game at 0-0, a Uruguayan forward – most likely Módena – went on a mazy run down the right-hand side before whipping in a cross. Waiting in the area was Juan Brown who, in a seemingly perfect position to intercept the ball, suddenly heard his cousin Jorge call out from behind:

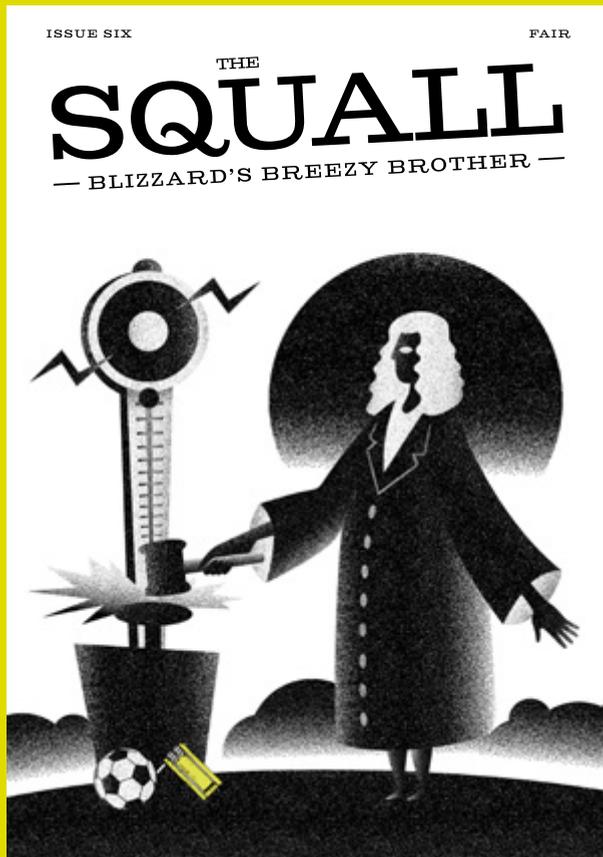
*'Dejala Juan!' Leave it, Juan!*

Hearing that unmistakable, reassuring voice, Juan duly let the ball pass. But when he turned his stomach dropped when he realised it wasn't Jorge, but little Pablo Dacal with the ball at his feet. The horrified Argentinians scrambled to reclaim the ball, but there was nothing they could do. Dacal, who could hardly believe his impersonation actually worked, quickly slotted the ball past the goalkeeper Wilson before wheeling away in celebration.

The Argentinians were livid. The first reaction came from Jorge Brown, who scolded his younger cousin for such a ridiculous error. Juan himself went after

Dacal in search of his own summary justice. "I'm going to kill him!" he screamed at Uruguay's centre-forward José Piendibene in clearly flustered Anglo-Hispanic. "You see what he does to us!" Dacal's cheeky act had paid off. Sensing Argentina were rattled, the Uruguayans took charge and went on to secure a victory that would usher in an era of unrivalled international dominance.

Despite their advanced 'scientific' combination game, Uruguay's rise to the top of world football has remained a romantic story of a small, plucky nation overcoming all odds to defeat more powerful opponents. Viveza remains critical to not only that story, but also the subsequent decline of the Uruguayan game. With the passing of time, the art of deception became absorbed into the now-famous national trait of *Garra Charrúa*, that determination – or rather desperation – to live up to those famous successes of so long ago. Uruguayan Viveza is now less about freedom and creativity than it is about the weight of expectation. Indeed, in a small country where football is everything, and success is tied so intimately to national sentiment, victory must be sought by any means necessary. 🇺🇾



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# THE INSIDE MAN

How Alan Sugar benefited  
from the birth of the  
Premier League

*BY EWAN FLYNN*

*Alan Sugar announces his intention  
to buy Tottenham Hotspur, 1991*



**The opulent foyer of the Royal Lancaster Hotel by London's Hyde Park is thronging with people. Above the noise, a gruff, East End-accented voice barks into a telephone: "Get your fucking arse round here and blow them out of the water." The phone is slammed down.**

It is 18 May 1992 and Alan Sugar, the chairman of Tottenham Hotspur and the electronics company Amstrad (Alan Michael Sugar Trading), has a lot riding on the vote about to take place in one of the hotel's conference rooms. Sugar, along with his counterparts from England's 21 other top-flight football clubs, is here to decide whether the television contract for the new Premier League will go to the terrestrial channel ITV or the satellite broadcaster BSKyB. If BSKyB wins the day, Amstrad will have millions of new orders for their set-top boxes and dishes ahead of the inaugural Premier League season which kicks off in less than three months.

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On the receiving end of Sugar's call was BSKyB's chief executive Sam Chisholm, who knew full well that the stakes were win or bust. In 1990 Rupert Murdoch had brought Chisholm to England from Australia to save his failing satellite project. So desperate was the situation – Sky TV, as it was then called, was losing £14million per week – Chisholm jetted in before the necessary work permits had been granted. When you're part of the Murdoch empire, such wrinkles get smoothed out in double-quick time.

Murdoch had launched Sky in a hurry in 1988, having seen rival British Satellite Broadcasting (BSB) awarded the licence

to become the UK's first satellite broadcaster. BSB had committed to meeting the UK government's high-quality D-MAC transmission standards in its successful bid, which would require time to develop expensive new technology and the launch of a new satellite into orbit. Sky could get to market first by transmitting its channels using lower quality existing PAL technology via the Luxembourg-based satellite company, Astra. Murdoch figured correctly that demand for satellite television in British households would not be sufficient to support two broadcasters. If Sky was on the air with subscribers already signed up, BSB would be fighting a losing battle.

Murdoch needed someone with a track record for producing home electronics quickly and at low cost. In his autobiography *What You See Is What You Get* Alan Sugar recalls receiving a call from Murdoch at Amstrad's office. His excitement grew by the second as Murdoch laid out his plans for Sky to start broadcasting in early 1989. This came at an auspicious time for Sugar. During the 1980s, Amstrad had established itself as the UK's leading manufacturer of home computers. But by the end of the decade, things had gone awry. Faults with a new model and increased competition had seen Amstrad's share price plunge. Sugar needed something new to sell.

"I knew immediately it [satellite TV] would be a great consumer product - the punters would go bananas for an extra sixteen channels if it could be done cheaply ... I told Rupert I was so confident about this that he didn't need to underwrite any orders."

But soon after Sky went live both men realised they had a sizeable problem – Sky’s programming gave viewers little to go bananas about. With viewing numbers low, advertisers held back. The only subscription Sky could look to for revenue was its movie channel, but securing film rights was costly. Worse still, in spring 1990 their rival BSB, also offering movie subscriptions, hit viewers’ screens via their non-Amstrad ‘Squariel’ receiver. With both broadcasters haemorrhaging money, a merger soon became inevitable. Although the new name BSkyB was agreed on, Sky, using Murdoch’s deep pockets, had bought the competition.

Murdoch had gambled that Margaret Thatcher’s government would turn a blind eye to his latest acquisition, which appeared to flout monopolies and mergers regulations. Murdoch had form; less than a decade earlier he’d been allowed to add the *Times* and *Sunday Times* to his News International stable alongside the *Sun* and *News of the World*. These papers had championed Thatcher ever since. Murdoch recalls broaching the satellite merger with Thatcher. She congratulated him on providing the UK with Sky News, “the only unbiased [television] news in the UK”.

Having inherited the vast losses accrued by both Sky and BSB, the new BSkyB, over £2 billion in the red, needed something more than the government’s ideological well wishes. Whispers circulated that the sinking BSkyB could even take News International down.

Sam Chisholm had a plan to save Sky: a sports subscription channel. Chisholm’s reputation was forged at Australia’s

Channel 9, owned by the media mogul Kerry Packer. Channel 9 had established itself as Australia’s most popular station by luring some of the world’s greatest cricketers to World Series Cricket, a breakaway competition. Chisholm knew only top-flight English football would move the needle when it came to securing subscribers for BSkyB. Football alone offered Murdoch salvation.

Summer 1991 proved pivotal in the history of the English game. The ‘Big Five’ – Arsenal, Everton, Liverpool, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur – had long been discontented with the Football League’s policy of sharing TV revenue between all 92 member clubs. After all, according to the Big Five, it was only their matches that viewers were interested in. Talk of a breakaway super league, which would negotiate its own TV deal, had been rumbling since the mid-1980s. It was about to become a reality. ITV’s current contract with the Football League ran until the end of the 1991-92 season. This was the time to strike out for freedom (and loads of money). Having entered into secret negotiations with the ITV Sports chairman Greg Dyke, the Big Five approached the Football Association to sound out the governing body over sanctioning a secessionist ‘Premier League’ formed of the existing first division clubs. The FA, believing a streamlined 18 team top-flight would benefit the England national team, gave its blessing, making this public in its ‘Blueprint for Football’ published early in 1991.

But the Football League was not willing to lose its star attractions without a fight. In June the FA was forced to go to the High Court to establish the Premier

League's right to depart with only six months' notice, rather than the three years enshrined in the Football League's statutes. The FA Premier League was on its way (although the FA prefix in the title would later be dropped, as would the commitment to reducing the league to 18 teams). Sam Chisholm and BSkyB watched on with interest. So did Alan Sugar.

Meanwhile, one of the Big Five had fallen on hard times. Midland Bank was threatening to call in the £11million it was owed by Tottenham Hotspur. Only a loan, secured with the help of Robert Maxwell, prevented Barcelona repossessing Gary Lineker after the second instalment of his transfer fee had gone unpaid. Spurs desperately needed a sugar daddy.

Alan Sugar claims in his autobiography that he has "no idea" what prompted him to buy Tottenham Hotspur in June 1991, for an initial investment of around £3million. Sugar does explain that his affinity for Tottenham dates back to childhood when his father and uncle would regularly take him to White Hart Lane. Although this sits rather awkwardly with the recollection of Irving Scholar, Sugar's predecessor as Spurs chairman, that when asked a question about Tottenham's glorious double-winning season of 1960-61, Sugar replied "Double? What Double? Is that something from the 1950s?"

Perhaps Sugar's motivation was more apparent to those visitors to Sam Chisholm's office at BSkyB who heard Sugar's hectoring voice down the line complaining about the number of unsold satellite dishes piling up in the Amstrad warehouse.

Sugar made no secret that his friends at BSkyB had a keen interest in him investing in one of the football clubs whose vote would determine the destination of the Premier League television contract. He later told the *Times* how "Rupert rang me up one day and said, 'What's going on with this football club you are thinking of buying?'"

The 22 clubs who assembled at the Royal Lancaster were already in possession of both BSkyB and ITV's bids for the Premier League contract. The Premier League chief executive Rick Parry had requested they be submitted the night before. As club officials entered the hotel, Trevor East from ITV Sport handed them envelopes containing an improved £262million offer. BSkyB was in danger of losing this must-win contest. Alan Sugar made a beeline for the telephone to warn Chisholm of this potential disaster. Chisholm called New York, where it was 4am, to wake Rupert Murdoch. He needed consent to bid whatever it took. Murdoch agreed, £304million ought to get the job done. Under Premier League rules the winning bid would need the support of at least three-quarters of the 22 clubs. BSkyB's strategy had been to lobby those outside the Big Five. The very term needled the other clubs. ITV promised the Big Five that they would show more of their matches throughout the five-year contract and assumed that where they went enough of the other clubs' votes would follow.

When wargaming how the vote would play out, ITV had not counted on Alan Sugar. Before the ballot, Sugar explained Amstrad's partnership with BSkyB represented a potential conflict

of interests and therefore suggested Tottenham abstain. When overwhelmingly those clubs outside the Big Five decided that Spurs should be allowed to vote, doubtless in the knowledge that Sugar would go for BSkyB – the more lucrative offer for them, Sugar withdrew his offer of abstention. If that was his strategy all along, it played out beautifully. Two clubs, Chelsea and Crystal Palace, did abstain. Of the remaining 20, 14 including Tottenham went for BSkyB, six for ITV. BSkyB had received precisely the number of votes it needed to secure the ‘democratic majority’ required under Premier League rules. There had been no margin for error. It was Alan Sugar’s vote that won it.

So began what Sam Chisholm called the “greatest corporate romance of all time” between BSkyB and the Premier League. Those football fans who could afford a subscription scrambled for an Amstrad dish to watch Sky’s much-heralded “whole new ball game”. Sky’s fortunes quickly turned. By 1994 BSkyB announced profits of £93million; later that year the company was floated with a valuation of £4.4billion.

When in 1996 it was time to vote for the next TV contract, Alan Sugar again went into bat for Sky. His relationship with Chisholm flourished to the extent that when Chisholm eventually left Sky in 1997, Sugar offered him a place on

the Tottenham board. Sugar has since described his tenure as Tottenham chairman as his life’s ‘wasted’ decade. It’s worth noting, however, that thanks to the success of the Premier League he was able to cash out his shares in the club for a reported £47million. Not a bad return on his initial investment. By 2007 Alan Sugar was ready to sell Amstrad. BSkyB was accounting for three-quarters of Amstrad’s revenue. Sugar asked James Murdoch – by then in charge of BSkyB – whether he might be interested. “Then I pulled out what I considered my final trump card ... he [James] just might want to run the idea past his dad.” A deal of £125million was agreed. As Sugar explains: “It was Rupert’s final gesture, as payback for the effort I’d contributed to BSkyB’s fantastic success story.”

Was it such a result for football fans? On 5 July 2020, Southampton beat Manchester City 1-0 in a low stakes Premier League fixture. City had already relinquished their league title to Liverpool and Southampton were enjoying mid-table comfort. The game, screened on the BBC under the arrangements permitting football’s restart during the coronavirus pandemic, attracted 5.7million viewers. It was a larger audience than Sky had ever achieved in the three decades since Murdoch, Chisholm and Sugar snatched the ball from free-to-air television’s playing field. 📺

# A FAIR CRACK OF THE WHIP?

A history of Alf Ramsey's  
England reign in one-  
cap wonders

*BY DAVE BOWLER*

*John Richards, centre, has a shot at goal  
watched by John Hollins, left, Peter  
Storey, Kevin Keegan and Colin Bell.*



**If one element of Sir Alf Ramsey's managerial style stands out, it's the ferocious loyalty he showed towards his players. Mick Channon, who came onto the scene late in Ramsey's England career, noted that, "Alf stuck by his players, so it was fucking hard to get into the England team. Once you were in, it was even harder to get left out!"**

His loyalty could be misplaced – a few careers perhaps went on too long, to the detriment of results – but it was the bedrock of England's greatest ever period on the international scene. Players knew Ramsey had their back, that he would treat them fairly, that one bad game would not mean the end.

That was certainly true once you were established, but 14 footballers might argue that Ramsey's famed "fair crack of the whip" did not extend to everyone. These were the 14 one-cap wonders he created – ignoring the slew of new caps named in his final game – and they stand out so vividly because their existence flies in the face of all he had wanted to wash away on succeeding Walter Winterbottom as England boss.

Under Winterbottom, the dread selection committee held sway, amateurs picking the England team based on favourites, on boosting the gate when an international was held in the provinces, as reward for good careers. Ramsey swept that away in the hunt for professionalism and for continuity, picking on merit and persevering with identified talent until it flourished.

Early on, you could understand the odd misstep in finding that blend – Ron Henry

and Ken Shellito were used and discarded in the first months. Others were the victim of circumstance – Gerry Young suffered long-term injury immediately after getting his cap, Tony Kay might have been an England regular but for his part in the betting scandal that engulfed the game in 1964, Derek Temple had the misfortune of being a winger in 1965 just as Ramsey was phasing them out.

Gordon Harris was very much a squad man, elevated by circumstances as a late replacement for the injured Bobby Charlton in early '66. John Hollins got a cap a year later in the similar absence of Martin Peters. The injury-prone Ian Storey-Moore came and went in 1970, the goalkeeper Alex Stepney was given one taster as perennial deputy to Gordon Banks and Peter Bonetti. In seven years to the Mexico World Cup, Ramsey had just nine one-cap wonders to his name, underlining the way he was going to run his team. England were, to all intents and purposes, a club side.

Comparative failure in Mexico in 1970 and the departure of hardy perennials such as the Charlton brothers, Keith Newton and Brian Labone gave Ramsey pause for a rethink. Some new regulars emerged quickly – Roy McFarland, Martin Chivers, Emlyn Hughes – but there were shades of 1963 as he looked to find a new side.

The 1970-71 season saw him give solitary caps to three cornerstones of First Division football, Colin Harvey, Tommy Smith and Tony Brown, all of whom had come through the various Under-23s and Football League representative games. Smith was sufficiently displeased at his treatment to ignore his England

cap in his autobiography *Anfield Iron*, understandable perhaps given that the role for which he had been screen-tested ultimately went to Peter Storey.

Sir Alf was renowned throughout the game for picking players and telling them, "I want you to do exactly the same job that you do for your club." Roy McFarland explained, "People ask me about the coaching with England, did I learn anything, did we try new things, but the answer's no, not really. That was very striking. Just do what you did for your club. Alf wasn't one to tell you how to play." Yet cracks in that methodology were beginning to appear, evident in the treatment of Tony Brown in 1971 and then John Richards two years later, illustrating how much damage Mexico had done to Ramsey's psyche.

"For the Home Internationals, you were away with England for a whole week," recalled Brown. "I was on the bench against Northern Ireland, played against Wales, and then in the stands watching the Scotland game – I'd had the elbow! It was a transitional phase after the World Cup in Mexico, which didn't help any of us and my debut was a game that I never really got into.

"I wasn't able to play my own game, I'd played an attacking midfield role for [West Bromwich] Albion but was asked to play as an out-and-out striker for England, as a target man. It didn't suit me. I needed to have things laid out in front of me, I was never a great player with my back to goal, it wasn't my game to hold the ball up. For some reason, he asked me to do something I wasn't suited to, and your heart does sink a bit." In short, while

Brown was closest in style to Martin Peters, against Wales he was asked to be Francis Lee.

Ironically, John Richards, a player who would have been better suited to that job a couple of years later given that he played off Derek Dougan at Wolves, came into the England side when Ramsey was caught between his faithful 4-4-2 and the clarion calls from around the country to unleash a more expansive England and play 4-3-3. But here was another conflict that Ramsey had to wrestle with – the majority of English sides tended to play with two central strikers. You had Keegan and Toshack at Liverpool, Jones and Clarke at Leeds, Davies and Hector at Derby, augmented with wingers such as Highway, Gray and Hinton. In trying to use three up front for England, rather than playing a natural wide man, his solution to preventing them all trying to occupy the same space was to shunt Richards or Keegan out wide, something that didn't suit them, particularly as young men trying to make an impression and getting frustrated at being asked to do something alien to them.

It was evidence of just how compromised Ramsey was feeling after Mexico and then England's subsequent dismissal from the 1972 European Championship by West Germany that he started to pay some heed to his critics. Times had changed, the "white heat of industry" was not enough for modern appetites that demanded flair and imagination, not least as an antidote to the grisly economic times that were enveloping the nation. On 15 May 1973, Prime Minister Edward Heath spoke of the "unacceptable face of capitalism" but for his arch-critic

Brian Clough, Ramsey was now the "unacceptable face of football".

Even as he tried to adapt, Ramsey's instincts prevented him from going the whole hog and embracing the flamboyant and, to him, fundamentally untrustworthy likes of Malcolm Macdonald or Stan Bowles that the press were baying for. Richards, while extremely talented, was also a quieter, sounder figure. Looking back at his one cap Richards is sanguine about it, which says much about his rather more stable personality: "There were a lot of good players about, so it was an achievement to get in. England played very few games then, so although you really need four or five games to settle, you're very aware you might not get them.

"I got my cap at Goodison against Northern Ireland, which was a bit of an oddity because it was their home game, but because of the Troubles, they couldn't play in Belfast. I'd got called in late because of injury to Allan Clarke – I was in the main squad of 22 for the Home Internationals but for that first game Alf had only called in 16, with the rest of us to join up later. So I went into the 16 and straight into the team. I'm from

Warrington originally, so my family were all able to get to the game very easily and see me make my debut, May 12 it was.

"It whizzed past, like a cup final. I remember feeling proud to get the shirt and then pleased to win. I was a bit disappointed in my performance, but I was stuck out on the left of Chivers and Channon which wasn't my natural position, so I don't think I did myself justice. I was being asked to be a different player and I only had one chance to do it having been called up late. I'm proud I played but I'd have liked a fairer crack at it."

Seven years earlier perhaps, Richards, and others, would have been given the same treatment as Jimmy Greaves had when Ramsey made the biggest call of all: "A fine player, but he doesn't suit my team." But by '73 Sir Alf was second guessing himself, unsure what his team should look like. Certainty had given way to confusion. It would give way to a calamitous defeat in Katowice just 25 days after Richards's debut. 🤔

# **MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS**

Grenada v Barbados 1993,  
the game in which own-  
goals made sense

*BY JON ARNOLD*

**Football is a simple game. No, no, this isn't the bit about the Germans. It's just the truth. One team attacks the other's goal while it defends its own. The other does the same. Don't use your hands, don't be overly physical and that's pretty much it.**

But what if you subvert those codes. What if instead of a goal being worth one, you made it worth two at certain points of a match? And what if instead of defending your goal, you needed to defend both?

The idea of the Caribbean Football Union in January of 1994 wasn't to test out heady ideas posited by situationists like three-sided football, rather it was simply to spice things up in qualification for its regional championship. Yet for Barbados and Grenada, the tweak of having the first goal in extra-time count double would result in one of the strangest international matches ever played.

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The teams went into the final day of qualification knowing only the winner would go through to the Caribbean Cup, a now defunct tournament used not only to determine the regional champion but as qualification for the Gold Cup, Concacaf's continental championship, in years when that tournament was taking place.

Grenada already had taken advantage of the rule counting the first extra-time goal as two goals, scoring in extra time to beat Puerto Rico and gain a two-goal goal difference boost. Barbados fell to Puerto Rico in regular time, meaning they needed a win by at least two goals to move into the Caribbean Cup.

That's exactly what Barbados were able to do early, taking a two-goal lead and sitting the driver's seat until a goal by Grenada in the last 10 minutes to make the score 2-1, a win for Barbados but a result that would send Grenada through. For a few moments, Barbados proceeded in search of the goal, but then came the passage of play that sets this game apart and secured its place in history.

Rather than scramble for the final few minutes in search of one goal to go through, why not gain some more time and make sure the goal counts for two? Terry Sealey and the goalkeeper Horace Stoute passed the ball back and forth and Sealey then thumped it past Stoute into his own net.

This is one of the few moments of the match we actually can see.

The match is one of the handful of sporting events included in the Lost Media Wiki, a project looking to track down video clips that have been lost to time. Someone must have the tape, but no one I spoke to in Barbados knew who that person might be.

Missing from the tape we do have is the chaotic finish that followed. It didn't take Grenada long to realise that they now could score a goal to advance with a victory or score in their own goal to lose in regular time but advance thanks to the goal difference.

But Barbados had the situation scouted. Reports indicate that for the last three minutes, half the Barbados squad defended their own net, while the other half defended Grenada's. They forced

extra-time, when Trevor Thorne found the winner, putting Barbados through. He ran behind the goal to celebrate and was joined near the running track by fans, some waving flags. Clearly getting to the tournament proper meant something to at least a few in Barbados.

Was it enough to make putting the ball into their own net worth it? That's tough to say.

On the one hand, we all can agree this wasn't football, at least not the way we have understood it being played. On the other, Barbados's players weren't asked to come up with the tournament guidelines, which saw five teams including Grenada and Barbados score a now-mythical goal worth two.

So, the question remains: Who thought this was a good idea? What official put the 'double bonus' extra time rule into place and how did they not see a scenario like the one that eventually took place coming?

The answer may be lost to history. Barbados players contacted for this story would not speak without payment to a retired players fund and a former federation official who also worked with the CFU insisted he could not speak to the author nor provide any information about who might be able to provide answers.

The why of that day remains like the footage of the game. We know someone has the complete picture, but we only can guess at what it is and hope that one day all the pieces are put together. 🗣️

# **NOTHING LEFT TO LIVE BY**

The scourge of match-fixing in the USSR and attempts to eradicate it

*BY VADIM FURMANOV*

*The Dynamo Kyiv coach  
Valeriy Lobanovskyi*



***“There is nothing worse than a fixed match. You can lose everything in the world, and it’s not a tragedy, if it’s fair: the Earth will continue to rotate on its axis, and the day of victory will come. That’s what you live by. If it’s unfair, everything stops. There’s nothing left to live by.”***

The legendary Soviet sports journalist Lev Filatov, longtime editor of the weekly *Football-Hockey*, penned these powerful words in his memoirs. Filatov was the country’s foremost crusader against match-fixing in an era in which it was rampant. With influential figures in Soviet football turning a blind eye to or even willingly participating in the epidemic, it was up to members of the press to take a stand. Filatov and others did so, often at great risk to career and reputation.

Match-fixing began spreading through the Soviet football scene in earnest in the 1960s. The first acknowledgment in the press came in a 1967 edition of *Pravda*, the official daily of the Communist Party. An article accused the goalkeeper of SKA-Kyiv of accepting 600 rubles to throw a match against Shakhter Karagandy in a promotion playoff. This incident was presented as an isolated occurrence.

A year later came a bombshell report. The source was the journalist Arkadiy Galinsky, the self-styled Solzhenitsyn of Soviet football, after the dissident who revealed the inner workings of the country’s forced labour system. His investigation was published not in one of the country’s established sporting newspapers but in *Sovetskaya Kultura*, an arts and culture weekly whose target

audience was more the intelligentsia than match-going supporters.

Galinsky wrote an account of a match he attended at the end of the 1967 season between Dynamo Kyiv and Dinamo Minsk. The Kyiv side had already clinched the title, while the visitors from Minsk were still in contention for a top-three finish, a prestigious accomplishment in Soviet football. He described the winning goal scored by the Minsk striker Mikhail Mustygin as comical, with the Kyiv players offering zero resistance from a corner, letting the ball drop in the middle of the box uncontested and giving Mustygin as much time as he needed to find the net. There was no attempt at a comeback, and the Minsk side won 1-0.

The title of Galinsky’s piece, “Strange Games”, entered the Soviet footballing lexicon as a euphemism for a fixed match. The article clashed with the official line that Soviet sport was perfectly clean and fair, and for his efforts he was effectively kicked out of the journalism profession for decades. The editors of *Sovetskaya Kultura* were also reprimanded.

This “see no evil” approach became untenable in the 1970s, when the situation could no longer be ignored. The directors of Pakhtakor Tashkent, for example, were accused of offering their counterparts at Spartak Moscow a hefty sum to throw a match during the former’s battle against relegation.

The first official publicly to acknowledge and condemn match-fixing was Valentin Granatkin, head of the Soviet football

federation. He stated in 1972: "In other sports (boxing, wrestling), the cessation of the sporting battle is seen as cowardice and unsporting behaviour. In football these phenomena are becoming practically a technique. And this must be fought with determination."

Match-fixing was also on the agenda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1972. It referred to the practice as in meeting notes as "a shameful affair, because instead of a fair sporting fight, the spectators are witnesses to a farce."

Since so many of the 'strange games' ended in draws, the solution was to eliminate draws altogether. For the 1973 season, any match ending in a draw would be decided via a penalty shootout. The rule encouraged dour, defensive football. One in four matches ended 1-0; having taken the lead, teams tended to sit back, lest they risk giving up an equaliser and losing everything in the post-match lottery. Players, coaches, and journalists were all critical of the rule change.

In 1974 the experiment was altered: only 0-0 draws would be decided by penalty shootouts and shootouts themselves could end in a draw if they were all square after five kicks each. Which is exactly what happened. In the first five matches that ended in 0-0 draws, no winner could be determined even after a shootout. During a match between Spartak Moscow and Dinamo Tbilisi the fix was so obvious – the penalty of Spartak's Yevgeny Lovchev was nearer the corner flag than the goal – that the match was ordered to be replayed. But

the rule was quietly scrapped. Penalties did not prove a solution.

The scandalous ending of the autumn half of the 1976 Soviet Top League season – in which all four of Spartak's rivals in the relegation dogfight won on the last match day and sent the Moscow side out of the top flight – combined with an ever-increasing number of draws provided the impetus for further attempts at reform.

In 1977 Sergey Pavlov, the head of the Sporting Committee of the Soviet Union, announced the creation of a specific body to deal with match-fixing and forcefully wrote in *Pravda* that "in the event of a violation by teams of the moral norms, the jury [of the new body] will be able to take serious measures against footballers and their superiors, up to and including disqualification, annulment of the match result, and even banning the squad from competition."

The following season a draw limit was introduced – after a maximum of eight draws, a team would start being deducted points. Two years later this was raised to ten in 1980, which remained the limit until it was eliminated altogether in 1989.

Filatov was cautiously optimistic, but ended up disappointed. "Not a single result was annulled, no teams or players were disqualified, even though fixed matches flourished," he wrote later.

A key figure behind the flourishing of match-fixing was the legendary Valeriy Lobanovskiy, who took over at Dynamo Kyiv in 1973. His pragmatic mantra when

it came to league football was “win at home, draw away” and this would be enough to secure the championship. It was an effective approach – Dynamo won eight titles under his tutelage – but his craft had a dark side.

In matches between Dynamo and other Ukrainian clubs of the Soviet top flight, it was basically a foregone conclusion that Lobanovskyi’s side would earn three points. Dynamo would take it easy in away trips and settle for a draw, and when they came to Kyiv the other Ukrainian visitors would not offer much resistance. This left Dynamo fresh and rested to take on their rivals from the title from Moscow.

Filatov, a fierce Lobanovskyi critic, described a match in the late 70s between Dynamo and fellow Ukrainian side Karpaty in Lviv, in which the hosts had an unexpected and undesirable 2-1 lead. This led the Karpaty defenders to “escort Dynamo striker Oleh Blokhin to their goal and do not prevent him from sending the ball into the net.” Minutes later, when Dynamo were awarded an equally unexpected and undesirable penalty, Leonid Buryak missed on purpose to ensure the agreed-upon draw.

The Lobanovskyi system was denounced by some members of the press and has since been discussed by a number of players. Volodymyr Munteaun, a Dynamo veteran, later complained about feeling awful about participating in these matches and claimed to have been punished for scoring goals contrary to instructions.

The situation came to a head in 1981. An early top-of-the-table clash saw

the leaders Dynamo Kyiv host CSKA Moscow, one point behind them in second place. Normally such an encounter would not be a suspected fix. CSKA were a Russian side, not a Ukrainian one, and the match was taking place in Kyiv where Dynamo were unlikely to show their opponents mercy.

But in 1981 CSKA were managed by Oleh Bazylevych, a fellow Ukrainian and Lobanovskyi’s former teammate and co-manager at Dynamo. There were rumours that the fix was in and the game, which was broadcast nationally, ended in a drab 0-0 draw. Despite the potential title implications, neither side sought victory. Sergey Salnikov, a journalist from Filatov’s *Football-Hockey*, wrote “and so the match, that could have been an example of an interesting battle, instead became an example of a completely different sort: how to spend one and a half hours on the field, without playing.”

Supporters flooded the newspapers with angry letters. The authorities were rattled enough to hold a hearing about the match in front of the presidium of the football federation. Lobanovskyi flatly denied any illicit dealings, stating “agreeing on a draw is criminal, Comrade Bazylevych and I did not agree on anything.” But then he made the point that chess players often purposefully ended games in draws, so what really was the big deal if footballers did it – which sounded like a cryptic admission of guilt.

Nevertheless, Lobanovskyi and Bazylevych escaped any punishment and were only issued light reprimands.

Not for match-fixing, but for excessive pragmatism that led to poor football. Lobanovskyi was simply too powerful to touch.

Filatov left *Football-Hockey* two years later. Ostensibly to retire, but the ex-referee Mark Rafalov later claimed Filatov was forced out for his activism.

Soviet football was never cleaned up. The authorities never showed much political will to confront the issue. It was people like Filatov who kept the fight as long as they could. As he wrote in his memoirs: "Journalists did far more in the battle against false football than the sporting organisations that God himself ordered to fight this battle." 

# **DERBY, LEEDS AND THE EUROPEAN CURSE**

The European Cup and  
the controversial exits of  
two English champion

*BY RICHARD JOLLY*

*Brian Clough in the dugout as  
manager of Derby County, 1969*



**In his dotage, when his legend was sufficiently established that Brian Clough had no need to boast, he still did. 'Old Big 'ead,' as he had christened himself, surveyed the managerial scene, looked at his profession's resident godfather and decided to put him in his place. "For all his horses, knighthoods and championships, he hasn't got two of what I've got," he said. "And I don't mean balls!" Sir Alex Ferguson had a solitary European Cup then, and Clough would not live long enough to see him get a second in 2008.**

Clough's feat of taking a provincial second-tier club and making them champions of Europe twice will probably remain unrivalled. Before Nottingham Forest's triumphs in 1979 and 1980, however, there were his two great lost European Cups, one with his team, one with his arch-enemy's, one with him at the helm, the other in uncharted territory after his explosive exit.

The context was dramatically different, but the common denominator was the bitter sense of injustice. History was altered, many felt, by the actions of referees. Almost half a century later, Derby County and Leeds United have never won the European Cup; in all probability, they never will. Each felt cheated, that fairness deserted them in the biggest game in their history.

For Clough's Derby, it was the 1973 semi-final against Juventus. For Leeds, then under the amiable antidote to Clough, Jimmy Armfield, it was the 1975 final versus Bayern Munich. Acrimony followed each game: rioting Leeds fans caused so much damage that United

were banned from Europe for four years, even if Armfield's diplomacy got the punishment downgraded to two seasons. A rather blunter Clough reacted to a 3-1 defeat in Turin by telling the local press: "No cheating bastards will I talk to. I will not talk to any cheating bastards." Lest there be any confusion, he instructed the bilingual journalist Brian Glanville to translate it into Italian.

But either could have emulated Manchester United, the first English club to win the European Cup and, until 1977, the only one. Derby could have been Forest, but sooner. Or perhaps, if his career had still taken him along the A52, Clough, and not Bob Paisley, could have been the first triple European Cup winning-manager. Certainly there were similarities with the job Clough did at local rivals, taking over a second-division club, getting them promoted and making them champions. He then led Derby past Eusébio's Benfica en route to a semi-final with a star-studded Juventus; win and it would have been Clough against Cruyff in a battle of the iconoclasts in the final.

The majority of Juventus's side went on to be in Italy's 1974 World Cup squad. They also had José Altafini and Helmut Haller, past World Cup finalists. But they had other influential individuals on their side. The general manager Italo Allodi had a relationship with the infamous Hungarian fixer Dezsó Solti that dated back to his days at Inter. Fast forward to 1973, when Allodi was at Juventus, and the Portuguese referee Francisco Marques Lobo said Solti offered him £5,000 and a car to influence the second leg; Lobo refused and Uefa subsequently cleared Juventus of

wrongdoing. The first game in Turin was instead the more contentious.

Clough, who had not calmed down by the time his autobiography was published 21 years later, wrote: "The lousy stench still fills my nostrils when I think of the attempts at corruption. It stank to high heaven."

The substitute Haller was seen going into room of the referee, his fellow German Gerhard Schulenburg, before kick-off and again at half-time. Clough's assistant Peter Taylor tried to follow them the second time. Haller jabbed him in the ribs, leading Taylor to gasp for breath and, as he told it, the watching John Charles to tell him to hold on to his passport as "some heavies grabbed hold of me." He ended the evening apparently being arrested.

In his defence, Schulenburg had a distinguished career that included refereeing the 1968 Fairs Cup final and at the 1974 World Cup. This, however, was one of his more infamous evenings. Archie Gemmill and Roy McFarland were both cautioned before the break. "Their only crime was to stand somewhere adjacent to an opponent who flung himself to the floor." Coincidentally, Gemmill and McFarland were both a booking away from a ban. "I'd heard lurid tales of bribery, corruption, the bending of match officials in Italy, call it what you will, but I'd never seen before what struck me as clear evidence," wrote Clough. "I went barmy."

And yet Glanville argued Juventus merited their 3-1 lead; their goals were uncontentious and Lobo's refereeing of the second leg brought fewer complaints. He did send off Roger Davies for head-

butting Francisco Morini, but he had already awarded Derby a penalty. Alan Hinton missed it. Clough nevertheless remembered it as the day his beloved mother had died; in fact, he was conflating traumatic occasions and that had happened a month earlier, on his birthday, the day of the quarter-final victory over Spartak Trnava.

But arguably the disappointment of Juventus drove Clough to Leeds. So, of course, did the chance to outdo his old foe Don Revie and, as he put it, "win it better." As it transpired, he got a solitary victory as Leeds manager but the incentive to end his surprise spell at Brighton was obvious. "The rotten way we were eliminated wouldn't allow me to forget the European Cup," he wrote. "I wanted another crack at it. Leeds offered me that chance on a plate. It was too good an opportunity to miss." Miss it he did, though, his 44-day spell ending six days before the caretaker Maurice Lindley began Leeds's continental campaign with a 4-1 win over FC Zürich.

Armfield oversaw an emphatic progression to the semi-finals and then a 3-2 aggregate win over the Barcelona of Cruyff and Johan Neeskens. It was marred by Gordon McQueen's dismissal for punching Manuel Clares. It should not have been Leeds's last red card of the competition.

The hard-luck story of the final has to be framed in the context of an early assault and a fortunate reprieve. "It saddens me that I may always be remembered for the dreadful tackle I made against Bayern Munich," wrote Terry Yorath in *Hard Man, Hard Knocks*. "It's not very pleasant to

know I helped end a fellow professional's career." Björn Andersson suffered a fourth-minute cruciate ligament injury in what Uli Hoeness termed, "the most brutal foul I think I have ever seen."

Yorath was not even booked. Thereafter, referee the Michel Kitabdjian's decisions acquired greater infamy in Leeds than Bavaria; the Frenchman remained sufficiently reviled that the *Yorkshire Evening Post* revisited his evening in Paris when he died in 2020.

Leeds were already scarred by the 1973 Cup Winners' Cup final, when they were beaten by AC Milan. The referee Christos Michas was subsequently banned for life for match-fixing and, 36 years later, the Yorkshire MEP Richard Corbett called for Uefa to strip the Italian club of their title.

Unsurprisingly, they refused. But Leeds had a second tale of official injustice. Two decisions at 0-0 cost them an opener against the European champions. First Franz Beckenbauer fouled Allan Clarke. "It looks a definite penalty to me," said Revie, the England manager acting as the co-commentator. Clarke recalled meeting Beckenbauer 15 years later when the German confessed it was a penalty.

Then Peter Lorimer's typically well-struck volley nestled in the Bayern net. It was a stunning way to break the deadlock. Or so it seemed until, with some of the Leeds players celebrating with the

'scorer', others noted the goal had been ruled out. Billy Bremner was adjudged offside. Sepp Maier had to stop the Scot from confronting Kitabdjian. He may have listened to one captain, but not the Leeds leader. Lorimer felt Beckenbauer proved persuasive on both occasions. "He was held in such stature that he could dominate officials," United's record goalscorer said. "It was a goal," the Bayern midfielder Rainer Zobel admitted decades later. "It wasn't offside."

But the only strikes that stood were the late strikes by Franz Roth and Gerd Müller. Leeds would not be European champions, nor Armfield the Elland Road version of Tony Barton and Roberto Di Matteo, the conciliator parachuted in mid-season to secure European glory.

The subsequent violence brought Leeds a ban that was irrelevant in one sense: they only qualified for Europe once in the next 17 years. The eventual winners in 1973 and 1975, Ajax and Bayern, were era-defining teams on the continental stage, still two of only four to have won the European Cup in three successive seasons. Leeds and Derby were probably less likely ever to become serial champions. Rather it was the rarity of the opportunity – Leeds had two other semi-finals, Derby none – that exacerbated the anguish of defeats inflicted in dubious manner. Clubs managed and divided by Clough remain united in a sense of what might have been. 🗨️



# CONTRIBUTORS

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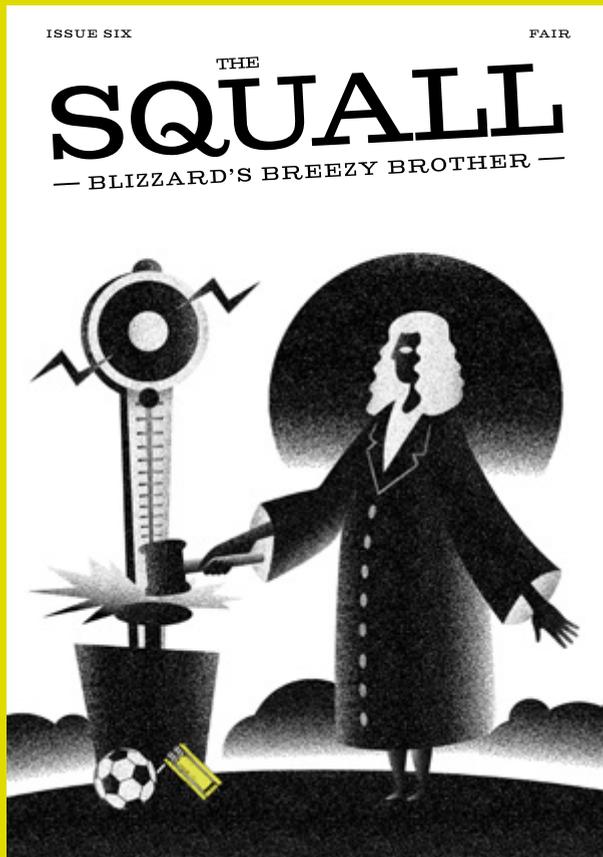
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Luke Alfred, The World's Fair

Samuel Cox, The Deliberate Miss

Tony Richardson, Equality

Tom Clements, Farewell to the Fairs' Cup

Martin da Cruz, Viveza Criolla

Ewan Flynn, The Inside Man

Dave Bowler, A Fair Crack of the Whip?

Jon Arnold, More Equal than Others

Vadim Furmanov, Nothing Left To Live By

Richard Jolly, Derby, Leeds and the European Curse

