

MINUTE WAR



United tossed final away in a haze of joy

position himself where instinct and experience tell him the ball is most likely to arrive. United's Gary Bailey was very much more the eager puppy with a youthful tendency to follow the ball, chase it and rely on his reflexes to reach it. For me, Bailey was too easily lured out of position when Arsenal scored their 12th-minute Brady-inspired first goal, claimed by both Alan Sunderland and Brian Talbot.

Tribute

I'd give it to Talbot if only as a tribute to his pleasing effort. Anyone putting this man's shirt through a mangle at the end would have squeezed a pint of sweat.

Bailey had, admittedly, no chance with Frank Stapleton's second after Brady had pulled apart the shabby curtain of United's defence.

But had he been attacking the ball in the last minute—as Jennings always does—instead of for too long watching Graham Hill's cross, he might have reached in front of Sunderland, who stamped the winner.

That frozen moment killed all

the jubilation created by United's come-back goals in the 36th and 88th minutes from Gordon McQueen and Sammy McIlroy—the second-best outfield player on the park.

It is perhaps, harsh to pile too much blame on young Bailey because throughout both teams there were faults and cracks which had a significant effect on the game.

Jordan, for instance, established what might have become a menacing superiority over Arsenal's Willie Young, but in the end his contribution was more eye-catching than effective.

Jordan's striking partner, Greenhoff, was if anything even less prominent, too often waiting for something to happen rather than making it happen.

The full backs of both sides—Rice and Nelson for Arsenal, Nicholl and Albiston for United—all relieved of the responsibility of marking conventional wingers, were consistently over-relied on to attack through the gaps the situation provided.

For tactics purists such as United manager Dave Sexton and Arsenal coach Don Howe, a lot of what went on out there



Arsenal substitute Steve Walford is grounded as jubilant Sammy McIlroy (left) signals United's equaliser.

at Wembley must have seemed naive and inept.

In the second half, when Arsenal mistakenly decided to cover behind the shelter of their lead, United, just as foolishly, went at them like a cavalry charge mounted by the Pioneer Corps—leaving themselves exposed to counter-attacks which could have killed them.

All the excitement of United's comeback couldn't obscure the fact that Bailey's knee blocked

a Stapleton header and Nicholl's boot got there fractionally in front of Sunderland.

I have to feel that United were slightly unlucky to lose but if any of their fans, influenced by superstition, are blaming me for tipping them I must point out that Jim Callaghan has a greater grievance. I voted Labour.

Pictures: MONTE FRESCO



'Taste' that so nearly went sour for Arsenal

THE Wembley substitution that nearly became a disaster was arranged the night before.

At least that was the tongue-in-cheek resolution of Arsenal's Steve Walford afterwards.

Walford went on for David Price five minutes from the finish when Arsenal were coasting in 2-0.

He told me: "I always share a room with Price. We were talking on Friday night, and he promised he would come off five minutes from time so that I could have a taste of Wembley."

"It was an amazing coincidence the way it

happened. But he was knackered... he had done so much running. I went on and I just couldn't believe what was happening. Suddenly, it was 2-2 and I couldn't even remember whether I'd had a kick yet.

Positive

"Thank goodness it worked out all right in the end. No one at Arsenal would have blamed me... but I bet you would."

Manager Terry Neill insisted: "We made the substitution as a positive move."

ALAN SUNDERLAND was resting at his Hoddesdon home last night with a swollen and painful left ankle. The man whose 89th-minute winner meant heartbreak for United will miss tonight's First Division match at Chelsea... a game that is certain to have a carnival atmosphere.

Sunderland, who was injured in a confrontation with Martin Buchan in the last seconds, said: "I've heard that Martin has hurt his thigh and is likely to miss the home championship. It sounds as if it was a costly challenge."

WHAT about the dispute over who scored Arsenal's first goal? Sunderland said: "I didn't see a goal. Brian Talbot. But it seems we both kicked the ball at the same time. I'm happy though, for Brian to have it. I got the wrong end of the stick and there's no dispute about that."

UNITED manager Dave Sexton dignified even at the moment of his deepest disappointment, refused to blame young goalkeeper Gary Bailey in any way.

"I don't fault the lad for any of the three goals," he said. "The crosses were out of his reach. Gary made some good saves and he used the ball very well. The way he has a good character. He is all right."

MAN-OF-THE-MATCH Liam Brady won't be giving his Wembley medal away this year. Last season, Brady player who wants only to be a winner gave his loser's medal to someone he described on television as "a close and personal friend." I can reveal it went to Arsenal kit manager Tony Donnelly, known at Highbury as "Golden Studs."

WHEN the Arsenal fans massed above the players' tunnel chanting manager Neill's name at the end, he made a point of reminding that coach Don Howe shared the acclaim. And when Neill met the press, he said: "Don ought to be here with me."

Yesterday, Neill said: "It wasn't a cowardly thing. It is only right that Don shares the credit. A lot of managers might look over their shoulders and be frightened to say that. Not me."

Neill and Howe are showing signs of making progress towards matching the celebrated Clough and Taylor as a great managerial partnership.

THE LEAGUE SCENE

WIN WILL DO, WATFORD!

WATFORD go into their final match at home to Hull tonight knowing that victory is certain to take them into the Second Division.

Bertie Mee, assistant manager, said: "The players are fit and our trip to France for a friendly match has relaxed them."

By TERRY SMITH

"All our matches this season have been important. We have been at the top and every team has been gunning for us. Every match has been like a Cup final."

Watford are hoping

for a 20,000-plus crowd.

Gillingham, at home to Exeter, know that defeat will end their promotion hopes. Exeter could be the key team because they also have to travel to Shrewsbury on Thursday.

Brian Godfrey, Exeter's manager, says: "We will be all out to finish with

two wins. I feel we were good enough to go up."

Chelsea goalkeeper Peter Bonetti plays his 60th and final League game against FA Cup winners Arsenal at Stamford Bridge aiming to finish his career the way he started... with a clean sheet.



ALAN EVANS, the captain of Wales, has been suspended for a year by the Welsh Darts Organisation. This follows the darts on a bid of stage during the recent international at Peim-brose Dock when Evans was involved in a confrontation with an England selector.

EVANS 19, has fourteen days in which to appeal. If the suspension goes ahead he will be excluded from the World Cup in Las Vegas in November.

GREG HANNON 'Duncairn Harriers' won the AAA marathon in 2hr. 13m. 6sec. in blistering heat at Coventry.

JOHN I. GARDNER, the British heavyweight champion, will box a five-round exhibition with Muhammad Ali at the Royal Albert Hall on May 29. He replaces Jimmy Ellis.

BOBBY CHARLTON scored four goals for the England 1966 World Cup winning side in their 16-10 win over a Thames TV team at London's White City. The match, in aid of the News vendors' Benevolent Institution, was organised by the Daily Mirror and TV Times.

SPORTS SUMMARY

STOCK CAR RACING

WHITE CITY, MANCHESTER — Final: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

LONGLEATON

Final: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

MIRRORED MASTER FINAL

Final: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE, Div II

Final: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

MOOTOR RACING

Final: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

GREYHOUNDS

WOLVERHAMPTON, 7.50: Joe Bob Day 1 (1.10), 2 (1.10), 3 (1.10), 4 (1.10), 5 (1.10), 6 (1.10), 7 (1.10), 8 (1.10), 9 (1.10), 10 (1.10).

WARWICK POOLS

Total prize money: £25,000. Pool 1: 1. M. Henson, 2. P. Smith, 3. G. Hesketh, 4. B. Smith, 5. G. Hesketh, 6. G. Hesketh, 7. G. Hesketh, 8. G. Hesketh, 9. G. Hesketh, 10. G. Hesketh.

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FIXTURES

Division One

Sheff Wed v Arsenal (7.45) ... Tottenham v WBA ...

Division Two

Cardiff v Wrexham (7.15) ... Millwall v West Ham ...

Division Three

Gillingham v Exeter ... Mansfield v Oxford ...

Division Four

Halifax v Hartlepool ... York v Stockport ...

Scottish League

Westlothian v Banisley ... Dundee v Bertha ...

Tonight's Speedway

Four Team Challenge Watches ... National League ...

Challenge Match

Challenge Match ...