

MailSport

50 GAMES THAT CHANGED SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

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HIGHLIGHTS, LOWLIGHTS, TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDIES

Sunday
Mail
September, 2016

01 Real Madrid	7
Eintracht Frankfurt	3
European Cup Final, Hampden	
May 18, 1960	P18-19
02 Celtic	2
Inter Milan	1
European Cup Final, Lisbon	
May 25, 1967	P17
03 Great Britain	6
Europe	1
Match of the Century, Hampden	
May 10, 1947	P16
04 Celtic	1
Rangers	1
Scottish Cup Final Replay, Hampden	
April 17, 1909	P15
05 Aberdeen	2
Real Madrid	1
European Cup Winners' Cup	
Final, Gothenburg	
May 11, 1983	P14
06 Rangers	3
Moscow Dynamo	2
Cup Winners' Cup Final, Nou Camp	
May 24, 1972	P13
07 Rangers	1
Celtic	1
Our Game's Blackest Day, Ibrox	
January 2, 1971	P12
08 Scotland	2
Czechoslovakia	1
World Cup Qualifier, Hampden	
September 26, 1973	P13
09 Leeds United	1
Rangers	2
Champions League, Elland Road	
November 4, 1992	P13
10 Airdrie	1
Rangers	3
John Martin Testimonial, Broomfield	
July 29, 1989	P10
11 Scotland	0
England	0
International Football History is made	
in Partick, Glasgow	
November 30, 1972	P11
12 ROT-Weiss Essen	0
Hibernian	4
European Cup, Stadion an der	
Hafenstrasse	
September 14, 1955	P10
13 Celtic	1
Rangers	0
Scottish Cup Final, Hampden	
May 10, 1980	P11
14 Scotland	2
Hungary	4
International Challenge Match,	
Hampden	
December 8, 1954	P9
15 AS Roma	3
Dundee Utd	0
European Cup Semi-Final 2nd leg,	
Olympic Stadium	
April 25, 1984	P9

16 Stenhousemuir	3
Hibernian	5
First Floodlit Game, Ochilview Park	
November 7, 1951	P9
17 Celtic	1
Kilmarnock	0
Scottish Premier Division, Celtic Park	
March 1, 1994	P9
18 Scotland	0
Uruguay	7
World Cup Finals, Basel	
June 19, 1954	P8
19 England	1
Scotland	5
Home International, Wembley	
March 31, 1928	P8
20 Clyde	1
St Mirren	0
Scottish League Cup, Shawfield	
August 13, 1966	P8
21 Hearts	0
Kilmarnock	2
Scottish First Division, Tynecastle	
April 24, 1965	P8
22 Hibernian	2
Dumbarton	1
Scottish Cup Final, Hampden	
February 12, 1887	P7

23 Scotland	1
England	1
Home International, Ibrox	
April 5, 1902	P7
24 Dumbarton	5
Third Lanark	1
Scottish Division Two, Boghead	
April 28, 1967	P7
25 Dumbarton	2
Rangers	2
Scottish League Play-Off, Boghead	
May 21, 1991	P7
26 Celtic	1
Rangers	0
Scottish Cup Fifth Round, Celtic Park	
March 2, 2011	P7
27 Celtic	9
Dunfermline	0
Scottish League Division One, Celtic Park	
January 14, 1928	P6
28 Dundee	1
Dundee United	2
Scottish Premier Division, Dens Park	
May 14, 1993	P6

29 East Stirling	0
Caley Thistle	2
League Cup First Round, Firs Park	
August 9, 1994	P6
30 Dundee United	1
Gothenburg	1
UEFA Cup Final, Tannadice	
May 20, 1987	P6
31 Dundee	2
Hearts	0
Scottish Premier Division, Dens Park	
May 3, 1986	P5
32 England	2
Scotland	3
Unofficial World Cup Final, Wembley	
April 15, 1967	P5
33 Austria	5
Scotland	0
International Friendly, Vienna	
May 16, 1931	P5
34 Rangers	3
Celtic	2
Scottish Cup Final, Hampden	
May 5, 1973	P5
35 Celtic	2
Leeds	1
European Cup Semi-final, Hampden	
April 15, 1970	P4

36 Morocco	3
Scotland	0
World Cup Finals, St. Etienne	
June 23, 1998	P4
37 Rangers	1
Fiorentina	4
European Cup Winners' Cup Final, Ibrox	
May 17, 1961	P4
38 Aberdeen	1
Celtic	1
Scottish Premier Division, Pittodrie	
April 27, 1985	P4
39 Celtic	0
Rangers	3
Scottish Premier League, Celtic Park	
May 2, 1999	P4
40 Rangers	3
Celtic	0
Scottish Premier Division, Ibrox	
April 1, 1990	P4
41 Aberdeen	2
Hamburg	0
European Super Cup Final, Pittodrie	
December 22, 1983	P3
42 Wales	1
Scotland	1
World Cup Qualifier, Ninian Park	
September 10, 1985	P3
43 Celtic	2
St Johnstone	0
Scottish Premier Division, Celtic Park	
May 9, 1998	P3
Hibernian	1
Rangers	1
Scottish League Division One, Easter	
Road March 19, 1975	P3
44 Hearts	3
Hibernian	1
Scottish Cup Final, Now Logie Green	
March 14, 1896	P3
45 Peterhead	2
Rangers	2
Third Division, Balmoor	
August 11, 2012	P3
46 Rangers	3
Celtic	1
Scottish Cup Final, Hampden	
February 17, 1894	P2
47 England	1
Scotland	2
Home International, Wembley	
June 4, 1977	P2
48 Scotland	1
England	2
Home international, Hampden	
April 2, 1927	P2
49 St Johnstone	2
Clydebank	1
Scottish League Div 1, McDiarmid Park	
August 19, 1980	P2
50 East Stirling	0
Nuneaton Borough	3
Pre Season Friendly, Ochilview	
August 3, 1974	P2

**OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME**

EUROPEAN CUP



EUROPEAN CUP FINAL
EINTRACHT, Frankfurt v. REAL MADRID
 HAMPDEN PARK, GLASGOW, MAY 18th, 1960
 Kick-off at 7.30 p.m.

50 GAMES THAT CHANGED SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

TO THIS DAY, 56 YEARS ON,
REAL MADRID v EINTRACHT
FRANKFURT IS REVERED
AS **THE GREATEST MATCH
EVER PLAYED.** EVEN THAT
EPITHET, THOUGH, SEEMS
INADEQUATE WHEN YOU
ANALYSE THE INFLUENCE
IT HAD ON THOSE
WHO WENT ON TO SHAPE
THE GAME IN SCOTLAND
IN ITS AFTERMATH

Football masterpiece created in front of 127,000 at Hampden

01

EUROPEAN CUP FINAL, HAMPDEN
May 18, 1960

Real Madrid 7 Eintracht Frankfurt .. 3

The acclaim from anyone who witnessed it was absolute. It was Citizen Kane on grass, Swan Lake in studs, the Mona Lisa on Mount Florida.

An elevation of football's art to its ultimate form and a watershed for those who thought they knew the game as they discovered they'd just gone back to the first day of school for 90 minutes.

To this day, 56 years on, Real Madrid v Eintracht Frankfurt is still revered as the greatest match ever played.

Even that epithet, though, seems inadequate when you analyse the influence it had on those who went on to shape the game in Scotland in its aftermath.

With the official attendance of 127,621 still the highest for a European final (not including the five figures-worth estimated to have shoehorned themselves into Hampden without tickets) and gate receipts lodged at £55,000, the most ever, the first European showpiece to be staged in Britain broke records – but it also broke the mould.

The 49 other games in this supplement all made an impact, one way or another, on Scottish football.

This one was more than that. It was a game-changer, a goalpost-mover. A match that saw a complete recalibration of the trajectory of the sport in the eyes of those who followed it, those who played it and those who coached it. Its influence at the time was all-encompassing, which is why it had to be No.1.

In just the fifth playing of the European Cup and with Real Madrid having won the previous four, it was easy to see why the royalty of Spanish football were worshipped across the continent.

In Scotland, however, there was a different perspective in the build-up to the game, the Germans having destroyed Rangers 12-4 on aggregate in the semis with their 6-3 win at Ibrox in the second leg a fortnight beforehand.

Anyone who could do that, Glasgow logic told you, must surely be favourites, irrespective of Real's reputation, their legendary attacking force of Canario, Del Sol, Di Stefano, Puskas and Gento or their own 6-2 semi win over Barcelona.

What they saw, however, was beyond anyone's wildest dreams – but little remembered is the fact the game almost never took place.

The German FA had banned their clubs from facing any team containing Ferenc Puskas after the Hungarian had accused the West German national side of taking drugs. Only a written apology saw the ban lifted in time for them to travel to Glasgow.

And initially Eintracht had the Spaniards on the back foot, Richard Kress scoring the opener in the 28th minute.

Once Real hit their stride, though, there was no stopping them. Alfredo Di Stefano scored two in four minutes before Puskas made it 3-1 from the penalty spot on the stroke of half-time, the first of four he scored unanswered.

Erwin Stein netted two more for the Germans but they only served to sandwich Di Stefano's hat-trick goal and add an almost mythological edge to a scoreline never matched since at that level. The overriding

HOW THEY LINED UP

REAL MADRID: Dominguez, Marquitos, Santamaria, Pachin, Vidal, Zarraga (c), Canario, Del Sol, Di Stefano, Puskas, Gento.
EINTRACHT: Loy, Lutz, Hofer, Weilbacher (c), Eigenbrodt, Stinka, Kress, Lindner, Stein, Pfaff, Meier.

DEADLY
 Di Stefano slots
 home equaliser
 and the first of a
 glorious hat-trick
 in Glasgow



“Fans were mesmerised by a brand of football none had seen before

emotion came as much from the stands as it did from the celebrations on the pitch at the end. The most commonly used word to describe what they'd just witnessed was awe. They were mesmerised, spellbound, captivated by a brand of football none had seen before and few have witnessed since.

Those who were there – dads, uncles, brothers – all talk about the game as defining football at its purest.

Billy Bremner – who would go on to captain Scotland at the World Cup – was there as a teenager who had just moved to Leeds United.

“It was awesome,” he said later. “Nobody could believe what they were seeing and at the end there was this incredible, indescribable buzz all around, like some unbelievably illustrious people had been allowed to come and visit, like Frank Sinatra had just sung to us personally.”

Alongside him that night was another callow youth from Stirling, a man who'd never match his pal's heights as a player but would go on to be one of the country's finest coaches, managers and mentors.

Alex Smith said: “We stood together in the Rangers end. We had never seen anything like it. Billy and I saw football that day we never knew existed.”

“I'll never forget the conversation we had walking away that night.

“I was in the reserves at Killie at the time, he was at Leeds, but wee Bremner turned

to me and sighed, ‘We've got a bloody mountain to climb’.

“He climbed it. I fell off and climbed a different one. But I think seeing that game inspired Billy to be the player he was.

“It was one of the biggest influences in his career because if you haven't seen the standard you want to be at, you don't know how to get there.”

Others who sat or stood, redefining their own aspirations, included Jock Stein, Billy McNeill, Walter Smith and Alex Ferguson.

Fergie said: “I was a teenager and Eintracht had just put a dozen past us over two games. Six at Ibrox! As a Rangers fan all you were thinking was this team were gods, they had to beat Real Madrid in the final. And they got slaughtered. It was an unbelievable gulf.

“It's actually one of my biggest disappointments in the game, that Manchester United lost the semis to Leverkusen in 2002, because I would have loved to have played Real Madrid in the final at Hampden.

“All because of that one game. That's how big an

impact it had on me.” And on everyone else. It's strange that with the game broadcast live you can still watch it in its entirety online, Kenneth Wolstenholme's silky tones providing the backdrop.

Another of those present, incidentally, who cited it as the zenith of the football he saw in his career, above even his iconic “They think it's all over...” day in 1966.

And it does look dated. There's no doubt the game has changed.

What hasn't gone out of fashion, though, is an appreciation of true artistry. And its presence was undeniable.

The last words, therefore, can be left to an artist of our own profession, a young Hugh McLivney, writing the final paragraph of his match report for the Scotsman from the old Hampden press box, perched so precariously on top of the old main stand.

“Last night Real flaunted all that has made them incomparable. The unflagging generalship of Di Stefano, the technical perfection and breathtaking ingenuity of Puskas, the industry of Del Sol, the deadly pace of Gento, the striking directness of Canario... to list the Real team is to chronicle greatness.”

LEGENDS
 scorers Di
 Stefano (left)
 and Puskas



BEAUTIFUL GAME goalmouth action and Real No.1 Rogelio Dominguez saves (below)

