

Date: 16 September 1992
 Opposition: Apollon Limassol
 Competition: European Cup Winners' Cup

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THE TIMES

Revitalised Rush passes Hunt's European record

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IAN Rush, the master goalscorer, who many felt has surrendered his predatory instincts in the face of advancing years, moved to within one goal of leaving an indelible mark on Merseyside football last night.

Having endured a fruitless start to the Premier League season, Rush, as abrasive, incisive and pacy as at any stage in his career, re-emphasised his majestic skills by scoring four of Liverpool's six goals against the Cypriot part-timers of Apollon Limassol in the European Cup Winners' Cup game at Anfield.

This brought to 19 his total of goals in European competition, a new club record, surpassing Roger Hunt's 17.

"It is a great honour and a privilege to beat a record set by such a great footballer," Rush said. He requires one more goal to equal Hunt's record club aggregate of 285.

Whether last night's performance will be sufficient to kick-start Liverpool's season remains to be seen. But one thing is certain. The second leg of this first-round tie in a fortnight's time constitutes little more than an annoying formality.

Although a combination of Liverpool's indifferent start to the domestic campaign and opposition of no great pedigree had manifested itself in a meagre attendance 12,769, the air was heavy with expectancy as the Merseyside club embarked on its 23rd European campaign, in pursuit of the one major trophy that has never returned to Anfield.

It was somewhat ironic that Limassol's willingness to push forward would ultimately prove a self-defeating tactic, for by committing so many players to attack, they were constantly guilty of neglecting defensive duties. In essence, they succeeded only in lulling themselves into a false sense of security.

Spoliaric, who chose to display his ball skills at a ridiculously inopportune moment, was instrumental in Liverpool taking the lead through Stewart in only the fourth minute. But for a while, Liverpool's football was far from convincing and had Limassol's sense of discipline not deteriorated completely in the minutes before half-time, the game would have continued to hold much fascination for any neutral observer.

As it was, Stewart's firm header from a Molby free kick in the 35th minute and Rush's opportunist strike five minutes later underlined Liverpool's superiority.

A lacklustre first half ended controversially when Charalambrous, having earlier been cautioned for dissent, was sent off for a brutal challenge on Stewart. Limassol were never to recover.

In the fiftieth minute, Rush swept home a cross from Walters and four minutes later he collected his third when he stooped low to head home, after Walters had again assumed the role of provider.

After Rush had claimed his fourth in the 74th minute, Limassol gained a measure of satisfaction when Spoliaric converted a penalty after Marsh had pulled down Pittas.

LIVERPOOL: D James; S Harkness (sub: P Charnock), D Burrows, S Nicol, J Redknapp, M Wright, M Marsh, P Stewart (sub: R Rosenthal), I Rush, J Molby, M Walters.

APOLLON LIMASSOL: M Christophi; A Andrellis, P Pittas, D Ioannou, D Kenny, Y Yiangoudakis, G Iosinides, M Spoliaric, D Djouras, G Christophi (sub: G Sofocleous), M Charalampous.

Referee: J Alberto Veiga Trigo (Portugal).

Torben Piechnik, the Danish international defender, is expected to complete a Pounds 300,000 transfer to Liverpool today. Piechnik, who plays for FC Copenhagen, was at Anfield last night.

"There are still one or two things to sort out but I am very hopeful that my transfer will be completed within the next 24 hours," he said.

the guardian

Rush sets record amid Anfield rout

NOTHING less than this margin would have been acceptable as Liverpool began their campaign to win the only European trophy that has so far eluded them.

Apollon were the softest of targets and Rush, who scored four, used the opportunity to break a club record. Stewart supplied the other two goals. Rush's third goal took his European total for Liverpool to 18, which surpassed Roger Hunt's tally of two decades ago. His fourth left him only one goal short of Hunt's record as Liverpool's all-time top scorer with 285 goals between 1959 and 1969.

Stewart had opened the scoring, shooting from close range in only the fourth minute. His goal allowed the Kop to settle back expecting the floodgates to open. Simultaneously it pooped the Cypriot party.

But when the score was still only 1-0 by the half-hour, with Liverpool missing chances galore, the Kop subsided into silence until Stewart headed in Molby's free-kick in the 37th minute. Two minutes later Rush capitalised on some neat footwork by Marsh to put Liverpool three up.

Apollon's coach Dietholm Ferner, a former German international, had promised they would not sit back and watch but by half-time, reduced to 10 men when the midfielder Charalambous was sent off for a second bookable offence, that is what they were reduced to.

Rush equalled Hunt's record when he volleyed in Walter's cross in the 50th minute and completed his hat-trick five minutes later, this time heading in another cross from Walters.

The Apollon goalkeeper Christophi successfully faced a barrage of Liverpool shots but could not hold a stinging drive from Rush a quarter of an hour from the end.

Apollon went home with a consolation goal when Marsh conceded a penalty which was converted by Spoliaric eight minutes from time. But even with away goals counting double it was hardly enough to make the away leg in a fortnight anything more than a social event.

- Liverpool today expect to sign Denmark's international centre-back Torben Piechnik for 500,000 pounds. He watched last night's game instead of playing for his club FC Copenhagen against the Finnish side Pallolijat in the Uefa Cup, which leaves him eligible to play for Liverpool in Europe.

Liverpool: James; Harkness (Charnock, 55min), Burrows, Nicol, Redknapp, Wright, Marsh, Stewart (Rosenthal, 87), Rush, Molby, Walters.

Apollon Limassol: M Christophi; Andrellis, Pittas, Ioannou, Kenny, Yiangoudakis, Iosifides, Spoliaric, Djouras, G Christophi (Sofocleous, 59), Charalambous.

Referee: J Tirigo (Portugal).

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	<p>BRITISH SOCCER WEEK</p> <p>Rush in the hunt for a record</p> <p>Ian Rush moved within one goal of Roger Hunt's all-time scoring record of 285 goals for Liverpool with a four-goal spree against European minnows Apollon Limassol.</p> <p>Rush took his European tally to 19 goals, smashing Anfield legend Hunt's 17-goal Euro record for the club as Liverpool put their Cypriot opponents to the sword with ruthless efficiency making the second leg in a fortnight a formality.</p> <p>The Welsh international striker, who has failed to score in domestic competition this season but grabbed a hat-trick for Wales last week, also hit the woodwork and had a shot well-saved by the keeper.</p> <p>Paul Stewart began the rout after four minutes, catching Limassol's scottish midfielder David Kenny in possession before advancing to score with a well placed shot.</p> <p>The Cypriots then held out till the 38th minute when Stewart rose to head firmly home at the far post from Jan Molby's free-kick.</p> <p>Two minutes later Rush began his one-man assault, turning on Mike Marsh's pass to slot a low drive.</p> <p>Limassol produced only one real first half chance, a Milenko Spoliaric shot that was comfortably collected by Liverpool keeper David James.</p> <p>Their task became an impossible mission when they were reduced to ten men before the break, Marios Charalambrous being dismissed for a foul from behind on Paul Stewart.</p> <p>Rush pounced again after 50 minutes, diverting home Mark Walters' hard, low cross from the right.</p> <p>Five minutes later he completed his hat-trick, stooping to head home at the far post after keeper Michalis Christophi had dived to push out Walters' curling shot.</p> <p>Rush made it six after 74 minutes after the keeper could not recover to gather a Jamie Redknapp shot that bounced off his chest. Limassol had some consolation seven minutes from time, Spoliaric scoring with a confidently taken penalty after Marsh was harshly ruled to have brought down Pambos Pittas.</p> <p>Rush said after taking Hunt's European goal scoring record that he felt proud and privileged by his achievement. Said Rush: "My dad used to support Liverpool and Roger Hunt was his hero. He was a legend here and still will be."</p> <p>Rush was wary of tempting providence by predicting that he would overtake Hunt's haul but admitted: "If I break his record I think it will stand for a few years. It's always nice to break records and they all seem to be Roger Hunt's records. To beat a player like him who was such a great player for Liverpool is a privilege. I believe records are there to be broken and someone will come along and break mine."</p>
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