

Date: 14 December 1993

Opposition: Wimbledon

Competition: League Cup

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THETIMES

Segers saves day for Wimbledon

Wimbledon 2 - Liverpool 2

(aet; score at 90 min 2-2; Wimbledon win 4-3 on penalties)

THE aristocrats from Anfield were put in their place by Wimbledon once again last night. The London club's remarkable sequence against Liverpool was extended in dramatic fashion, victory in a penalty shoot-out taking them through to the quarter-finals of the Coca-Cola Cup for the first time in their history. There were Wimbledon heroes the length and breadth of Selhurst Park, but in the end, with the clock at 10.40pm, there was nobody to match Hans Segers, their flying Dutch goalkeeper, who eventually secured a home tie against Sheffield Wednesday, last season's beaten finalists, on January 11. Segers had been prostrate with anguish when his mistake two minutes into injury time at the end of 90 minutes had given Liverpool hope in this fourth-round replay when none had seemed to exist. Rising in a crowded six-yard area when Nicol crossed from the right, he fisted the ball into his own net under pressure from Fowler and McManaman and forced his team into extra time. But then Segers came into his own. In the 95th minute Fashanu up-ended Walters to conceded a spot kick, and although Barnes's shot had both pace and precision, Segers flung himself to his right to make a wonderful two-handed save. There were numerous subsequent alarms at either end, but a shoot-out it was, and Segers was in the mood as Liverpool, an edgy and unconvincing outfit throughout, finally had their nerves fully exposed. Ruddock, Barnes and Fowler were successful, but Redknapp and Walters both hit their efforts too near Segers, and each time he managed to block. Jones had missed one penalty for Wimbledon, but when Ardley comprehensively beat him with Wimbledon's final kick his side was through. Deservedly so, too. Unbeaten now in six league and cup games against the men from Merseyside, they had dominated the first half, survived a brief Liverpool revival, and finished the stronger. Unlucky to be forced into a replay at all television evidence suggested Fashanu had been extremely unfortunate to have a goal disallowed 14 days earlier at Anfield, where they were applauded off by the Kop Wimbledon might have put this game out of Liverpool's reach by half-time. Holdsworth squandered two early chances as Wimbledon, mixing up long and short passes, continued to stretch them. A goal seemed inevitable, and it duly arrived after 18 minutes. Liverpool had already been caught out twice by Nicol's keenness to move forward from left back whenever they had possession. The gap was exploited by Jones, who picked up Fear with a pinpoint cross-field pass. Fear pulled the ball back into Holdsworth's path for him to side-foot home. Liverpool's discomfort was not helped when both Wright and Molby had to go off before half-time. The holes continued to open up in front of Wimbledon, and with 32 minutes gone Fashanu missed a glorious chance to make it 2-0. Liverpool were in obvious disarray but, seven minutes before half-time, there seemed little wrong with Fitzgerald's tackle on McManaman 20 yards out but the free kick was awarded and when Barnes rolled it short, Ruddock sent a low left-foot shot just inside Segers's right-hand post. Wimbledon had one piece of luck in the second half, Scales deflecting Rush's shot to safety, but they seemed to have secured their passage in the 75 th minute when Jones, whose passing was a feature of the night, put Fashanu away on the left. Grobbelaar could only parry the shot, and Earle scored his fourth goal in four games against Liverpool. WIMBLEDON (4-4-2): H Segers W Barton, J Scales, S Fitzgerald, B McAllister P Fear (sub: A Clarke, 102min), R Earle, V Jones, N Ardley D Holdsworth, J Fashanu. LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): B Grobbelaar R Jones, M Wright (sub: S Harkness, 26), N Ruddock, S Nicol S McManaman, J Redknapp, J Molby (sub: M Walters, 34), J Barnes I Rush, R Fowler. Referee: H King.

theguardian

Shoot-out saves Segers' face

WIMBLEDON are still stuck in Liverpool's craw and Graeme Souness's team remain trapped in the tramlines of last season's cup failures. After two wildly fluctuating hours of football at Selhurst Park last night, Neal Ardley's decisive kick settled the penalty shoot-out to earn Wimbledon a Coca-Cola Cup quarter-final at home to Sheffield Wednesday and leave Liverpool contemplating an awkward FA Cup third-round tie at Bristol City. This time last year Souness's players lost a Coca-Cola replay to Crystal Palace at Selhurst before going out of the FA Cup to Bolton. Much, therefore, could depend on forthcoming events at Ashton Gate. Another cup defeat and Liverpool's season will virtually have ended. You could not fault their determination or fighting spirit last night. Wimbledon had had the better of the 1-1 draw at Anfield, indeed had been applauded off the field by the Kop, but they were denied a victory over 90 minutes when Segers punched Nicol's centre into his own net in stoppage time. Barnes could then have won the tie for Liverpool in extra-time with a penalty after Fashanu had brought down Walters. Segers, however, atoned for his earlier error with a superb two-handed save, completing his heroics when the contest went to penalties of the shoot-out kind. The Wimbledon goalkeeper blocked Redknapp's kick and saved another, from Walters, with his legs. In the meantime Grobbelaar had thwarted Jones's attempt to knock his block off by parrying the shot above his head. The crucial kick fell to Ardley, and he sent Grobbelaar the wrong way. Liverpool, four times winners of the League Cup but now wearing past honours like campaign medals from forgotten wars, had returned to south London strongly suspecting the fates were ganging up on them. They had, after all, been this way a year earlier - same week, same competition, same round, same ground - but against different opponents, Crystal Palace, who had won a replay at Selhurst having, like Wimbledon, forced a 11 draw at Anfield. To increase their sense of foreboding Jones underwent an unexpected metamorphosis as a passer of the Platini kind, and this saw Wimbledon go ahead in the 18th minute. He found Fear with an inspired ball from left to right, and with Nicol caught out of position Fear had ample time to bring the ball inside before setting up Holdsworth for a chance which he took coolly and precisely. Thus, in the matter of passing, movement and finishing, were grandmothers taught to suck eggs. The outlook for Liverpool looked bleak, especially after they lost Wright and Molby. Yet they drew level seven minutes before half-time. Fitzgerald brought down McManaman near the penalty arc, Barnes tapped the free-kick sideways, and Ruddock drove a hard, low shot into the net through a thicket of legs. The second half proceeded along similar lines, with Liverpool attacking smoothly but Wimbledon still promising to find the opposition's glass jaw. In the 70th minute what was now a routine through-ball from Jones sent Fashanu clear, his shot slid under Grobbelaar's body, and Earle, whose goal at Anfield had earned the replay, restored their lead. That seemed to be that, but then Segers gave Liverpool fresh hope, although as things turned out he was merely prolonging their agony. Wimbledon: Segers; Barton, Scales, Fitzgerald, McAllister, Fear (Clarke, 103min), Jones, Earle, Ardley, Holdsworth, Fashanu. Liverpool: Grobbelaar; Jones, Ruddock, Wright (Harkness, 25), Nicol, Redknapp, Molby (Walters, 35), McManaman, Rush, Fowler, Barnes. Referee: H King (Merthyr Tydfil).

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BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

Segers sees off Liverpool

Neal Ardley sent Wimbledon through to the quarter-finals of the Coca-Cola Cup with the last kick on a night of drama at Selhurst Park. They edged home 4-3 in an amazing penalty shoot-out in blizzard conditions to earn a home tie with Sheffield Wednesday.

Wimbledon's hero was Dutch goalkeeper Hans Segers, who saved three spot-kicks - after conceding an own goal.

Two of them came in the shoot-out - from Jamie Redknapp and then Mark Walters. Earlier, he had beaten out John Barnes' penalty in extra-time.

Segers sent the tie into the extra period. With almost two minutes of injury time gone at the end of the first 90 minutes, Segers, under pressure from Robbie Fowler, punched Steve Nicol's cross into his own net.

Wimbledon just about deserved to go through to the quarter-finals of the competition for the first time - and extend their unbeaten run against Liverpool to six league and cup games. They were unlucky not to win their first tie at Anfield a fortnight ago and their confidence was reflected in an ebullient start, with Peter Fear cracking a shot an inch wide from Vinny Jones' pass.

In the 18th minute they took Liverpool apart with a smooth move to go ahead.

Another superb long-ball from Robbie Jones released Fear, who crossed low for Dean Holdsworth to score.

Holdsworth should have had another when he blazed over. Then Liverpool were then hit by a double injury blow as first Mark Wright and then Jan Molby limped off injured.

Liverpool claimed an unexpected equaliser in the 36th minute. Scott Fitzgerald was penalised for his tackle on Steve McManaman and Neil Ruddock's low shot was deflected off the wall past Segers.

Rob Jones, Ian Rush and Fowler all went close, but with 20 minutes left Wimbledon went ahead again as another great ball from Robbie Jones sent John Fashanu galloping away.

Bruce Grobbelaar managed to block the shot - only to see it run loose for Robbie Earle to slot in from close range.

John Barnes shot over and in a remarkable scramble Fowler and McManaman had shots blocked.

After Segers' blunder, Ardley saw his shot fumbled onto a post by Grobbelaar, before Liverpool were awarded a penalty when Fashanu brought down Walters.

But the keeper redeemed himself with his first penalty save.

Andy Clarke then missed a sitter for Wimbledon - stretching the game into the shoot-out. Fashanu, Holdsworth and Brian McAllister scored for Wimbledon, with Vinnie Jones missing. Ruddock, Barnes and Fowler were on the mark for Liverpool, but Segers saved crucially from Redknapp and Walters - then stepped up Ardley to end the drama.

Segers insisted: "Penalty shoot-outs - I love 'em!"

Segers admitted he blundered with the injury time punch, saying: "I went for it and lost my feet. Before I could get back it was in the back of the net. I was going through the ground at that moment - I just couldn't believe it."

But he added: "I didn't think that was it for us. Typical Wimbledon - we fight for every ball. We fought for that result. I was pleased with the save from Barnes, because I thought it was a well taken penalty. But I love shoot-outs. The secret is to stand up. There's always going to be one or two iffy shots that go in the middle. If you stand up with them you've got a chance."

Ardley, 21, said: "I didn't have any nerves about taking the last penalty. The gaffer had faith in me, he told me to just go out and take it - and if someone says that you just do it."