

Sports

Late Jimmy Greaves hailed as England's most lethal striker

Former England football great dies aged 81

LONDON: Injury denied him a role in England's greatest triumph, but Jimmy Greaves, who died yesterday aged 81, will be remembered as one of the most prolific strikers in English football history. With 366 goals in 528 top-flight appearances for Chelsea, AC Milan, Tottenham and West Ham, he scored more goals in Europe's five major championships than any other player until Cristiano Ronaldo finally surpassed his total in 2017.

Greaves also found the net 44 times for England and while a gashed leg stopped him playing in the 1966 World Cup final win over West Germany, his breath-taking strike rate ensured his legacy remained secure.

Only Bobby Charlton, Gary Lineker and record holder Wayne Rooney have scored more England goals than Greaves. "I had a goal drought once," Greaves used to quip during after-dinner speeches. "Worst 15 minutes of my career."

A short, quick and remarkably sure-footed player, Greaves struck the ball unerringly with both feet and was renowned for the deliberateness of his finishing, often rounding the goalkeeper to score.

"When he got the ball in the penalty box, the world stopped," remembered Greaves' former West Ham team-mate Harry Redknapp. "It was like some-

body had hit pause on the television screen. The action around him carried on, but Jim appeared to be operating in another dimension; Slower, calmer, making his mind up oblivious to the surrounding frenzy."

His 266 goals in 379 games for Tottenham make him the club's all-time leading scorer and he also scored 132 times in 169 games for Chelsea. Fifty years after his retirement from the pro-



366 goals
in 528 games

fessional game, his goal-scoring feats still rank alongside the best of the sport's modern stars.

Love affair

Raised in Hainault, northeast London, Greaves joined Chelsea as a teenager, made his debut aged 17 and had scored 100 league goals by the age of 20. Italian giants Milan signed him in June 1961 for the then significant sum of £80,000

(\$121,600), but despite scoring nine goals in 12 Serie A games, he failed to settle in Lombardy.

By December he was back in London with Tottenham, who secured his services for £99,999. The unique fee was devised by Spurs manager Bill Nicholson, who did not want to saddle Greaves with the burden of being English football's first six-figure player.

Thus began the great love affair of Greaves's career. He won two FA Cups at White Hart Lane, scoring against Burnley in the 1962 final, and netted twice in a 5-1 drubbing of Atletico Madrid in the 1963 European Cup Winners' Cup final, which made Spurs England's first continental trophy-winners.

He finished as the English top-flight's leading scorer in six seasons, but on the international scene, fortune was to desert him in the cruelest fashion. He started the 1966 World Cup on home soil as a guaranteed starter, only for an ugly foul by France's Joseph Bonnel to leave him with a shin wound that cost him his place in the team.

Greaves was fit to play in the final, but manager Alf Ramsey persevered with West Ham's Geoff Hurst, who etched his name in English football folklore with a match-winning hat-trick. "I danced around the pitch with everyone else, but even in this moment of triumph and great



LONDON: In this file photo taken on July 20, 1966, England international football player Jimmy Greaves (left) fights with French footballer Jacky Simon, during the match between France and England of the football World Cup, at the Wembley stadium. — AFP

happiness, deep down I felt my sadness," Greaves later reflected.

Greaves struggled with alcoholism towards the end of his top-flight career, which ended at West Ham. After retiring, he penned a long-running column in tabloid newspaper The Sun and

appeared as one half of 'Saint and Greavesie' in a television double act with the former Liverpool and Scotland striker Ian St John. He survived a stroke in 2015 and was awarded an MBE in 2020. He is survived by his wife, Irene, and their four children. — AFP

News in brief

Ajax enjoy 9-0 romp

AMSTERDAM: Free-scoring Ajax Amsterdam cruised to a 9-0 rout of Cambuur in the Dutch top flight on Saturday, their fourth win this season in which they have scored at least five goals. David Neres scored twice while the other seven goals were shared amongst Jurrien Timber, Steven Berghuis, Noussair Mazraoui, Dusan Tadic, Mohamed Daramy, Danilo and Sebastian Haller. Ivory Coast international Haller had scored four times in Wednesday's 5-1 triumph over Sporting Lisbon in the Champions League. Ajax had already celebrated two other big wins in the Eredivisie this season — 5-0 against both NEC and Vitesse. Victory on Saturday put Ajax on top of the table with 13 points from five games although second-placed PSV have a game in hand and boast a perfect record of four wins in four matches so far. — AFP

Chara back with Islanders

NEW YORK: Slovakian defenseman Zdeno Chara, the oldest player in the NHL at 44, has come full circle with a one-year contract with the New York Islanders. Islanders president Lou Lamoriello had been looking to bolster the team's depth since trading left-hander Nick Leddy to the Red Wings in July. Chara, who has 207 goals, 459 assists and 2,000 penalty minutes in regular-season play and another 18 goals in the playoffs, played 55 of 56 regular-season games last season for the Washington Capitals. He had inked a one-year deal with the Caps after 14 seasons and one Stanley Cup as captain of the Boston Bruins. Still a formidable presence on the ice, Chara can surpass Hall of Famer Chris Chelios (1,651) for the most career NHL games for a defenseman. Chara was selected in the third round of the 1996 NHL draft by the Islanders, making his debut for them on November 19, 1997. — AFP

Four-time champion retires

PARIS: Germany's Tony Martin will hang up his bike after the World Road Cycling Championships this week in Flanders, his Jumbo team announced yesterday. Martin, 36, won four world titles in the individual time trial, in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2016. Competing at the top level since 2008, Martin also won five stages of the Tour de France between 2011 and 2015 and two on the Vuelta a Espana. This year he exited the Tour de France in an ambulance early on stage 11 after suffering face and leg injuries when tumbling into a deep roadside ditch, having been at the center of a crash-marred opening day that saw a fan knock half the peloton down. — AFP

Former cyclist dies

BRUSSELS: Former pro cyclist Chris Anker Sorensen was killed in a road accident on the sidelines of the world championships in Belgium on Saturday, local media reported, citing Denmark's TV2 Sport. The 37-year-old, who won a stage of the Giro d'Italia in 2010, was in Belgium to report on the tournament which started yesterday. Belgian broadcaster Sporza said that Sorensen was out cycling when he was involved in a collision with a car. In his riding career, Sorensen competed for the CSC, Saxo Bank and Tinkoff teams. As well as winning the eighth stage of the 2010 Giro, he captured the sixth stage of the 2008 Criterium du Dauphine and was Danish national champion in 2015. — AFP

Inter crash six past Bologna to move top of Serie A

MILAN: Inter Milan bounced back from midweek Champions League disappointment on Saturday with a 6-1 hammering of Bologna which moved the reigning champions top of Serie A. Simone Inzaghi's side were sucker-punched in the last minute by Real Madrid in Wednesday's single-goal defeat but made no mistake this time at the San Siro.

They moved to top following a thumping win which came thanks to goals from Lautaro Martinez, Milan Skriniar, Nicolo Barella, and Matias Vecino and a brace from Edin Dzeko. Bologna sit eighth on seven points after their first defeat of the season, made no mistake by Arthur Theate's late consolation goal.

"I was worried about this match because after a game like the one with Madrid, in which we definitely deserved more, there was a bit of worry (for the reaction)," said Inzaghi to DAZN. "But the boys approached

the game in the best way possible."

Denzel Dumfries made an almost instant impact on his first Inter start since signing from PSV Eindhoven last month, replacing Achraf Hakimi who moved to Paris Saint-Germain, as Inter ran riot in front of their delighted fans on a beautiful evening in Milan.

The Netherlands wing-back, who scored twice at Euro 2020 and was a highlight for the disappointing Dutch, laid on Martinez's opener and caused havoc down the right flank throughout the match. "I'm very happy. I think it was a good game from us, after the defeat of Real Madrid we needed to bounce back and we did a very good job as a team," said Dumfries to DAZN. "I feel good, my teammates gave me a warm welcome and helped me a lot so I'm happy to be here."

Dumfries danger

Just five minutes had passed when

Lens beat Lille in derby blighted by pitch invasion

PARIS: Lens defeated reigning French champions Lille 1-0 on Saturday in a northern derby overshadowed by a pitch invasion that delayed the start of the second half by 30 minutes. Dozens of Lens supporters stormed the Stade Bollaert-Delelis pitch at half-time to confront the visiting Lille fans nestled away in a corner of the ground after tensions flared with other spectators.

Riot police intervened to separate the factions of opposing supporters as both sets of fans hurled seats at each other over a partition wall. "We're in the process of trying to get a clear view. It unfolded in some confusion. Of course, any act of violence is condemned by Lens," said the club's man-

aging director Arnaud Pouille. "Unfortunately, the region's image is affected by what happened."

"I have a precise idea of the facts, but I don't want to influence anyone," he added. "You've seen the images. There were some gestures that sparked things and a reaction which is damaging." Six people sustained minor injuries and police made two arrests, according to the Lens sub-prefect.

The trouble came the week after Nice were docked a point following the ugly incidents that led to their August 22 home match with Marseille to be abandoned. That game will be replayed at a neutral venue on October 27. Nice were also ordered to play three matches behind closed doors.

A clash between Montpellier and Marseille on the opening weekend of the season was also interrupted for about 10 minutes after fans threw bottles onto the pitch. "This start of the season is not going to help us. A reality check is quickly needed for everyone involved in football, starting with supporters," tweeted French sports minister Roxana Maracineanu.

Rooney vows to stick with Derby despite looming administration

LONDON: Derby County manager Wayne Rooney said Saturday he was committed to the English second-tier club despite the financially-stricken side's impending administration. The 35-year-old former Manchester United and England striker, in his first managerial role, insisted he wanted to help rebuild Midlands club Derby after a 2-1 win over Stoke in the English Championship on Saturday. Derby led when Max Bird celebrated his 21st birthday with a 25-yard strike in the 32nd minute and Curtis Davies headed the Rams into a 2-0 lead two minutes later.

Rooney's side could have gone even further ahead before Stoke pulled a goal back in the 58th

minute through former Derby winger Tom Ince. But Derby held out to give their fans something to celebrate amid the looming threat of a points deduction.

Derby announced late Friday the club's directors "had no choice but to make the tough decision" to file notice to appoint administrators following a failure to secure new owners and because of the impact of COVID-19 on their finances. "I've said a few times I'm committed to this club and to the group of players and the staff, I care about them, so I'll keep doing everything I can to help us get through this," said Rooney. He added: "My job is to bring some pride and dignity back to the club, it's got a big fan base and those fans deserve my full attention and the players' full attention."

Rooney revealed he only found out about the club's plan to go into administration from watching television news. "I saw it on the TV which is not ideal, I think communication is key, I've still had no contact with Mel (Morris, the owner) for a while now so it's been very difficult for me to address the

fans when I don't know what the situation is. It's been a very difficult 24 hours finding out the news of going into administration. I imagine there will be people who will lose their jobs who have mortgages and bills to pay so to have that snatched away from them is heartbreaking. Today was a game I obviously wanted to win but I wasn't that interested in the result, it was more about the players showing character and showing the fans they care."

Derby are already facing separate points penalties for previous breaches of financial fair play rules. The Rams avoided relegation from the Championship on the final day of last season after drawing 3-3 at home to Sheffield Wednesday. They were then spared a points deduction, which would have sent them down, when the English Football League decided not to appeal against a decision to only fine the club for failing to comply with finance rules. Derby's greatest days were in the 1970s when they were twice crowned champions of England by winning the old First Division. — AFP



MILAN: Inter Milan's Slovakian defender Milan Skriniar heads the ball and scores a goal during the Italian Serie A football match between Inter Milan and Bologna at the San Siro stadium in Milan on Saturday. - AFP

Dumfries burst down the right and rolled an inviting low cross from which Argentina forward Martinez could not miss. Skriniar headed home the second from Federico Dimarco's corner on the half-hour and Barella made it three four minutes later fol-

lowing another charge and low cross from Dumfries. And a comfortable win turned into a rout once Vecino tapped home from Academy product Dimarco's low cross which evaded Dzeko and Dumfries in the 59th minute. — AFP



LENS: Riot police officers arrest a man after Lens' supporters invaded the pitch during the French L1 football match between Lens and Lille at Stade Bollaert-Delelis in Lens, northern France, on Saturday. — AFP

Fans must 'set an example'

Poland midfielder Przemyslaw Frankowski scored the winning goal on 74 minutes as Lens climbed up to second in Ligue 1, unbeaten through six games. "They told us there had been some incidents between supporters,

for us to focus on ourselves and that we would restart," said Lens goalkeeper Jean-Louis Leca. "It's always annoying when supporters come to blows in a football stadium. They too have to set an example because there are kids in the ground." — AFP