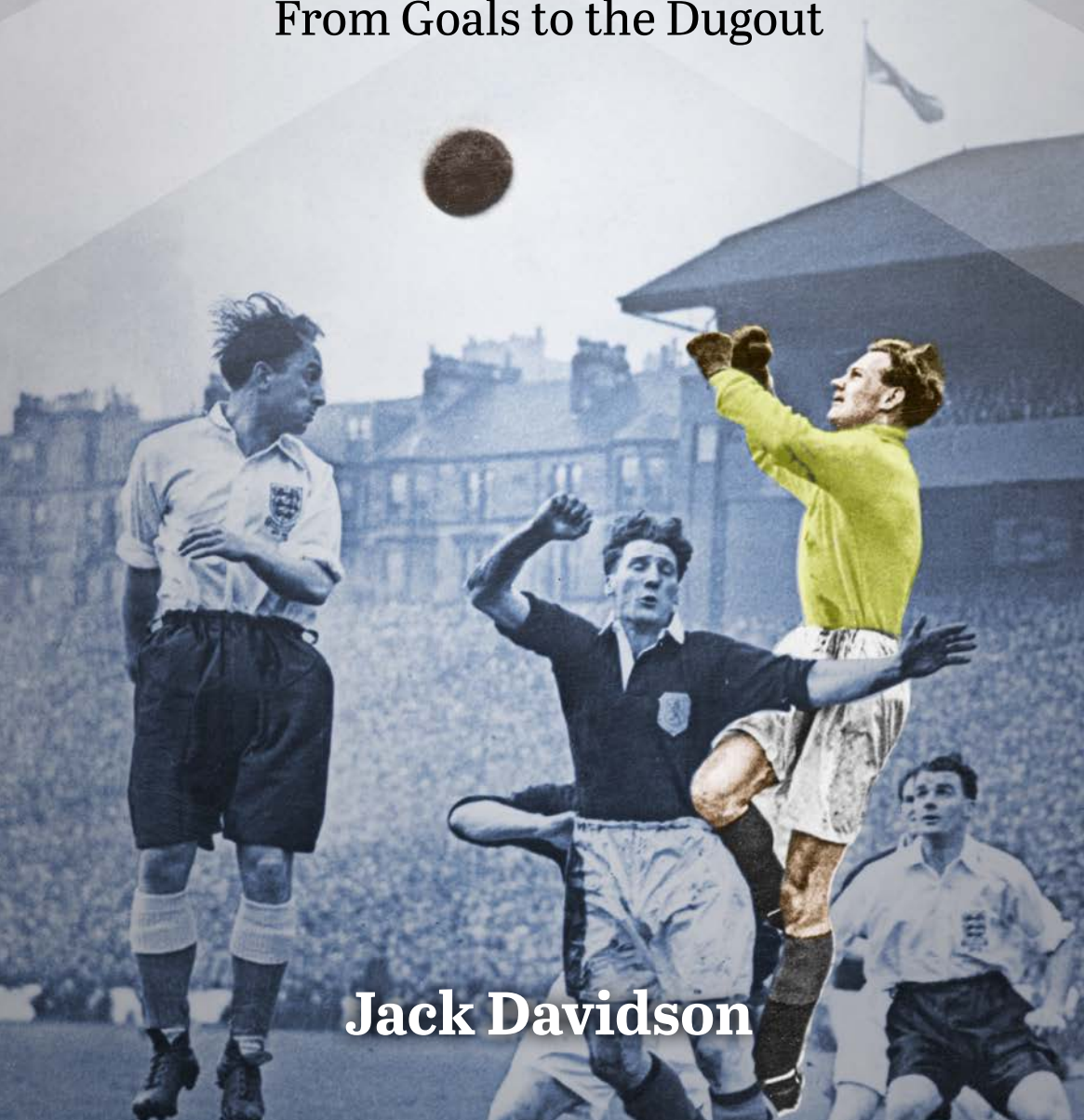


BOBBY BROWN

A Life in Football,
From Goals to the Dugout



Jack Davidson

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Chapter 1

Wembley 1967

AS dream starts to new jobs go, even Carlsberg would have struggled to improve on Bobby Brown's. Appointed Scotland team manager only two months earlier, on 11 April 1967 he oversaw his team beating England, then reigning world champions, at Wembley, English football's impressive and emblematic stadium. It was his first full international in charge and England's first loss in 20 games. To defeat the world champions, Scotland's most intense and enduring rivals, in these circumstances was an outstanding achievement, like winning the Grand National on your debut ride or running a four-minute mile in your first race. The date is enshrined in Scottish football history as one of its most memorable days. In fans' folklore, it was the day when Scotland became 'unofficial world champions' by knocking England off their throne – and what could be sweeter for a Scottish fan? As Brown said, in his understated way at the time, 'It was a fairly daunting task for your first game in charge. I knew how important it was for Scotland especially after we had failed to qualify for the 1966 World Cup finals. We had a great team full of top players who rose to the occasion and did the nation proud.'

To appreciate fully the significance of this momentous victory, it is necessary to consider the backstory to this fixture. It is no exaggeration to say that at the time Scotland v. England was the biggest game in the annual British football calendar. Some would maintain that was largely only so for the Scots, but Scottish players of the era were convinced it meant as much to their English counterparts as it did to them. Certainly, English fans did not travel north to Hampden in the same numbers as Scots who made the bi-annual pilgrimage south. For years, Scots had been descending on Wembley in their thousands, giving the impression at times that it was a home fixture for them. In 1967, it was conservatively estimated that about 40,000 of the 100,000 crowd were Scottish supporters, although the noise they generated made it appear there were many more present.

Throughout the country, numerous small groups formed their own 'Wembley clubs' to organise their trips, with members contributing a weekly sum over two years to cover the expense. These 'clubs' would exist for years, with the same members making the exodus south year after year, many of whom took holidays to coincide with the game and enable them to spend a week or a long weekend on their trip. Off they would go in a sea of tartan, often accompanied by a piper and usually an enormous 'carry-out' to 'take over' London and affirm their Scottish identity in England's capital. Many photos of these expeditions can be seen capturing the mood of the enthusiastic fans, usually in a sizeable group, each grinning at the camera from underneath an outsize tartan 'bunnet', bedecked in tartan scarves, often with a cigarette in the mouth, a pint in one hand and the other arm wrapped in friendly embrace round a fellow fan's shoulder while apparently giving a rousing rendition of some old Scots air. Their visit undoubtedly signalled good times for London publicans, and although there was inevitably excess, for the most part they were good-natured, not a hostile invading

army. Iconic landmarks, including Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus, were favourite venues for them to congregate to vaunt their nationality and support, sometimes to a degree of consternation among the locals and usually entailing an increased police presence.

Apart from being an excuse for some considerable self-indulgence, it was also an opportunity, in the eyes of the Scots, to remind the English how innately superior they were at the national game. After all, was it not the ‘Scotch Professors’ coming down to play in England in the 1880s who laid the foundations of the English game, along with the likes of Perthshire’s William McGregor, the founder of the English Football League and then FA chairman? The Wembley match afforded the opportunity for the classic case of the ‘wee’ neighbour to put one over the ‘big’ neighbour – the David v. Goliath syndrome. And how, in 1967, the fans relished it and how they celebrated it. Those celebrations were rendered even more jubilant because of England’s status as reigning world champions, and at the same time doused the still keenly felt disappointment of a number of previous visits to Wembley.

This was the oldest international in world football, and, although by 1967 the World Cup, particularly, and the European Nations’ Championship, to a lesser extent, were well established and high profile, Scotland v. England still rated as a very prestigious fixture. Although several unofficial games between the two countries took place between 1870 and 1872, at the Kennington Oval, the first official one was played on 30 November 1872 at the West of Scotland cricket ground at Hamilton Crescent, Partick, in Glasgow, ending in a 0–0 draw. This followed the FA’s minutes of 3 October that year, recording, ‘To further the interests of the Association in Scotland it was decided during the current season a team should be sent to Glasgow to play a match against Scotland.’ Thereafter it became

an annual match, usually as part of the Home Internationals until 1984, and thereafter until 1989 for the Rous Cup. After its inception, it quickly grew in importance, with its first 100,000-plus crowd in attendance at Hampden for the 1902 edition.

The construction of the Empire Exhibition Stadium, to give Wembley its full name, in 1923 was the catalyst for the Scots to travel south in ever increasing numbers for the game. As its name suggests, it was built for the purposes of the eponymous exhibition there, and no expense was spared. It was a landmark stadium, with its famous twin towers and the wide boulevard of Wembley Way leading up to it. Completed four days before the FA Cup Final that year, it hosted what became known as the 'White Horse Final', when a mounted police officer's horse distinguished itself on crowd control duties.

Ironically perhaps, regarding what is perceived to be such an English bastion, Scots were very much associated with its early days. The construction company which built it was Sir Robert McAlpine and Co, whose founder, Robert McAlpine, was a Scot, born in Newarthill, near Motherwell. The plan was to demolish the stadium after the exhibition, but Sir James Stevenson, a Scot from Kilmarnock, who was chair of its organising committee, opposed that proposal and campaigned successfully for it to be retained. And the first international goal scored there was scored by a Scot, Willie Cowan of Newcastle United – the winning goal against England in 1924. When constructed, it was considered the world's greatest sporting arena, and it continued to maintain its cachet, with the legendary Brazilian Pele, at a later date, describing it as 'the cathedral of football, the capital of football and the heart of football'. Curiously, and again ironically perhaps, Scotland's national stadium, Hampden Park in Glasgow, is named after an English politician of the 17th century, John Hampden, a famous parliamentarian and central figure in the Civil War.

Underlining the importance of this international, only Scotland played at Wembley against the home nation until 1951, when Argentina were permitted to play there, after which it became the regular home venue for all England's matches. Between the war years, the popularity of the match grew considerably, with a world attendance record being set at Hampden in 1937, when 149,547 were present. Two years later at the same ground, the figure had dropped to a mere 149,433! This emphasised the importance of this annual encounter between the world's oldest rivals, especially to the Scots.

By 1967, their enthusiasm for the fray had not dimmed, despite some severe drubbings dished out at Wembley in the not very distant past. A 9–3 humbling six years earlier has entered the annals as the low point from a Scottish perspective – their worst defeat by their southern neighbours. Frank Haffey, the Celtic goalkeeper playing that day for Scotland, bore the brunt of the criticism for that stinging loss, probably somewhat unfairly. His apparent carefree demeanour did not help in that assessment, with reports that he was singing in the bath after the match. His performance gave rise to quips such as 'What's the time? It's 9 past Haffey.' When Brown announced Ronnie Simpson of Celtic was to be Scotland's goalkeeper in 1967, the *Glasgow Herald* drily reminded its readers that the last time a Celtic goalkeeper represented the country, 'he conceded nine goals'.

In 1955, Fred Martin of Aberdeen was in goals as the English forwards put seven past him, with the Scots responding with a meagre two; while, in a wartime international in 1944, Scotland conceded six against two scored. Further back, in 1930, Hearts goalkeeper Jack Harkness, later a well-known football writer, picked the ball out of his net five times, again the Scots replying with two. There had been the occasional Scottish highlight, such as the 'Wembley Wizards' of 1928, when their diminutive

artistes recorded a 5–1 win. In 1949, the Scots recorded a famous 3–1 win in a game often referred to as ‘Jimmy Cowan’s match’ in deference to the Morton goalkeeper’s brilliance that day. And in 1963 they gained a measure of revenge for the 9–3 thrashing two years before by winning 2–1.

However, despite such rays of sunshine occasionally piercing the dark clouds that seemed to hover over Scotland at Wembley, in 1967 the weight of history and form favoured the home team. In the corresponding match the previous year at Hampden, England had won 4–3, although informed opinion was the scoreline did not reflect their superiority.

In the meantime, they had gone on to win the World Cup on 30 July 1966, beating West Germany 4–2 at Wembley. Predictably, this success rankled with many Scots who cavilled at it, complaining that England, as host nation, did not have to pre-qualify and were allowed to play all their games at Wembley. They also perceived that the infamous Russian linesman Mr Bahramov had given them an unwarranted leg up by indicating that the ball had crossed the goal line for England’s vital third goal, in extra time. Put briefly, the majority of Scots found it very hard to accept that England were world champions. They were also less than impressed by manager Alf Ramsey’s ‘wingless wonders’ style of play, which they thought a negation of the true spirit of the game.

And what fuelled their occasionally less than gracious attitude to English success was that Scotland had not participated in the finals, the Scottish contribution being limited to a few non-league teams in the Borders providing warm-up opposition for some of the finalists. In their qualifying section for that World Cup, a stirring win over Italy in Glasgow in November 1965, thanks to a John Greig thunderbolt shot, raised hopes of qualification. What was required to clinch it was a win in the return game in Naples the next month. A depleted Scottish

team, weakened by the non-availability of key players such as Law, Baxter, Henderson and McNeill, lost 3–0, and with that, Scottish hopes were trodden into the Neapolitan turf. The Scots' sense of grievance was compounded through England's memorable win. Scottish players based in England, 'Anglos' as they were referred to, had to suffer in dressing rooms as their English counterparts took delight in reminding them of their world champion status and how the Scots had not even made it to the finals. Denis Law, as proud a Scot as there is, admitted that he could not bear to watch the final, going to play golf instead. He claimed his afternoon was ruined when he heard the news of England's victory. Jim Baxter, another legendary Scottish player, did attend the final but was less than impressed by the English performance, expressing his surprise that 'that lot' had won it.

In the lead-up to Wembley '67, not many fancied Scotland's chances. Apart from the 'Wembley factor', this English team had played 19 consecutive games undefeated since 1965, including that famous final. In Scotland's corresponding number of games, they were undefeated in 13 of them, six of which were draws. The England team selected for this game was the same one that had won the World Cup, with the exception of Jimmy Greaves of Spurs replacing Roger Hunt of Liverpool, hardly weakening it.

This was to be their first match back at Wembley since then, and being defeated there as reigning champions, especially to Scotland, was not part of their agenda. They had a settled team and an experienced and proven successful manager, Alf Ramsey, at the helm, whose first game this would be since being appointed a knight of the realm. Adding spice to the forthcoming encounter was Ramsey's thinly disguised lack of affection for the Scots. When he arrived in Glasgow with his team for the previous year's match, the Scottish press greeted

him with 'Welcome to Scotland, Alf', to which he replied, 'You must be bloody joking.'

In contrast, the 44-year-old Bobby Brown was new to international management. Well known north of the border as a former international goalkeeper, a position he had occupied with distinction for Queen's Park and Rangers, his management experience was limited to just over eight years in charge of St Johnstone, one of the country's provincial clubs. His profile in England was low, a factor which fed into pre-match coverage of the game by the English press. Although he was largely successful with the Perth-based club, he was having to operate on limited resources and, generally, low crowds. While he was manager, the club did not play in Europe, nor had he ever been exposed to international football as manager. He had never met a number of important players in the Scottish team, such as Denis Law, Jim Baxter and Billy Bremner, prior to the squad assembling in the days preceding the game. The international game undoubtedly required a different approach from club football, taking into account the fact that the players belonged to their clubs. Before Wembley '67, as on other occasions, Brown only had them with him for a few days before the game, making it more difficult to establish a rapport and ensure he got his message over to them.

Understandably, Scottish fans were unsure of Brown given that background, and he still had to prove himself in their eyes. That background did not in any way quell their eagerly felt anticipation for the game or diminish their passion for it. If anything, it served to ratchet up the tension to an almost unbelievable level. Although Scotland's ticket allocation was about 30,000, it seemed half the country was on its way to Wembley judging by the numbers of cars, buses and trains crossing the border on Friday afternoon and evening. Meanwhile, the English press were busy consigning Scotland's

hopes to the dustbin and thereby adding to their motivation to upset the odds and beat the world champions.

Desmond Hackett in the *Daily Express* wrote, 'England will firmly relegate Scotland to their minor role in international football.' Geoff Green in *The Times*: 'This will be England's day.' Ken Jones in the *Daily Mail*: 'England's unbeaten run must end sometime but not today.' And Brian James in the *Daily Mirror* opined, 'The Scots have no chance – they have not learned as much about football as England.' While motivation to beat England on their home turf was never in short supply, such comments filled the tank to overflowing.

Despite the odds apparently being so stacked against Scotland, Brown maintains that he never felt negative about his team's prospects. He recalled, 'It was obviously a very big challenge. Playing England at Wembley always was, but this time the stakes were a bit higher with our opponents being the world champions. Although I was new to the job and obviously felt pressure, it was never overwhelming. As far as I was concerned, it was a great honour to be manager of my country and I had tremendous confidence in the players we had. I was fortunate in the calibre of player I was able to select, all of whom were really top drawer. A number of them played club football in England and had played with their clubs in Europe. And the home-based players included six Old Firm representatives who weeks later all featured in European finals with their respective clubs. We had no reason to feel inferior and nor did we.'

Brown was extremely diligent in his preparation. Following his final game in charge of St Johnstone on 18 February, he took up the reins with Scotland. During that period of just over six weeks to the Wembley fixture, he watched 24 matches in Scotland and England, clocking up a huge mileage in the process. Although he knew nearly all of the potential Scottish squad at least by reputation, there were several whom he had

not seen play at first hand, and a few scarcely known to him but who had been recommended. He therefore undertook an extensive scouting operation, anxious to leave nothing to chance in arriving at his strongest eleven for his full international debut.

Prior to then, he was in charge of Scottish teams for two minor international fixtures, both against England. The first was an under-23 game at Newcastle on 1 March, a fixture the Scots had not won for six years. Brown's plan was to contain the opposition for the first 15 minutes and thereafter go on the offensive. It worked well, with the Scots going on to record a highly satisfactory 3–1 win following Jim McCalliog's 16th-minute opener, Peter Cormack and Jimmy Smith adding the others. McCalliog of Sheffield Wednesday, who had previously been capped once at this level, against Wales, had been attracting Brown's interest through his club performances and would go on to play a crucial part in the Wembley match. Others playing for Scotland that evening included keeper Bobby Clark, Pat Stanton, Eddie Gray and Tommy McLean. McCalliog met Brown for the first time at Newcastle and remembers being impressed by him: 'He was a lovely, happy, smiley man who obviously knew his football. He'd been a successful player himself and I was chuffed to meet him.'

The second match was between the respective league sides at Hampden on 15 March. One innovation introduced by Brown before that match was to convene a meeting of the seven club managers whose players featured in the team, to discuss their strengths and weaknesses and try to foster a spirit of co-operation with them. Present were Jock Stein (Celtic), Scot Symon (Rangers), Bob Shankly (Hibs), Malky Macdonald (Kilmarnock), Willie Cunningham (Dunfermline Athletic), John Harvey (Hearts) and Eddie Turnbull (Aberdeen). Brown stated that his objective was to win and score as many as possible.

Unfortunately, despite that intention, the English league won 3–0, with Geoff Hurst scoring a double and Allan Clarke the other. Only two players who would play at Wembley – Tommy Gemmell and John Greig – featured for the Scots. Others who played included Bobby Ferguson in goal, Billy McNeill, John Clark, Willie Henderson, Stevie Chalmers (travelling reserve for Wembley) and a certain Alex Ferguson, about whom the press wrote ahead of the match, ‘Ferguson has a great future and if he is in form he could get the vital goals.’

Clearly it was not to be, and Brown had had his first setback. Alf Ramsey occupied the opposing dugout that evening and, contrary to the way in which he was often perceived, was magnanimous in victory towards Brown. As they made their way back to the dressing rooms, he put his arm round Brown’s shoulder to say, ‘Don’t worry too much, Bobby. You’ll suffer many disappointments as I did, the great thing is to learn from them.’ Certainly, on that occasion, he was rather more loquacious than he would be after the Wembley game.

Brown deliberated long and hard about his team. Apart from his scouting activities, he had also studied a technical report, commissioned by the FA and written by Walter Winterbottom and Ron Greenwood, on tactics employed by the teams during the 1966 World Cup, including games against England. As a result, he became convinced that an attacking formation with an element of fluidity and a tight defence was the answer to combat Ramsey’s rigid 4–3–3 formation. He wanted to have full-backs capable of going forward to exploit space up the flanks as auxiliary attackers, a midfield that operated not only there but also supported the attack, and forwards who would press the defence closely and hopefully score goals. Essentially, a fluid 4–3–3 that at times would convert to 4–2–4. With the personnel available to him, Brown felt he could make the English central defence of Jackie Charlton and Bobby Moore

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uncomfortable and that his attacking line-up could take advantage of Ramsey's 'wingerless' team.

Brown's selection was as follows: Ronnie Simpson (Celtic); Tommy Gemmell (Celtic), John Greig (Rangers, capt.), Ronnie McKinnon (Rangers), Eddie McCreadie (Chelsea); Billy Bremner (Leeds), Jim McCalliog (Sheffield Wednesday), Jim Baxter (Sunderland); Willie Wallace (Celtic), Denis Law (Manchester United), Bobby Lennox (Celtic). Travelling reserves: Bobby Ferguson (Kilmarnock – goalkeeper), Steve Chalmers (Celtic), Frank McLintock (Arsenal).

England lined up as follows: Gordon Banks (Leicester); George Cohen (Fulham), Jack Charlton (Leeds), Bobby Moore (West Ham, capt.), Ray Wilson (Everton); Alan Ball (Everton), Nobby Stiles (Manchester United), Martin Peters (West Ham); Jimmy Greaves (Spurs), Bobby Charlton (Manchester United), Geoff Hurst (West Ham).

Brown originally selected Jimmy 'Jinky' Johnstone as outside-right – an awesome dribbler on his day and capable of snatching a goal, having scored two in the previous year's fixture in Glasgow. However, he was injured the previous Wednesday night playing in a European Cup semi-final in Glasgow against Dukla Prague and had to be withdrawn. This was a blow to Brown's plans, because 'Jinky' could be a devastating player who was extremely difficult to combat. In his place, Brown called up Jinky's Celtic team-mate, Willie 'Wispy' Wallace. His team selection was subject to some criticism, particularly by the English press, who felt Johnstone's withdrawal weakened it considerably. They also expressed the view that not only was the manager inexperienced at this level, but so were a number of his players – Simpson and McCalliog were debutants, while Lennox, Wallace and Gemmell had only a handful of caps between them. It was pointed out that this was in sharp contrast to the home team, in terms of both manager and players.

Brown recalled the reasoning behind his selection. ‘To my mind the midfield was absolutely essential to the game. Billy Bremner on one side and Jim Baxter on the other were key players in that area. Bremner on the right, who hailed from the Raploch, a tough neighbourhood in Stirling, I always thought of as like “ten stones of barbed wire”. Although there was not much of him, he was a tenacious tackler with a high work rate, a “terrier” of a player. He was an important member of a then very successful Leeds United. On the left, Baxter was a complete contrast, a cultured, artistic player who could run a game. You could not expect much from him defensively, as he didn’t do a lot of running. At this time he was playing for Sunderland and carrying a bit more weight, no longer the “Slim Jim” he had once been. He had left Rangers to go to Wearside and there was no doubt he was no longer the player he had been at Ibrox. But he still had bags of ability and great belief in himself. I thought he would most definitely be “up” for this game. Then I had to decide who would best combine with them and offer some fluidity in the formation by being able to go forward as an attacker and also cover back when required. This role called for a player with an excellent engine and a good measure of skill. Having been very impressed with young Jim McCalliog when I watched him in the under-23s and also for his club, I decided he was the man for the role. Some were sceptical of him, as he was only 20 and uncapped, but he had played in England since he was 15, at Leeds, at Chelsea and then with Sheffield Wednesday. His transfer fee from Chelsea to Sheffield Wednesday was a British record for a teenager – £37,500. He had also played at Wembley in an important game, the FA Cup Final in 1966, when his Sheffield Wednesday team lost 3–2 to Everton and he scored. As it turned out, he fully justified my decision. Once I was satisfied with my midfield, which I saw as the team’s crucial hub, I turned my attention to the rest of the side.

'In goal I decided to give Ronnie Simpson his first cap for Scotland at age 36, making him Scotland's oldest ever debutant in this fixture. My choice was criticised in some quarters, but I felt confident about him. He was playing well for Celtic in big games at home and in Europe, was used to appearing in front of big crowds, and had previous experience of Wembley as he played there for the Great Britain team in the London Olympic Games of 1948. He had also taken part there in two FA Cup finals for Newcastle United in 1952 and 1955, collecting winner's medals each time. The other main candidate for the position was Kilmarnock's Bobby Ferguson (later of West Ham United) but I felt he was not at his best for the Scottish league against the English league about a month previous and I decided to make him travelling reserve. Ronnie had made his senior debut for Queen's Park as a 14-year-old in 1945 and had actually been my ballboy at times when I played for the Spiders. His father, Jimmy, had been a centre-half for Rangers who appeared for Scotland against England at Wembley in 1936, and so Ronnie was following in his footsteps.

'At right-back, I put in Tommy Gemmell, a strapping, athletic type of player, a strong runner who could set off on galloping runs up the right wing. He would run through a brick wall for you and had a terrific shot on him. Although he usually played on the left for Celtic, he could also play on the right. Again, some criticism came my way, as he only had three caps and according to some was playing out of position.

'In central defence I went for the Rangers club pairing of John Greig and Ronnie McKinnon. They were a tried and tested partnership who had combined well together for years, were well used to the big occasion, and I felt they could be relied on to do the job. Greig I made captain – he always gave 100 per cent and played for the jersey. McKinnon was a more reserved sort of individual who sometimes needed a little reassurance before

going out on the pitch, but, as I say, the two of them dovetailed well together. I was under some pressure to field the Celtic duo of Billy McNeill and John Clark, a pairing whom I also rated highly, and I gave the decision a lot of thought. It was difficult, but I just felt that on this occasion the Rangers two should go in.

‘At left-back I had no doubt that the best man was Eddie McCreadie of Chelsea, I think the finest left-back I’ve ever seen. He had the best and most cultured left foot of any left-back. He always tried to place the ball as well as being strong in the tackle. I thought he was ahead of his time actually, and would have no difficulty fitting into the modern game. In my book he was an outstanding player who had gone from fairly humble beginnings in Scotland with East Stirlingshire to excel in England with Chelsea.

‘Up front, my original choice on the right, as mentioned, was the inimitable Jimmy “Jinky” Johnstone of Celtic, a mesmerising dribbler who could wreak havoc in opposing defences – but his injury meant he was not available. There is no doubt his absence was perceived as a weakness for us, but in his place I went for his clubmate Willie “Wispy” Wallace, a bit of a surprise choice in some eyes. He was relatively inexperienced at this level, with only three caps to his name, but I had seen him play a number of times and was impressed with his game intelligence as well as his overall play. He also carried a goal threat with his powerful shot, and was in form, having scored twice in that game against Dukla Prague. He had had big-match experience with Celtic, and I felt he could fit in well with the way I was approaching the game. I required him to drop back at times to help the midfield as well as contributing to the attack.

‘Denis Law at centre-forward almost picked himself. At his best a truly wonderful player, and undoubtedly one of Scotland’s all-time greats. He always brought a positive attitude, was confident in his own ability on any stage and always had

a burning desire to beat England, particularly after 1966. And he was a superb finisher. For his club, Manchester United, I thought he was playing in a slightly deeper position than he should, but for this game I wanted him to be up close to the opposition central defenders. I wanted him to harry Jack Charlton and Bobby Moore, the captain, as I felt they were not used to having someone exerting so much pressure on them.

‘On the left, I chose Celtic’s Bobby Lennox – really a dream player to have in your team, a smashing lad. He could run all day, open up defences with his speed and skill and cut inside to score a goal. Again, some considered him inexperienced at this level, as he only had one cap, but for me he was a certainty to start. All-time English great Bobby Charlton thought extremely highly of Lennox, and that is about as good a reference as you could hope for.

‘There were no substitutes then, but we could take travelling reserves. A goalkeeper was, of course, essential, and I picked Kilmarnock’s Bobby Ferguson, who, despite not having his best showing against the English league, was a good, experienced keeper. As outfield players I chose Celtic’s Stevie Chalmers and Frank McLintock of Arsenal. Chalmers, I felt, gave me options due to his versatility: he could cover a number of positions up front and drop back to midfield if needed. Again, he was a goalscorer and fitted the attacking pattern I had in mind for the team. And as for Frank McLintock, he was an experienced, solid defender who could also play in midfield and had played at Wembley previously in cup finals. That was the team I felt could do a job for us and I was delighted that it did!’

The home-based members of the squad assembled on the Wednesday before the game at Largs on the Ayrshire coast, where they stayed at the Queen’s Hotel on the seafront, reserved for their exclusive use. Some light training was undertaken at the nearby Inverclyde Sports Centre, but Brown, being new to

the job, used much of the time available familiarising himself with the players, some of whom he knew well and others less so. He made it his business to speak individually and collectively to them as he sought to foster a bond and positive spirit. Assisting him behind the scenes were trainer Walter McCrae and physio/masseur Tom McNiven. McCrae, a former goalkeeper at junior level, was an experienced trainer and also a qualified physiotherapist. A man of erect bearing thanks to his National Service in the Royal Marines, he commanded the players' respect, and Brown had a lot of confidence in him. He had served previous Scottish managers Ian McColl, Jock Stein, John Prentice and Malky Macdonald. Throughout his whole career, he was associated with his home-town team, Kilmarnock, as trainer, manager and general manager. Tom McNiven was also a former junior footballer and had been a successful sprinter. His career was also identified particularly with one club, Hibs, where he was trainer/physiotherapist for many years. He also provided valued support to Brown.

On the Thursday, the squad travelled down south, where they installed themselves in the upmarket Brent Bridge Hotel in Hendon, north London, about a 15-minute drive from Wembley. There the English-based players, the 'Anglos', joined up with the others and Brown began meeting the likes of Billy Bremner and Denis Law for the first time. He again spoke to all the 'Anglos' individually, to try to create a rapport with them, and placed great emphasis on developing team spirit.

After light training at the nearby Hendon Amateurs' ground, Brown outlined his tactics for the game. At that time, managers generally did not spend a lot of time on the minutiae of tactics. What was most important to Brown was getting his selection right and setting the framework in which he wished them to play. Little by way of motivation was required, given the importance of the fixture and particularly the attitude of

the English press. On the Friday, another light training session took place, and, in the afternoon, the squad made a trip to Wembley to have a look round the stadium and a check of the playing surface, invaluable for those new to the arena. That evening, Brown and some players, by way of relaxation, went to watch Arsenal beat Dunfermline Athletic 2–1 at Highbury in a friendly. And various administrative tasks were attended to ahead of Saturday, including players' phone calls and the organisation of tickets for families and friends, as Brown did not wish such matters to be a distraction on matchday.

The build-up had gone well, and, although there clearly was pressure on the players, Brown never felt they were anything other than upbeat about their prospects. Although in managerial terms this was a step up from his time at St Johnstone, he never felt overawed – largely because he had great belief in the calibre of player at his disposal. He also felt his task was made that little bit easier as he had been an international himself, which helped win his players' respect.

On the Saturday morning, the squad did some light ball work for half an hour. Some players went for a stroll round nearby Golders Green, including keeper Simpson, whose calmness impressed Brown: 'He looked as if he was just going out for a walk with his dog on a Saturday morning!' Then, after the press photos had been dealt with and last-minute phone calls had been made, the squad sat down to a light lunch. Ronnie Simpson was delighted to have received a 'good luck' phone call from Old Firm rival goalie Billy Ritchie of Rangers, a nice touch from the Ibrox no. 1. Next it was on to the team coach for Wembley, which was met by police motorcycle outriders who shepherded them en route to the stadium, where they arrived at 1.30pm. Everyone on board became more and more aware of the sheer volume of Scottish fans as the bus threaded its way through them. Once the coach was on Wembley Way, the fans'

presence was spine-tingling. Jim McCalliog recalled, 'It was absolutely amazing seeing all those fans thronging Wembley Way. They were all draped in tartan and shouting and singing, waving flags – an incredible sight. I realised this was a dream come true for me to be there, to play in this game. This is what I had spent hours and hours and hours kicking a ball about for as a kid, to make it to here. We were sitting there looking out the window, hardly able to believe our eyes. Occasionally our attention would be drawn to groups of fans and we would point them out to each other as we exclaimed, "Look at him, look at them!" and so on. It really was unbelievable.'

Brown echoed these recollections, being equally impressed by the number and 'betartaned' enthusiasm of the Scots fans on Wembley Way. 'It really was quite something and brought it home to you just how much this game meant to Scotland. In those days it was a real gala occasion, the undoubted high point of the season. Scottish fans took holidays to coincide with it and saved up over two years for this trip. And, of course, it had the added element this year: not only were we playing the "Auld Enemy" but also the world champions. I think the realisation of the enormity of the fixture began to hit the players as our coach made its way through the seething masses of our fans. They appreciated they were carrying a nation's hopes with them. In my recollection at that time, the mood among the players changed slightly as a kind of quiet descended on the bus while they all took in just how much this meant and several seemed lost in their own thoughts. You have to remember that it wasn't only their country or their clubs they were representing, but their families and friends, many of whom were down for the game. They were also conscious of representing those in their youth who had encouraged and shaped their early careers and the football-mad communities where most had grown up.'

Skipper Greig later wrote: 'On the surface we had no reason to feel confident but we thought we were unfortunate not to qualify for the 1966 Finals and we were desperate to make a point.'

Once in the stadium, Brown took his players out of the dressing room for a stroll on the pitch, to let them get a feel for it and soak up the atmosphere and acknowledge their amazing support. Back inside, the team first read the many 'good luck' telegrams that had flooded in from family, friends and fans, serving to underline further the occasion's importance. As warming up on the pitch was not permitted, it had to be done indoors. In the dressing room, the team went through their routine of stretching exercises, kicked a ball against the wall and prepared themselves physically and mentally for what lay ahead. McNiven gave the players a 'rub' while McCrae, in addition to supervising the warm-up, attended to players' individual needs, distributing items such as stocking ties, plasters, ankle bandages and the like where required. According to Bobby Lennox, in a book he later wrote, at Celtic and other clubs sometimes, if players asked, they would be given a small 'nip' of whisky before going out on to the pitch, to calm the nerves a bit. He remembered on this occasion, reserve and club team-mate Stevie Chalmers, mindful of this habit, had brought into the dressing room a small bottle of whisky from which Ronnie Simpson and one or two others helped themselves to a small 'nip'. It has to be emphasised: this was a minute quantity, not a tumblerful!

Brown gave a fairly brief talk on tactics, reminding his charges what he had already drilled into them at Hendon, and spoke individually to each player about his role. What struck him about them, particularly at this point, was how much belief they had and how little apprehension was apparent. Partly he attributed this to the fact that many of these players were household names, some in England. There they regularly faced

up to their opponents that afternoon, and they knew they were at least on the same level as them, if not on a higher one.

McCalliog was impressed by the confident vibes from his team-mates. 'As a young 20-year-old coming in for his first cap, I was understandably a bit nervous at meeting up and playing with some of these famous names, guys like Law, Baxter and Bremner. Funnily enough, I had played against Law on the Monday night in a league game against Manchester United. But with the help of Bobby Brown, who gave me great confidence in myself, I soon felt at ease in the group. He was very good before the game in the dressing room, ensuring everyone knew their task and keeping things calm. The dressing room was actually disappointing for such a grand stadium – it was not very big, and all you got was a peg for your clothes! It was a concrete floor, so you had to be careful, walking about with your boots on, you didn't slip. However, the memory that sticks with me most strongly though was just how much confidence my team-mates seemed to have before the game. In training, it was fantastic to watch how they carried themselves, the way they could control the pace of the game and the outrageous pieces of skill they could come up with. Their attitude was "England had won the World Cup, so what?" In fact, they reminded me of the time when I was at Chelsea a couple of years earlier and manager Tommy Docherty gave some of us the chance to watch the Rest of the World XI train at Stamford Bridge before a special match against England at Wembley. There I saw people like Di Stefano, Eusebio, Puskas, Masopust, Santos, Denis Law, Gento and others close up, and it was fantastic to see what they could do with the ball. My Scottish team-mates in training were just the same. Law, Baxter, Bremner, Gemmell all had that streak of arrogance, and Greig had a strut about him, McKinnon too. It just made you think there was no way they were going to be second to anyone, and their confidence was infectious in the

dressing room, like when Baxter announced, “This lot can play nane.”

Five minutes before kick-off, Brown said a few more words, urging them to make their country proud. The bell rang for them to go out, and as they began to file out quietly, like men on a mission, Baxter bounced the ball a couple of times on the floor before the dressing room door slammed shut.

The teams were presented to the Duke of Norfolk just before 3pm, and, as stated in the FA's booklet of 'do's and don'ts', the match could not begin until the good Duke had resumed his seat in the Royal Box. Once he was sitting comfortably, the game kicked off amid ear-splitting roars of encouragement from the Scottish fans. An early earth-shattering tackle by Gemmell seemed to set the tone, and the Scots were soon on top. Jackie Charlton injured himself in about the 15th minute in a rash tackle on Lennox and spent the rest of the game up front. The Scots deservedly took the lead in the 28th minute thanks to Denis Law, who converted a rebound off English keeper Banks from a shot by Wallace. At half-time, the score remained at 1–0. In the dressing room, Brown was disappointed the scoreline did not reflect the run of play, as he felt Scotland were well ahead; he encouraged them to go for more goals. In the 78th minute, they went two ahead thanks to a Bobby Lennox goal, making him the first Celtic player to score at Wembley for Scotland. It was shortly after that when Baxter indulged in his now legendary bout of 'keepie-uppie'. McCalliog inadvertently set him up by backheeling the ball to him in the opposition half in response to his shout, prompting Baxter to exhibit his skills bouncing the ball off head, knee and instep, trying to humiliate the world champions. While this delighted the Scottish support, it did not have the same effect on Brown. 'I was standing on the touchline pulling my hair out at Baxter's antics and I was going berserk. I wanted them to drive on to get more goals, but there was no

telling him, he could be a law unto himself.' Nor was Brown the only one upset at Baxter. Denis Law, who had suffered in the 9–3 reverse at the same ground in 1961, was determined to score more goals and rub English noses in it that way. Ronnie Simpson too was screaming from his goalmouth to 'get on with it', but Baxter was equally determined, as he put it, 'to extract the urine' from the opposition.

One commentator noted how when Baxter was indulging in this display, Nobby Stiles was nearby 'bobbing up and down trying to decide whether to tackle him at head or knee level'. In the 85th minute, Jack Charlton pulled one back for England before McCalliog notched a third two minutes later. Geoff Hurst scored a consolation second with his head shortly before the whistle blew for full time. Scotland were now world champions ... according to some!

Alf Ramsey, at the end, shook Brown's hand and said in his own clipped way, 'Well done, you played very well today,' before disappearing up the tunnel. Brown reckoned that, inside, he was fuming after this defeat on his team's return to their scene of glory, and that to Scotland into the bargain. As is well documented, the Scottish fans celebrated wholeheartedly, a number spilling on to the pitch while some helped themselves to pieces of turf as souvenirs. They shouted repeatedly, 'We want Brown!' The centre spot in its entirety was removed, and many gardens in Scotland had their turf surprisingly supplemented the following week. The pitch invasion was good-natured, though understandably unwelcome from the authorities' point of view, and half an hour after full time mounted police had to clear it. Who can forget the famous photo of the two Scottish fans congratulating Baxter on the pitch, one of them with his arm in a headlock round the player's neck, unintentionally almost choking him, to his clear discomfort, as the fan's self-restraint succumbed to his euphoria? Interestingly, from today's

perspective, both gents were in suit, collar and tie, although one would not readily regard either as being part of the establishment. A number of players had difficulty making their way to the safety of the dressing room through the exuberant fans. Some even tried to gain entry to the Scots' dressing room to celebrate with the team, but an alert Brown, commissioner and police officer, prevented that.

Inside the dressing room, the atmosphere was electric. Brown was going round congratulating everyone and declaring, 'London belongs to you tonight, boys!' The players were ecstatic and high on cloud nine. Hugh Nelson of Arbroath, the chairman of the SFA international selection committee, and other Scottish officials came in to offer their congratulations. Denis Law shook Brown's hand warmly, saying, 'Congratulations boss, you've got off to a great start.' Speaking recently, Law commented, 'That was a fantastic win for us – to beat the world champions on their own patch was something else. It's a match that really stands out. I wanted to win so much, especially as I had been on the wrong end of the 9–3 score in '61. We should have scored more goals, but the supremely talented Jim Baxter started his "keepie-uppie" and taking the mickey. I was wanting to keep my great team-mate Bobby Charlton quiet after his World Cup win!'

Greig later wrote, 'It was a lifetime ambition of mine to play at Wembley so to go there as captain in 1967 and win the game as well was fantastic. Unofficially we were world champions and I think it's fair to say that's as close as Scotland will ever get!'

Brown, while delighted with the win, had one little pang of regret – that Scotland had not scored more goals. 'I felt we skinned them alive, we were so much on top. But instead of pushing ahead for more goals, Baxter, who controlled the play for us, slowed it down and wanted to make a fool of England. Bremner had the same attitude and he collaborated with him. It was hard to be angry with them given how they had played

and the result we got, but still I thought it was an opportunity missed to have racked up a big score. I think we should have and could have scored five or six, given the pressure we had. In fairness, Banks did make two great saves late on from Law. Later I did confront Baxter about his antics but he just said, "Sorry boss, I wasn't trying to be cheeky!" That apart, I was really pleased that everyone did as they had been told.'

Alan Herron, veteran Scottish football journalist, was of a similar opinion: 'I thought we humiliated England, we completely dominated them. We should have scored more – I remember Bobby Brown being a bit perturbed after the game because of the way Baxter and Bremner mucked about at times, especially in the second half.'

They were nutmegging opponents and constantly teasing Alan Ball, the English midfielder, their man of the match in the World Cup Final. They would deliberately pass back and forward to each other, making him run from one to the other. They also wound him up by calling him the 'Clitheroe Kid', referring to a then well-known short, northern English comedian with a high-pitched, strongly accented voice, similar characteristics to Ball's. On other occasions one of them would walk casually away from the ball, as if going for a stroll, while the other would come to collect it, affecting an exaggerated ease in their play and underlining how England were struggling to deal with them.

While Brown acknowledged the excellence of Baxter's contribution generally, for him the Scottish man of the match was McCalliog. 'I thought McCalliog was, if you like, our unsung hero. He played a vital role in linking midfield with attack and scored an important goal. He carried out his instructions to the letter in a performance full of energy and guile, and was the perfect complement to Baxter and Bremner. A remarkable contribution when you consider it was his international debut

and he was only 20, playing with and against all these well-established names. The other thing that helped us was that all the boys gelled very well together off the pitch. There were no cliques or prima donnas and the Old Firm players got on well.'

In McCalliog's opinion, Brown was due a lot of credit. 'Bobby Brown got his team selection absolutely right. I honestly thought the whole team played really well – everyone earned a minimum of an 8 out of 10 rating with some deserving even more. He was attentive, had a good way with the players and set out the right way for us to play. He gave me and others confidence with his approach. There were no big tactics talks, as was the case with most managers in those days, but once he made clear to us the framework we were to play in, it was up to us to use our football intelligence to make it work. One player whom I did not know really but who impressed me a lot was Willie Wallace. I thought he was very clever, particularly in his use of space to prompt attacks and also to combat English attacks. Although he was nominally a forward, he moved between midfield and attack, like me, and we would often cover for each other. We gave the English no chance to settle, and once we were in possession we did our utmost to keep it.'

Today, one could imagine such a momentous game being followed by a series of interviews with the players, but then the SFA rulebook did not permit them to 'comment on the match on television, radio or to the press after the game'. From Wembley they returned to their hotel to change before going to the banquet in the evening at the Café Royal in Regent Street, where they were to be joined by the English team. According to McCalliog, this was a welcome opportunity to socialise with the opposition, which was not normally possible in league football. His recollection was that both teams mixed well together, although Gemmell's was different. He later wrote that the English team sat sulking in a corner. Nobby Stiles thought Jim

Baxter was as entertaining there as he had been on the pitch that afternoon. Brown tried to engage Ramsey, telling him he had played against him during the war and after, but that elicited little reaction. As for the game, Ramsey only said to Brown that he had made a very good start. Although he was to meet the English manager several times more in the future, he never spoke once about the 1967 game. He thought the English manager generally courteous but ‘hard to warm to. He didn’t open out really, and it was as if it was costing him pounds each time he opened his mouth.’

Brown remembers at one stage of the evening going outside for a breath of fresh air. As he stood enjoying the evening breeze and reflecting on the day’s events, he could see walking along towards him rather unsteadily, and singing loudly, a Scottish fan – tartan ‘bunnet’ askew – who had clearly been celebrating his team’s success wholeheartedly. He made his way past the smartly dressed Brown with just a sideways glance at him and continued until he was about ten yards past, when he suddenly stopped, wheeled round and turned back. Stopping in front of him, he then proceeded to jab him in the chest with his forefinger while exclaiming loudly inches away from the national manager, ‘See you, Scotland 3 England 2 – We beat you easily today, don’t you ever forget it!’, before continuing merrily on his way, much to Brown’s amusement. During the evening, thousands of Scottish fans had taken over Piccadilly Circus, chanting, ‘Sir Alf is on the dole!’ and ‘We all live in a tartan submarine, a tartan submarine!’ and other less seemly ditties. Pieces of Wembley turf were on sale for ten shillings or a pound according to the size on offer.

Back inside, the party continued, with the Scottish team sticking together the whole evening. Some players recall meeting up at the Café Royal with fellow Scot Dave Mackay, the Spurs great who was not playing that day. He had appeared

in a bar there with some family and friends from Edinburgh who had been at the match, and their table was covered with a large square of turf from Wembley, set like a tablecloth! The celebrations continued until late into the wee small hours at a number of parties after the Café Royal.

Back in Glasgow on the Monday, Brown attended the SFA offices for a debrief, after which he went out for lunch with some officials. When it was time to pay, the restaurant manager said to him, ‘Mr Brown, you don’t need to pay, this is on the house.’ The feel-good factor in the wake of the result had certainly spread throughout the country, and Brown and his players were hailed as heroes.

Hugh Nelson made a statement to the press: ‘Bobby Brown deserves the fullest recognition every Scot can give him – the Wembley win was his – he chose the team, he worked out the tactics, he put them over to the players. He kept us informed every step he took. I appreciated his courtesy phoning me to tell me his Wembley team the night before telling the press – he deserves all the credit he can get.’

The nation was definitely walking with an extra spring in its step. Brown recalls speaking to his father, a keen football fan, on his return. He told him that, on the day of the game, he had been so nervous about the outcome that he could not listen to it on the radio and instead had gone with Brown’s mother to spend the afternoon in Callender, an attractive little town in Perthshire. They were walking along the riverside there, enjoying the peace and quiet, when suddenly, at about quarter to five in the afternoon, the calm of their surroundings was rudely shattered by a cacophony of car horns tooting loudly to signal the Scottish success – a sound that was music to his ears.

The tone of the English press after the game was for the most part in marked contrast to their pre-match comments.

Desmond Hackett wrote, 'The Scots command my highest praise for what they did to the World Cup winners. Remember history will only record a 3–2 win and that does not substantiate claims to have taken over the World Championship.'

Ken Jones: 'England were lucky to dodge a massacre. Scotland might have achieved the immortality of the Wembley Wizards ... but they let England off the hook.'

Brian James: 'Tributes are due to Scotland; they were the better team and contained the more totally committed players. The truth is that in two years they have learned how to beat eight fit men whereas in 1965 they could only draw against nine[!].'

Peter Lorenzo: 'Let it be said firmly and fairly, Scotland thoroughly deserved their splendid triumph. But given eleven fit men I will stand unhesitatingly by the World Cup winners against Scotland and the cream of Europe.'

The latter two quotes clearly referred to Jack Charlton's injury, despite which he managed to score England's first goal. The reality was that the Scottish defence found him a handful up front and would have preferred to see him playing in his own position in defence. It is noteworthy that the Scots also suffered injuries. Gemmell was off the pitch receiving treatment when Law opened the scoring, and in the second half both Law and Lennox required treatment for injuries.

Ramsey himself was quoted as saying, 'I warned it would take a great team to beat us. Let's give them their due.'

The Italian sports paper *Stadio* stated, 'A well-deserved success; the Scots were much superior in midfield. We praise Scotland for their all-round strength. Individually and collectively this team shone brightly without any weaknesses.'

For Brown, this had been an unforgettable occasion, but he was keeping his feet on the ground. The match was also a qualifying game for the following year's European Nations'

Championship in Italy. With that in mind, he said, 'We didn't do any lap of honour because we're only halfway to our goal of qualifying for Europe. We should have had five or six goals. Every single player did his bit and a lot of the team's confidence was down to Baxter and Law. Without doubt it was the best managerial debut I could have been given.' Although in public he sought to keep the lid on fans' optimism, privately he was both relieved and delighted at the outcome of his first international in charge.

Although he was not to know it at the time, this was to be the one and only time he was able to field that eleven, because of injuries and call-offs – something that later would become a matter of particular regret.