

# When the Scots hammered Spain in the Bernabéu

Following the euphoria south of the border after England's 3-2 victory over Spain recently, former Hibs' star Davie Gibson remembered when Scotland travelled to the Bernabéu Stadium in Madrid and inflicted the biggest ever home defeat on the Spaniards.

The historic game took place on 13 June 1963 and was the third game of a summer tour.

After two defeats, the Scottish press suggested that the tour be abandoned to prevent further embarrassment against a top-class Spanish side who would go on to win the European Championships the following year.

The Scottish players had other ideas however and fielded five forwards, all of whom scored.

Davie told The Edinburgh Reporter: "I made my Scotland debut against Austria at Hampden in front of 90,000, but the Austrians turned it into a kicking match, which was eventually abandoned.

"We lost in Norway after Dave Mackay had to go off and Frank McLintock came off the bench to win his first cap.

"We conceded two late goals to go from 3-2 up to 4-3 losers. Then, after we lost 1-0 in Dublin the press slaughtered us. Some were demanding the tour be abandoned before we embarrassed Scotland in Madrid.

“There was a bomb scare at Dublin Airport. To pass the time, Dave Mackay started doing his party piece – he would juggle a half-crown coin, then flick it into his top jacket pocket. Jim Baxter joined in and I remember Ian St John tried it and the coins flew everywhere which broke the tension and got us all laughing.

“By the time we got to the Bernabeu, we were ready for anything. All of our players were annoyed at ourselves and even more annoyed at the press, so we took a collective decision to have a go at the Spaniards.

The plan nearly backfired when Adelardo of Atletico Madrid put Spain in front after just eight minutes, but the prolific Denis Law equalised eight minutes later with his 11th goal in seven internationals that season.

Then Scotland scored again, with Gibson getting the first of his three international goals when he ran on to a Jim Baxter pass which he fired home from 20 yards. “That was a special moment. You grow up dreaming about playing for Scotland, and scoring, then it happens which felt magic,” he recalled.

When clubmate McLintock scored three minutes later, the Spanish fans and players were shocked.

Rangers’ Davie Wilson made it 4-1 after half an hour and, although Jose Veloso of Deportivo La Coruna pulled one back just before the break, it was a far happier Scotland that went off at half-time.

Rangers’ Willie Henderson scored a fifth goal in 51 minutes and the Spanish heads dropped, with Scotland so in command they could indulge in a period of “keep-ball” before St John capped perhaps his best game for Scotland with the sixth goal, seven minutes from time.

Davie continued: “We were a team which liked to get forward, and wanted to at every opportunity. That day we did, and our

attacking plans really paid off, all five forwards scored that night.

“Perhaps we did kick the form book out of the window. After the losses to Norway and the Republic of Ireland we were under pressure to perform, but, that’s how it is with Scotland. That Madrid win stands out as a career highlight for me.

“The fact that all of our forwards scored made it even more remarkable, and I don’t think anything like that will ever happen again, especially these days when teams often play with only one striker.

“I can still remember the team, Adam Blacklaw from Burnley was in goals and Celtic’s Billy McNeil played at full back with Davie Holt of Hearts. My Leicester team mate Frank McLintock, Ian Ure from Dundee and Rangers’ Jim Baxter were the half backs.

“Up front we had Rangers Willie Henderson, myself, Liverpool’s Ian St John, Manchester United’s Denis Law who was the captain and Davie Wilson of Rangers.”

Manager Ian McColl said: “This is one of the greatest teams ever to wear the Scottish jersey. They were all magnificent – no – superb. On this form we would have beaten the best side in the world.”