

By Paul McParlan

# TOMMY JACKSON – THE HERO OF OLD TRAFFORD!

Optimism was not high among Evertonians when they faced Leeds United in the FA Cup semi-final at Old Trafford on 27 April 1968.

Alan Ball was suspended so manager Harry Catterick selected 21-year-old Tommy Jackson in his place. It was a daunting task for a player who had made his Toffees debut only five days earlier at Nottingham Forest.

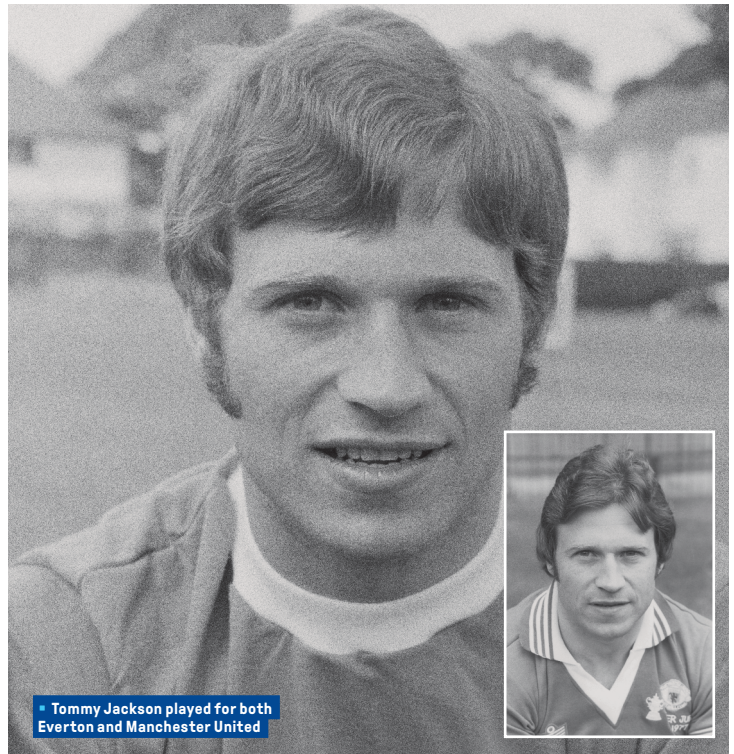
By contrast, Leeds possessed, in Billy Bremner and Johnny Giles, the most combative midfield pairing of that era. Jackson was given Howard Kendall's number 4 shirt at Old Trafford (which meant our future manager wore 10 for the only time in his Everton career) and he had the game of his life.

Jackson produced a tenacious, terrier-like performance and his constant, indefatigable harassing of the opposition was a key factor in Everton's 1-0 victory that earned a second Cup final trip to Wembley in three seasons.

Jackson's only other appearance in 1967/68 was as a substitute replacement for Jimmy Husband against Manchester City the week after the semi-final and although he was named in the initial Wembley squad, he didn't make the final 12.

Everton signed Jackson from Glentoran in February 1968 for £9,000. He was on the radar of many clubs after his superb man-marking performance nullified the threat of the renowned Benfica striker Eusebio in a European Cup tie in 1967.

Although his opportunities with the Blues were limited, he played a vital role in Everton's title win in 1969/70, slotting seamlessly into midfield to cover Ball, Harvey or Kendall whenever they were missing. He made 14 starts to add another Championship medal to



the two he won in Northern Ireland with Glentoran.

Jackson left Everton for Nottingham Forest in October 1970 as part of the deal that brought Henry Newton to Goodison.

Just over 12 months later he scored the only goal of the game as Forest defeated Everton 1-0 at the City Ground!

In the summer of 1975 he was granted a free transfer and Manchester United manager Tommy Docherty moved quickly to take him to Old Trafford to add valuable experience to a young squad which had just returned to the top flight.

Jackson more than played his part as United finished third in the First Division table.

He also won 35 caps for Northern Ireland during his career, the highlight being a 1-0 victory over England at Wembley in May 1972. After spells as manager of Waterford and Crusaders he returned to Glentoran in October 1987 where he delivered 16 trophies before leaving in 1993.

Jackson may not be the most heralded of Everton players, but he remains the last Northern Irishman to win a League title with the Blues.