



By Mike Royden

LEAP YEAR MADNESS:

EVERTON V ASTON VILLA, 28 FEBRUARY 1964

The Liverpool Echo called it 'The Most Freakish and Eventful Game Played at Goodison.'

1964 was a leap year, and the players, officials and the 50,292 crowd certainly needed the extra day to recover. Everton moved into second spot in the First Division table with a 4-2 home win against a Villa side with future Everton boss Gordon Lee in defence, but it was far from straightforward.

This six-goal fest had everything - not that the fans could see much of it. The Friday evening fog grew progressively denser, making it impossible to identify players from the terraces in the second half.

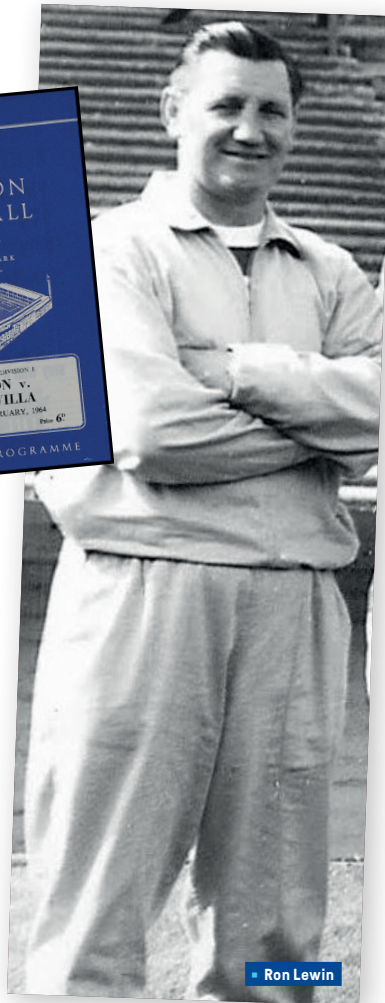
The Goodison faithful had already seen Everton go a goal down after five minutes. Thirty minutes later, referee Bill Holian was accidentally charged in the back, pulling a thigh muscle as he fell awkwardly. During this bizarre delay, the crowd was treated to a gramophone record, being played and the sight of the Villa keeper hitting the turf face down, as though poleaxed (the result of concussion after a blow

to the chin while making a save from Alex Young a few minutes earlier). After a further delay, he too left the scene of carnage on a stretcher. Earlier, the referee had cause to inspect Tony Kay's studs after Wylie of Villa had received a kick to his stomach. His shirt was torn from top to bottom and had to be replaced.

Linesman Burns replaced the injured referee with Toffees coach Ron Lewin running the line. On the restart Dennis Stevens latched on to a pass from Young to equalise. Young had looked suspiciously offside, but no flag was raised by Lewin and the goal stood. Villa screamed for offside all the way back to the centre circle. Centre-half John Sleeuwenhoeck (who had gone in goal) was booked for kicking the ball away - as was George Graham. Meanwhile, the police frogmarched away a few protesting Villa supporters.

Mr J Jones of Moreton, a qualified linesman watching from the stands, had seen enough. He offered his services and duly replaced the Everton coach. And this was just the first half!

Roy Vernon put the Blues 2-1 ahead with a spot-kick and Alex Young drove home the third before Alex Scott made it 4-1. Ten-man Villa (no subs were permitted until the 1964/65 season) mounted a brave fightback and scored a second through Graham, who was



Ron Lewin

a limping passenger by the end. Post-match, a still furious Villa threatened to report the missed offside decision to the League. Of the goalkeeper's injury, former Everton hero and now the Villa boss, Joe Mercer, said: "The great thing from our point of view, was that the player involved was Alex Young. We know, therefore, that it must have been an accident." Once an Evertonian...

**MOST FREAKISH AND
EVENTFUL GAME PLAYED
AT GOODISON**
**Referee And Goalkeeper
Are Carried Off**
EVERTON NOW SECOND
By LESLIE EDWARDS

The most freakish, most eventful game ever played at Goodison Park. That is the only apt description of the game last night in which Everton beat Aston Villa by 4-2 and so moved into second place in the League table.

side, turned the ball on to the goal line from the right, and Stevens, throwing himself at it headed it into the net as he fell to the turf. Vernon, brought down in the penalty area at 55 minutes, recovered in time to take the award from the spot and put his side in front.