

## The match we never got to.

### John McCormick

There are hundreds of games I never got to, whole seasons of them, but there is one in particular that sticks in my mind: April 5<sup>th</sup> 2015, Easter Sunday, a derby at the SOL. We had won the previous 4 derbies, Thanks to Di Canio of the muddy knees and Poyet of the Great Escape. This time it was Dick Advocaat in charge.

Ed offered to get me a ticket, and my wife was OK with me travelling up for the weekend but there was a problem. My daughter was due to give birth around the time tickets went on sale so I held on. And so did she, for over two weeks. In the end I had to turn down the chance of the ticket and resign myself to staying at home.

The wait ended on the morning of Easter Sunday. All was well, and early that afternoon we piled into the car to the hospital, where I held my new born granddaughter for the very first time.



Going back, the car radio carried the excitement of the SOL and even the teams coming out but we got home just in time for the start and I didn't miss Jermain Defoe cracking in that winner – in a manner of speaking.

*Welcome to the family, our Hazel, born on the day we did five in a row.*

### Malcolm Dawson

I had booked my holiday before the fixtures came out - a week in Northern Italy and Venice, to search for lesser kestrel, slender billed gull and Caspian tern in the Po Delta and sample the gelato in the place so loved by the artists Bellini, Tintoretto and Titian.



So it was much to my chagrin when I realised that my flight out from Gatwick was on the morning of April 4<sup>th</sup> the day before our home fixture against our nearest and biggest rivals. As the flight was early I booked a hotel at the airport on the Friday night but broke off my long drive south by staying with friends for a couple of nights just outside Nottingham. The journey wasn't the only thing that I broke, because whilst at their home I managed to break off the earth pin from the charger I had for the tablet that would allow me to check my e-mails if I wished,

but more importantly to keep up to date with things from the Stadium of Light. But no worries, it was only the plastic pin at the top and a bit of superglue would render it fully operational again.

It was only when I had unpacked in our remote country farmhouse hotel that I realised that I had forgotten to put it back in my case after the glue had set. And having been using it on the plane, the charge was down to about 15%! No one else in the party had one which was suitable and next day, having returned from our field trip in time for kick off, I retreated to my room. I didn't dare risk logging on more than once every 15 minutes, but managed to see the final score just before the battery went dead and celebrated with plenty of local wine. I had to wait until I got home to see Jermain Defoe's wonder strike but am now the owner of a tee shirt which I bought from our friends at Art of Football, commemorating one of the best goals I never saw at the Stadium of Light.



*Image on art of football tee shirt  
www.art-of-football.com*

*Watch Defoe's goal on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vo3BS06L4No>*