

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MEXICO 1970 - Quarter-
finals Leon, Estadio Nou Camp, 14 June 1970

WEST GERMANY - ENGLAND

3-2 *d.t.s.*

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The never-ending challenge between Germany and England continued in Mexico'70. After the final four years earlier at Wembley and the thousand controversies that followed Hurst's decisive phantom goal in extra time, the two teams crossed paths again in the quarter-finals at the Leon stadium, with West Germany favoured by their impressive run in the first round: 3 victories out of 3 matches with 10 goals scored, 7 of which by the superstar Gerd Müller.

England, for their part, boasted the best defence in the tournament (only 1 goal conceded in 3 games, that of Jairzinho), but lost their great goalkeeper Gordon Banks, injured in the last game of the round against Czechoslovakia. The road to the semi-final promises to be a momentous battle, a match destined to remain in football legend just like the one in 1966. The first half was barren of emotions, with the two teams perfectly placed on the pitch to study each other without revealing themselves too much, saving energy due to the heat and the altitude, but it was a real game with no holds barred, with the Argentine referee Coerezza struggling to keep it in hand. The game was turned on its head in the 31st minute when English centre-half Mullery set up the action in midfield, sending right-back Newton down the flank, and then went close by hitting a cross from Newton himself, ahead of Schnellinger and Maier's exit. England took the lead in the only goal-scoring action of the first half, and Germany failed to react, hamstrung by England's fast pressing of their playmakers, Beckenbauer and Overath. At the start of the second half, Germany tried to uncover themselves in search of an equaliser and England immediately found the double with a fantastic counter-attack: a long throw for Hurst, who was jumping forward,

He waited for Newton's insertion and launched him to the right, the latter's cross to the second post where Peters promptly arrived to anticipate Vogts and tap into the net. Four passes from defence to goal: textbook football. It seemed to be over for the Germans, who just did not seem able to change gear. In the 7th minute of the second half, after a frustration foul by Müller on Newton, the British full-back got up and mocked him by mimicking a Nazi salute. Gerd laughs it off and walks away without responding to the provocation. The key to the match came in the 10th minute, when Libuda was taken off and Grabowski was on the pitch, and he immediately made his mark by committing Bonetti, Banks' replacement, from a good position on Overath's suggestion; his speed changed the inertia of the match, but it took a flash of class from Franz Beckenbauer to start the comeback. In the 23rd minute, the Kaiser received the ball on the three-quarter line and took off with his proverbial stride, aiming at Mullery, skilfully skipped past him and finished with a diagonal right-footed shot that went under the arms of a clumsy Bonetti. The game finally got going, with the Germans revitalised. Sir Ramsey took off a tired Bobby Charlton and put on the lively Bell to exploit the large spaces left to the English counter-attack: in the 27th minute the new arrival escaped on the right and crossed for Hurst who with a diving header beat Maier but the ball lapped the ground.

post. At the other end Overath launched Müller, who mocked Newton and his Nazi taunt with a dribble, but then his shot was neutralised by Bonetti. With 14 minutes to go it took a stroke of genius from the old golem Uwe Seeler to equalise: Schnellinger's long throw into the box, the ball was long for Mullery and Seeler, but the latter, in impossible conditions of balance, jumped and hit the ball with the back of his head as it fell, creating a delightful lob that flew past a petrified Bonetti and into the net. Crazy goal and all to go for England. Three minutes later, a great opportunity for Beckenbauer to seal the win.

match: he triangulated nicely with Müller on the edge of the box, then entered the area, skipping past Labone, but his shot, one-on-one with Bonetti, clamorously went wide. So it went into extra time, and the battle took on epic proportions. Franz was unleashed and fired a bomb from 30 yards that Bonetti deflected into the corner with good reflexes. England were still in the game and reacted on Bell's drive, who put in a cross from the right for the stopper Labone, who broke forward for the corner, but his volley from an ideal position was unluckily high over the crossbar. In the second period of extra time Labone was again the protagonist, with a pass that unleashed Hurst in front of the goal: the striker deflected the winning shot and Vogts saved on the line, but the referee had interrupted the game for an alleged foul by Labone. And so came the episode that decided the match: in the 3rd minute of the second period of extra time Grabowski exploited his freshness and speed, racing down the right flank before curling a long cross that found Löhr ready at the second post to head the ball into the middle, where Gerd Müller was a hawk to elude Mullery and tap in behind Bonetti for the 3-2 goal and his eighth World Cup strike. England's anger emerged powerfully for a dramatic finale: the evanescent Lee burned Schnellinger on the clearance, outpaced Maier and handed Hurst the equalising ball, but again the embarrassing Argentine referee blew his whistle for a non-existent foul on Schnellinger, the goal disallowed. It wasn't over: Hunter's cross into the box, Bell anticipated Vogts and jumped over Beckenbauer who blatantly knocked him down, it would have been a sacrosanct penalty but once again the referee's decision penalised the English and the game continued. It seems that fate, disguised as an Argentine referee, wants to return the ill-gotten gains to the Germans of 4 years earlier. The last opportunity was at the feet of Newton, who fired a powerful right-footer from the edge of the box in the 120th minute, but Maier was not surprised and gave the semi-final against Italy.

WEST GERMANY: Maier 6, Vogts 5.5, Höttges 6 (*from 46' Schulz 6.5*), Schnellinger 6.5, Fichtel 6, Beckenbauer 7.5, Libuda 6 (*from 55' Grabowski 7.5*), Löhr 7, Seeler 7, Overath 7, Gerd Müller 7. All. Helmut Schön.

ENGLAND: Bonetti 5.5, Newton 6, Cooper 5, Mullery 6, Labone 5, Moore 5.5, Lee 6, Ball 6.5, Bobby Charlton 6.5 (*from 70' Bell 7*), Hurst 6.5, Peters 7 (*from 81' Hunter 6.5*) . Manager: Alf Ramsey.

Referee: Coerezza (ARG) 5

On 31' Mullery 0-1.

On 49' Peters 0-2; on 68' Beckenbauer 1-2; on 76' Seeler 2-2.

On 108' Gerd Müller 3-2.