

After having mentioned on Wednesday an imaginary manager of Macclesfield Town FC who takes them to Premier and Champions League glory, I thought I would use this email today to talk about three legendary British football managers who you really should know about, if you want to know about football. I think you will have heard of a couple of them from the books I have given you, but maybe not the third.

The three managers are MATT BUSBY, BILL SHANKLY, and JOCK STEIN (pronounced 'Steen'). All three worked as managers at roughly the same time - in the 1960s and 1970s. All three turned their clubs (in the case of Matt Busby, MANCHESTER UNITED; in the case of Bill Shankly, LIVERPOOL; in the case of Jock Stein, CELTIC) into legends of world football. And two of them - Matt Busby and Jock Stein - ended up advising the most successful modern day British manager, ALEX FERGUSON. All of them were good footballers when they were young, but none of them had a particularly amazing career (just like Alex Ferguson whose career highlight as a footballer was a couple of seasons playing for Rangers in the Scottish First Division). And all of them were Scottish (again, just like Alex Ferguson) - they were all born (like Richard Burton) in mining towns where life was hard and football was the only escape into a world of excitement and beauty.

Matt Busby was the oldest (born in 1909, four years before Bill Shankly (1913), and thirteen years before Jock Stein (1922)). And he was the first to be made manager of the club - Manchester United, in his case - that he would make legendary. Busby was appointed manager of Manchester United in 1945. The last time Manchester United had won anything was in 1911, but Busby immediately had United challenging for honours, going through a frustrating period of coming second in the First Division (which would now be the Premier League) in 1947, 1948, 1949 and 1951 - but they won the FA Cup in 1948, and then finally became Champions in 1952. Busby then transformed the team, putting into it a large number of players who had been developed in the Manchester United youth team. Ever since then, Manchester United have had a record of selecting at least one homegrown youth player in their first team. Manchester United have now gone over 4,000 matches IN A ROW where someone who played for Manchester United as a youth player has been selected for the first team - no other team in the world has anywhere close to that sort of record.



From 1952 onwards, Manchester United had so many young players in the team that they were known as the BUSBY BABES. But just because they were young didn't mean they were no good - they were very, very good. In fact they were most technically skilful team ever assembled in English football, and the most skilful team that would ever play in England until Alex Ferguson's first legendary Manchester United team (Schmeichel, Parker, Bruce, Pallister, Irwin, Giggs, Ince, Keane, Kanchelskis, Cantona, Hughes) that won the Double in 1994. The Busby Babes went on to become First Division Champions in 1956 and 1957, and came within one game of



winning the Double for the first time in the 20th century in 1957 - they lost the FA Cup Final to Aston Villa. They were riding high, and were all ready to take on Europe and try to win the 1958 European Cup, having been knocked out in the semi-finals by Real Madrid the previous year. At the time (unlike now with the Champions League) only the team that came top of the First Division could compete in the European Cup - so to win the European Cup, you had to first win your league and then the next year try to win the European Cup. But disaster struck for Manchester United in 1958 - after playing against Red Star Belgrade in YUGOSLAVIA (drawing 3-3 and going through to the European Cup semi-finals on aggregate 5-4), they flew back to England, stopping along the way to refuel at MUNICH. When the plane tried to take off again, it crashed on the runway. Eight players were killed, including Manchester United and England's star player DUNCAN EDWARDS - someone who would have gone to probably become the best player in the world ever to play football had he not died at the age of only 21. Matt Busby was severely injured, and it was unclear for many weeks whether he would survive. He would, but his team was shattered, as were his dreams of winning the European Cup. Real Madrid would go on to win the European Cup in 1958 and for two more years after that - making five in a row - until finally surrendering the Cup in 1961. But for the MUNICH AIR CRASH, Manchester United would undoubtedly have stopped Real Madrid winning so many European Cups. But as it was, Matt Busby had to start all over again - try to win the League, and then win the European Cup.



In 1959, one year after the disaster at Munich, Bill Shankly was appointed manager of Liverpool. He recruited ex-Liverpool players like BOB PAISLEY and JOE FAGAN to work with him, forming the famous Liverpool 'boot room', where the coaching staff would meet and talk about how to improve the team. Like Manchester United, Liverpool were in need of rebuilding - they were in Second Division, and been there for five years. Liverpool just missed out on promotion to the First Division in 1960 and 1961, but finally managed it in 1962. 1963 saw Liverpool in the top league for the first time in eight years and they came eighth. The year after, in 1964, they won the Championship, the first time they had managed to do this since 1947. Then in 1965 they won the FA Cup, and in 1966 it was back to winning the Championship again. Having got to the semi-finals of the European Cup in 1965, they might have hoped to do better in 1967, but were knocked out by an AJAX team that was inspired by a then-unknown JOHAN CRUYFF. Bill Shankly would not get to compete for the European Cup again for seven years - instead he would watch the man we are just about to talk about and then Matt Busby lift the biggest trophy in European football.



Jock Stein became manager of Celtic in 1965. Although Celtic and Rangers were the two leading Scottish teams, in 1965, Rangers had much the better record in terms of winning the Scottish League. Celtic had last won the league in 1954 - 11 years before Jock Stein's appointment. In those 11 years, Rangers had won the League six times. But Stein's appointment made an immediate difference. In 1966, Celtic won the league, winning the title from Rangers by two points. They also came very close to winning the Double that year, losing the Scottish Cup Final in a replay to (guess who...) Rangers. Winning the league allowed Celtic to enter the European Cup in 1967. Jock Stein started the season saying that he thought Celtic 'could win everything' - and he wasn't wrong. Celtic again won the League



Championship, drawing with Rangers in Rangers' last game of the season to ensure that Rangers could not overtake them. They also won the Scottish Cup, completing a domestic Double - but could they make it a treble by winning the European Cup? Celtic managed to get through to the final, which would be played at Benfica's ground in Lisbon. Celtic would face the mighty INTER MILAN, who had won the European Cup in 1965 and 1966. The key to Milan's success was an incredible defence - it was hugely difficult to score against them. So when Celtic went 1-0 down in the final, it seemed to spell doom for Celtic. But amazingly, Celtic managed to come back, scoring twice to win the Cup 2-1. Here is a video about the game: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7ON3mMMFSs>

Celtic became the first British team ever to win the European Cup. The Celtic players became known as the LISBON LIONS. The most remarkable fact about the Celtic team that won the European Cup was that all but one of their 15 man squad was born within 10 miles of Celtic's ground - and the odd man out, BOBBY LENNOX, was born within 30 miles of the ground! Celtic were the most local team that would ever win the European Cup. But the following year, another British team would win the European Cup, this time made up of talents from all over Britain, including the genius Irishman, GEORGE BEST.

Yes - under Matt Busby, Manchester United had been rebuilt, around the attacking trio of BOBBY CHARLTON (a survivor of the Munich Air Crash), DENIS LAW, and the brilliant young footballer, GEORGE BEST. Their first honour was the 1963 FA Cup, followed by the 1965 League Championship - the year after Liverpool won their first title for ages. Liverpool would get the title back in 1966, while United tried again for the European Cup. George Best produced an amazing performance to knock out Benfica in the quarter finals, following up a home 3-2 win in the first leg with an astonishing 5-1 away win against Benfica in the second: a victory which saw George Best dubbed 'El Beatle' in the Spanish press because he was a star and shared a hairstyle with a certain Liverpoolian beat combo which was making the news around then. But then in the semi-finals, Manchester United were knocked out by Partizan Belgrade - a team they should have easily beaten. Manchester United simply didn't turn up, allowing Partizan to beat them 2-0 in Belgrade - a deficit they could not make up at Old Trafford, winning only 1-0. Matt Busby was in tears, thinking that he had blown his last chance of winning the European Cup. But he would get one more chance.

After Liverpool had seized back Manchester United's title in 1966, Manchester United won it back in 1967, allowing them another shot at the European Cup. United got to the semi-final, where they faced the mighty Real Madrid. United managed to win the first home leg 1-0. But then in the away leg, they went down 2-0 within the first 40 minutes. United then got one

back from an own goal to make 2-1: 2-2 on aggregate with United going through on away goals. But then Real Madrid struck back instantly, making it 3-1 at half time. The United players were distraught, but Busby reminded them: we just need one goal and we are going through on away goals. They got that goal in the 73 minute, and then five minutes later, BILL FOULKES - another survivor of the Munich Air Crash - made it 3-3 to make sure. United were through to the final, where they would face the team they had knocked out in 1966: Benfica, led by the amazing EUSEBIO (pronounced 'You - say - bee - oh'). United went 1-0 up in the 52nd minute, but Benfica broke their hearts by equalising with only 11 minutes to go, and in the last minute, Eusebio broke through the United defence and bore down on goal. Would he score? Eusebio hit his shot well, but the United keeper, ALEX STEPNEY, managed to palm the ball away to take the game into extra time. In extra time, Manchester United took over, with goals from BOBBY CHARLTON, GEORGE BEST and a player who had been part of United's youth team, BRIAN KIDD (who would go on to be Alex Ferguson's assistant when United won the Double in 1994), crushing Benfica into a 4-1 defeat. Here is a short colour film of the final: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMZ9EVFJRZk&t=301s>

United had won the European Cup, the first English side to do so - ten years after the Munich Air Crash. Charlton and Busby were in tears when the final whistle went - for both of them, this would be their final major achievement in football, with Busby retiring in 1969 after losing the league championship to Manchester City on the last day of the season. After 1968, Manchester United went into decline - while they would win the FA Cup in 1977, 1983, 1985 and 1990, they would not win the league championship again until 1993 - an interval of 26 years. Those 26 years would see Liverpool become England's leading team. But if you had told a Liverpool supporter in 1970 - your team will become the most dominant side in English and European football, they would not have believed you. From 1966 to 1973 - seven long years - Bill Shankly would win nothing.

In contrast, Jock Stein's Celtic won every single Scottish league title in that time, going on to set a record of nine league titles in a row. Celtic would also get back to the European Cup final in 1970, losing the final to FEYENOORD, a Dutch team that they should have beaten easily. Instead they were beaten 2-1 in extra time, having taken a 1-0 lead. But for Shankly, there would be no success. The team he had built and that had traded titles with Manchester United from 1964-1967 had grown old and gone into decline. It needed to be rebuilt and that took time. The revival began with Shankly's recruiting in 1971 a young attacking player called KEVIN KEEGAN, who played for Scunthorpe. Keegan was paired up with the striker JOHN TOSHACK, who had been signed the year before - and together they formed an electric combination. Liverpool got to the FA Cup Final in 1971, where they were beaten by Arsenal, who did a domestic Double. Liverpool then came within one point of the League title in 1972, losing out to Derby County under an up-and-coming manager called BRIAN CLOUGH (pronounced 'Cluff'). And then in 1973, the dam broke with Liverpool winning the title. They followed that up by winning the FA Cup in 1974, beating Newcastle United 3-0 with Keegan contributing two goals. Here is a short film of that game:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKYiN0aUB8w>

And then... Shankly announced his retirement. Nobody could believe it, nobody could understand it. Shankly himself said he was tired. The only big trophy he hadn't won was the European Cup, but Liverpool had crashed out of that competition in only the second round in 1974 - and to get back to competing for that, Liverpool would have to win the title again in 1975 (which they wouldn't actually do - Derby County would win it again, just as they had done in 1972) and then try again. Shankly said he was too tired to try. But it proved to be his

biggest mistake. He soon realised he missed the game too much, and started hanging around the Liverpool training ground, which created problems for the new manager, BOB PAISLEY - the players didn't know whether they should still be listening to Shankly, or to Paisley. Shankly had to be told to stay away from the training ground. Offended, he refused to watch Liverpool games in the directors' box and would instead stand with the fans. He died in 1981. In the seven years between Shankly's retirement and his death, Liverpool won four League titles (1976, 1977, 1979, 1980) and three European Cups (1977, 1978, 1981). So if Shankly had carried on and not retired when he did, Shankly would have died with a record of seven League titles, three European Cups, and two FA Cups - and people would be debating whether he or Alex Ferguson was the greatest post-war manager. What a missed opportunity.

With Shankly's retirement, that left only Jock Stein of our trio of legendary managers still working. After Celtic's run of nine consecutive titles, they would only win the title one more time - in 1977 - under Jock Stein. That 1977 team - which won the Double with the Scottish Cup as well - was inspired by a young genius player called KENNY DALGLISH (pronounced 'Dal - gleash'). Stein hoped to build a team around Dalglish, and make another attempt at the European Cup - but his hopes were dashed when Liverpool signed Dalglish for a record fee as a replacement for Kevin Keegan, who was moving to play for the German team, Hamburg. It would be Liverpool that would get the benefit of Dalglish's brilliance in Europe - winning three European Cups with Dalglish in the team. With Dalglish gone, Stein stepped down as Celtic manager in 1978, and shortly afterwards became manager of Scotland - a position he would occupy until his death in 1985. Stein died after witnessing his Scottish team secure a play-off place for the 1986 World Cup Finals by drawing 1-1 away from home to Wales, with a penalty for Scotland nine minutes from time. The pressure of watching the game proved too much and Stein had a heart attack in the Scottish dressing room. He died in front of the man who was assisting him as Scottish manager, while also managing Aberdeen - Alex Ferguson. Ferguson took the Scottish team on to the World Cup Finals and the same year became manager of Manchester United, an appointment that would result in a whole new era for English football. But that new era - which we are still living through - was built on the achievements of Matt Busby, Bill Shankly and Jock Stein.