

= 2001 UEFA Cup Final =

The 2001 UEFA Cup Final was a football match between Liverpool of England and Alavés of Spain on 16 May 2001 at the Westfalenstadion in Dortmund, Germany. The showpiece event was the final match of the 2000–01 edition of Europe's secondary cup competition, the UEFA Cup. Liverpool were appearing in their third UEFA Cup final, after their appearances in 1973 and 1976. It also represented the first European final they reached since being banned from Europe following the Heysel Stadium disaster. Alavés were appearing in their first European final.

Each team had to progress through six knockout rounds playing 12 matches in total to reach the final. Liverpool's matches were mainly close affairs, none of their ties were won by more than two goals. The fourth round and semi-final ties against Roma and Barcelona were won 1–0. In contrast, Alavés ties ranged from close affairs to comfortable victories. They won their first round tie against Gaziantepspor by one goal, whereas they beat Kaiserslautern 9–2 in the semi-final.

Watched by a crowd of 48,050, Liverpool took an early lead when Markus Babbel scored in the fourth minute. They extended their lead in the 16th minute when Steven Gerrard scored. Midway through the first half, Iván Alonso scored to bring Alavés within a goal of levelling the match. A few minutes before the end of the first half, Liverpool went 3–1 up when Gary McAllister scored from the penalty spot. Minutes after the start of the second half, Javi Moreno scored twice to level the match at 3–3. Liverpool went in front again in the 76th minute when Robbie Fowler scored. With a minute remaining in the match, Alavés equalised thanks to Jordi Cruyff. The match went into extra time, with the first half goalless. With the match heading for a penalty shoot-out, Delfi Geli headed into his own net, as a result, Liverpool won on the golden goal rule. The victory meant Liverpool completed a Treble of Football League Cup, FA Cup and UEFA Cup.

= = Route to the final = =

= = = Liverpool = = =

Liverpool qualified for the UEFA Cup by finishing fourth in the 1999–2000 FA Premier League. Their opposition in the first round were Rapid București of Romania. The first leg was held at Rapid's home ground Stadionul Giulești-Valea lui Pânzele, Liverpool won 1–0, Nick Barmby scored the winning goal. The second leg at Liverpool's home ground Anfield finished 0–0, which meant that Liverpool won the tie 1–0 on aggregate to progress to the second round. Liverpool's opposition in the second round was Slovan Liberec of the Czech Republic. The first leg at Anfield was heading for a 0–0 draw, until the 87th minute when Emile Heskey scored to give Liverpool a 1–0 victory. The second leg was at Liberec's home ground, the Stadion u Nisy. Liberec took the lead in the first half to level the tie at 1–1. Midway through the first half, Liverpool equalised to make it 1–1 on the night and 2–1 in their favour in aggregate. Two further goals in the second half by Barmby and Michael Owen, before a late Liberec goal ensured Liverpool won the match 3–2 to progress to the third round after a 4–2 aggregate victory.

Liverpool's opponents in the third round were Olympiacos of Greece. The first leg was held at Olympiacos' home ground, the Karaiskakis Stadium. Liverpool were heading for a 2–1 victory courtesy of goals from Barmby and Steven Gerrard, until Olympiacos equalised in the last minute to earn a 2–2 draw. The second leg at Anfield was won 2–0 by Liverpool, with a goal scored in each half by Barmby and Heskey respectively. The victory ensured Liverpool won the tie 4–2 on aggregate to progress to the fourth round.

Liverpool's opposition in the fourth round were Italian side Roma. The first leg was held at Roma's home ground the Stadio Olimpico, where Liverpool had won the European Cup twice in 1977 and 1984. Incidentally, Roma were the team Liverpool beat to win the European Cup in 1984. Liverpool were once again successful at the Stadio Olimpico, as they won 2–0 courtesy of two Michael Owen second half goals. The second leg at Anfield was a close affair. Roma scored in the

70th minute to take the lead , they now needed to score another goal to take the match into extra @-@ time . They looked like they had the opportunity to do so , when the referee awarded a penalty towards the end of the match after he had adjudged that Markus Babbel had handled the ball . However , moments later , he reversed his decision and instead awarded Roma a corner @-@ kick . Roma were unable to score the necessary goal following the incident and Liverpool progressed to the quarter @-@ finals courtesy of a 2 ? 1 aggregate victory .

Portuguese side Porto were the opposition in the quarter @-@ finals . The first leg in Portugal ended 0 ? 0 . Liverpool won the second leg at Anfield 2 ? 0 with Danny Murphy and Michael Owen scoring in the first half to progress to the semi @-@ finals courtesy of a 2 ? 0 aggregate victory . Liverpool were drawn against Spanish side Barcelona in the semi @-@ finals . Liverpool defended resolutely during the first leg at Barcelona 's ground the Camp Nou to earn a 0 ? 0 draw . The second leg at Anfield was equally close , until the 44th minute when Liverpool were awarded a penalty . Gary McAllister scored the subsequent penalty to put Liverpool 1 ? 0 up in the match and the tie . However , a Barcelona goal would see them progress as a result of the away goals rule . Liverpool managed to see out the 90 minutes without conceding a goal to progress to their first European final , since they were banned from participating in Europe following the Heysel Stadium disaster at the 1985 European Cup Final .

= = = Alavés = = =

Alavés qualified for the UEFA Cup by finishing sixth during the 1999 ? 2000 La Liga . They were drawn against Turkish team Gaziantepspor in the first round . The first leg at Alavés ' home ground the Estadio Mendizorroza finished 0 ? 0 . However , the second leg was more entertaining . The match contained seven goals , Alavés won the match 4 ? 3 to progress to the second round . Alavés ' opposition in the second round were Lillestrøm of Norway . The first leg was at Lillestrøm 's home ground the Åråsen Stadion . Alavés won the match 3 ? 1 with goals from Begona , Óscar Tézlez and Cosmin Contra . The second leg in Spain was a 2 ? 2 draw , which ensured that Alavés won the tie 5 ? 3 on aggregate to progress to the third round . Another Norwegian team , Rosenborg were their opposition . The first leg in Spain was a 1 ? 1 draw . The second leg held at Rosenborg 's ground the Lerkendal Stadion . Alavés took an early lead when Rosenborg player Bent Inge Johnsen scored an own goal . Alavés scored a further two goals in the second half , with Rosenborg scoring a late goal to win the match 3 ? 1 and progress to the fourth round courtesy of a 4 ? 2 aggregate victory .

The opposition in the fourth round were Italian team Internazionale , who had won the competition three times . The first leg in Spain saw Internazionale go ahead 3 ? 1 midway through the second half after Álvaro Recoba scored twice and Christian Vieri scored . Alavés fought back to equalise in the 73rd minute after goals from Óscar Tézlez and Iván Alonso securing a 3 ? 3 draw . The second leg at Internazionale 's home ground the San Siro appeared to heading for a 0 ? 0 draw until the 78th minute when Jordi Cruyff scored . A further goal from Ivan Tomi? ensured a 2 ? 0 victory for Alavés . This meant that they progressed to the quarter @-@ finals at the expense of the three @-@ time winners due to a 5 ? 3 aggregate victory .

Fellow Spanish side Rayo Vallecano were the opposition in the quarter @-@ finals . Alavés won the first leg at home 3 ? 0 . Rayo took a 2 ? 0 lead in the second leg at their ground the Estadio Teresa Rivero , but a late Cruyff goal ensured that Alavés would progress to the semi @-@ finals . Their opposition in the semi @-@ finals were German team Kaiserslautern , the first leg in Spain saw four penalties awarded . Three were awarded to Alavés and one to Kaiserslautern , all were scored and a further two goals for Alavés ensured the match finished 5 ? 1 to Alavés . The second leg at Kaiserslautern was essentially meaningless as the German team needed to score four goals to stand a chance of reaching the final . It was Alavés who scored four goals , Kaiserslautern scored a consolation goal , but Alavés won the match 4 ? 1 to progress to the final in their first season in European courtesy of a 9 ? 2 aggregate victory .

= = Match = =

== Background ==

Liverpool went into the match having already won two trophies during the 2000 ? 01 season . Their first trophy was the Football League Cup which they had won in February defeating Birmingham City 5 ? 4 in a penalty shoot @-@ out after the match had finished 1 ? 1 . The second trophy was the FA Cup , which they won 2 ? 1 . They entered the match with the opportunity to win an unprecedented Treble .

Liverpool were appearing in their third UEFA Cup final , both their previous appearances in the final in 1973 and 1976 had resulted in victory . They were also making their first appearance in a European final since their ban from European competition following the Heysel Stadium disaster . Alavés on the other hand were appearing in their first European final in their first season in European competition . Remarkably , the club had been in the Fourth Division of the Spanish league system 11 years ago . As it was their first season in Europe , Alavés had commissioned a special shirt that was pink and bore the names of all their ' socios ' (members) as a memento of their qualification for Europe .

Liverpool opted for a 4 ? 4 ? 2 formation , with the only change from their FA Cup winning team four days earlier being the inclusion of Gary McAllister at the expense of Vladimír ?micer . Robbie Fowler who had been disappointed to be a substitute for the FA Cup final was again on the bench . Emile Heskey and Michael Owen were picked to spearhead Liverpool 's attack . Alavés opted to play a 5 ? 3 ? 2 formation , with Cosmin Contra , Dan Eggen , Antonio Karmona , Óscar Télez and Delfí Geli in defence . In attack , Martín Astudillo and Jordi Cruyff were chosen to play behind lone striker Javi Moreno .

== First half ==

Liverpool won the toss and kicked @-@ off . Within the first four minutes Liverpool had scored . Markus Babbel headed in a Gary McAllister free @-@ kick to put Liverpool 1 ? 0 up . They nearly added to their lead minutes later when Emile Heskey was put through on goal from a McAllister pass , but Alavés goalkeeper Martín Herrera cleared the ball with his feet . Two minutes later , Martín Astudillo was shown a yellow card for a challenge on Heskey . Liverpool player Gary McAllister also received a yellow card after he confronted the Alavés player over his challenge . Alavés first opportunity to score was in the 12th minute . They were awarded a free @-@ kick on the edge of the Liverpool penalty area following a challenge by Stéphane Henchoz . Oscar Télez curled a shot towards Liverpool 's goal , however , Liverpool goalkeeper Sander Westerveld pushed the ball away from goal . Three minutes later , Michael Owen collected a Dietmar Hamann pass and played a diagonal pass to Steven Gerrard , whose shot beat the Alavés keeper Herrera to put Liverpool 2 ? 0 ahead .

Minutes later Alavés made the first substitution of the match when Iván Alonso replaced defender Dan Eggen . The change had the desired effect as four minutes later , Alavés scored . Right wing @-@ back Cosmin Contra put the ball into the area from the right side of the pitch and Alonso rose above Babbel to head the ball into the net to make the scoreline 2 ? 1 . Immediately afterwards , Alavés were almost level when Contra put another ball into the penalty area , however , Henchoz cleared the ball before an Alavés player could reach it . In the 35th minute , Alavés were again nearly level . Alonso 's header fell to Javi Moreno , who went past Henchoz his shot was saved by Westerveld after it hit his chest . The rebound fell to Ivan Tomi? , but Westerveld again saved his shot . Five minutes later , Liverpool were awarded a penalty . Michael Owen had run into the penalty area past the Alavés defence , he was brought down by Herrera who was booked for the foul . Gary McAllister took the penalty and scored to put Liverpool 3 ? 1 ahead .

== Second half ==

In contrast to the first @-@ half , it was Alavés who started the half the better of the two sides . Contra put a cross from the right side of the pitch into the penalty area , which was met by Moreno , whose header beat Westerveld to make the scoreline 3 ? 2 . Four minutes later Alavés had equalised . They were awarded a free @-@ kick 25 yards away from goal and Moreno went straight through the Liverpool wall and into the goal past Westerveld . Liverpool reacted to the scoreline being levelled at 3 ? 3 by substituting Stéphane Henchoz with Vladimír Šmicer . Steven Gerrard was placed in the right @-@ back position as a result of the change . Three minutes later , Owen was brought down by defender Antonio Karmona , who was subsequently booked . Liverpool were awarded a free @-@ kick , which Gary McAllister hit into the Alavés wall . In the 64th minute , both sides made substitutions . Liverpool replaced Emile Heskey with Robbie Fowler , while Alavés goalscorer Javi Moreno with Pablo .

Eight minutes later , Gary McAllister passed the ball to Fowler who moved towards the centre of the pitch from the left @-@ hand side and hit his shot into the corner of the net to put Liverpool 4 ? 3 up with 18 minutes of the match remaining . Two minutes later , Liverpool substituted Michael Owen for Patrik Berger . In the 82nd minute , Alavés had an appeal for a penalty after Hamann was adjudged to have brought Magno down , the Brazilian was subsequently booked for diving . With two minutes remaining , Liverpool goalkeeper Sander Westerveld conceded a corner . The subsequent corner is headed into the goal by Jordi Cruyff to make the scoreline 4 ? 4 . Two minutes into injury @-@ time , Contra went down under pressure from Gerrard in the Liverpool penalty area . Again , the referee deemed that there was no penalty . Following this , the referee blew his whistle to signal the end of 90 minutes if play . The match would now go into a 30 @-@ minute extra @-@ time period .

= = = Extra time = = =

The golden goal was used during extra @-@ time , which meant that whatever team scored first would win . Liverpool kicked off the first half of extra @-@ time and within three minutes , Alavés looked like they had scored a golden goal . Ivan Alonso had put the ball in the Liverpool goal , but it was ruled out as Alonso was offside . A minute later , Óscar Tézlez was booked for fouling Robbie Fowler . Within four minutes , Alavés had been reduced to 10 men . Magno was shown a second yellow card for a two @-@ footed challenge on Markus Babbel . With a minute of the first half of extra @-@ time remaining , Fowler thought he had scored the winning goal , however it was disallowed as he was offside .

Alavés kicked off the second half of extra @-@ time and within seconds , Babbel was booked for bringing down Alavés defender Delfi Geli 30 yards from goal . The resulting free @-@ kick was put wide by Hermes Desio . Three minutes later , Liverpool had a chance to score , but Fowler could not reach Steven Gerrard 's cross and the ball was subsequently cleared from the Alavés penalty area . In the 115th minute of the match , Alavés were reduced to nine men , when Antonio Karmona received a second yellow card for fouling Šmicer . McAllister took the resulting free @-@ kick , which was headed into his own goal by Geli . As a result of the golden goal , Liverpool had won the match 5 ? 4 to win their third UEFA Cup and complete a Treble .

= = = Details = = =

= = Post @-@ match = =

Liverpool 's victory was their third UEFA Cup success , this put them level with Internazionale and Juventus as the teams with the most success in the competition . Their victory also meant they completed a Treble of cup victories , as they had won the Football League Cup and the FA Cup earlier in the season .

The match was hailed as one of the most exciting finals in modern times , with Alan Hansen declaring : " the best final ever . " Liverpool manager Gérard Houllier hailed his players after the match : " When you play in a European final , you are looking for immortality . People remember

who was playing and when you look at programmes from finals you just recall the facts of the game . These boys have produced a game which will be remembered for a long time ? and that is thanks to Alavés too . " Houllier hit back at critics that had labelled Liverpool as boring before the match : " Maybe we are a boring side ? as I seem to keep reading ? but I will put up with that . We must have scored 122 of our 123 goals on the counter attack , but all I know is that our total this season is the third highest in Liverpool 's history . "

The performance of Gary McAllister was lauded after the match with Trevor Brooking stating : " Gary McAllister was outstanding . " Alan Hansen also praised McAllister 's performance : " Gary McAllister was outstanding . At 36 , to keep going the way he did , keep taking those free @-@ kicks and producing it when it counted , was sensational . He fully deserved his man of the match award . "

Alavés manager José Manuel Esnal praised his players despite their loss : " Dortmund has seen a great final , and it was possibly the smallest team in the competition that made it great . " Esnal saluted his players for their character especially for equalising twice in the match : " We played with pride and class to get the score back to 4 ? 4 at the end of normal time , the result of that , however , was that we were half dead going into extra @-@ time . But we 're the same team as we were two hours ago . One side always has to lose a final , just as one wins . "

Despite their success , Liverpool were not celebrating immediately after the match , as they had an important match in the Premier League on the Saturday following the final . The match against Charlton Athletic was a must @-@ win match for Liverpool if they wanted to finish in third place in the league and claim the final UEFA Champions League qualification place . The subsequent match was won 4 ? 0 by Liverpool to secure their place in the 2001 ? 02 UEFA Champions League . Winning the UEFA Cup entitled Liverpool to compete in the 2001 UEFA Super Cup against Champions League winners Bayern Munich . Liverpool won the match 3 ? 2 to secure their second Super Cup victory .