

= 2004 FA Community Shield =

The 2004 FA Community Shield was the 82nd FA Charity Shield , an annual English football match played between the winners of the previous season 's Premier League and FA Cup . It was contested on 8 August 2004 by Arsenal , champions of the 2003 ? 04 Premier League , and Manchester United , who beat Millwall in the final of the 2003 ? 04 FA Cup . Watched by a crowd of 63 @, @ 317 at the Millennium Stadium , Arsenal won the match 3 ? 1 .

This was Manchester United 's 23rd Community Shield appearance and Arsenal 's 18th . Manchester United were without seven of their first @-@ choice players for the game , which meant David Bellion and Eric Djemba @-@ Djemba came into the starting 11 . Cesc Fàbregas started alongside Gilberto Silva in midfield for Arsenal as captain Patrick Vieira was absent . After a goalless first half , Arsenal took the lead when Gilberto scored in the 50th minute . Striker Alan Smith equalised for Manchester United soon after , but José Antonio Reyes put Arsenal back in front after United 's defenders failed to clear the ball . Mikaël Silvestre scored an own goal 11 minutes before the end that ensured Arsenal 's victory .

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson was complimentary of his opponents afterwards and was pleased there were no new injuries to report . Opposing manager Arsène Wenger praised Fàbregas 's performance and reiterated his desire to keep Vieira at Arsenal , after speculation regarding the player 's impending transfer to Real Madrid .

= = Background = =

Founded in 1908 as a successor to the Sheriff of London Charity Shield , the FA Community Shield began as a contest between the respective champions of the Football League and Southern League , although in 1913 , it was played between an Amateurs XI and a Professionals XI . In 1921 , it was played by the league champions of the top division and FA Cup winners for the first time . Wembley Stadium acted as the host of the Shield from 1974 . Cardiff 's Millennium Stadium was hosting the Shield for the fourth time ; it took over as the venue for the event while Wembley Stadium underwent a six @-@ year renovation between 2001 and 2006 .

Arsenal qualified for the 2004 FA Community Shield as winners of the Premier League . They finished their league campaign without a single defeat and earned the nickname " The Invincibles " , akin to the Preston North End team that went unbeaten in the inaugural Football League season . The other Community Shield place went to Manchester United who had defeated Millwall 3 ? 0 in the 2004 FA Cup Final . This was the fifth meeting between the two clubs in the Community Shield ; Arsenal had won three of those meetings to Manchester United 's two .

Meetings between Manchester United and Arsenal were often eventful encounters , as both clubs vied for domestic honours . A goalless draw between the two clubs in September 2003 , in which Ruud van Nistelrooy missed a penalty in stoppage time , resulted in an altercation between both teams . Several Arsenal players were charged and fined accordingly by The Football Association (FA) for instigating the brawl ; the club was later fined £ 175 @, @ 000 , the largest ever given to a club by the FA .

= = Pre @-@ match = =

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson said in his press conference : " The game will be competitive . Prestige comes into it , pride comes into it , so it is always competitive when we play Arsenal . " He wanted to use the game as a means of preparing his team for their UEFA Champions League third qualifying round game against Dinamo Bucure?ti the following Wednesday . Ferguson was concerned about the state of his squad , with several first team players injured . He was irked that senior players Cristiano Ronaldo and Gabriel Heinze were absent , on duty for their respective national teams at the Summer Olympics : " Apparently , it 's supposed to be for amateurs , and money earned is put in trust , but we will be paying their wages while they are away so I don 't know what that 's all about . "

When asked about Arsenal 's unbeaten run and whether it would be repeated in English football , Ferguson replied :

" That was a one @-@ off . Arsenal accumulated most points last season so they won the title fairly enough , but they didn 't display championship form . They had too many draws . I think they came to a point around January where they realised they could go through the season undefeated , and that was a great driving force for them , but they had to stay undefeated to compensate for the number of draws . It was still an incredible achievement , though . "

Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger responded by saying : " Everybody has the freedom to make a judgement . In the last 20 minutes of every game last season , we were never behind . That means we had already done the job before . " He insisted the draws did not reflect on his team 's negative tactics , but " because of other teams coming back into the game " . On the issue of Patrick Vieira 's anticipated move to Real Madrid , Wenger told reporters the player would remain at Arsenal . Wenger acknowledged his team were short on experience as a result of selling players and missing Vieira , Sol Campbell and Thierry Henry , who all were injured . He considered this to be a disadvantage , but argued " ... the younger ones have to be given a chance . They all have to take some responsibility . "

Tickets for the game went on general sale on 28 July 2004 . They were advertised on the FA website at a cost of between £ 15 and £ 40 . Sir Geoff Hurst was named as the event 's chief guest .

= = Match = =

= = = Team selection = = =

For Arsenal , Thierry Henry was declared fit to start and played alongside Dennis Bergkamp up front . 17 @-@ year @-@ old Cesc Fàbregas partnered Gilberto Silva in central midfield , with José Antonio Reyes and Jermaine Pennant providing width on either side . Manchester United were without seven of their first @-@ team players , including Ruud van Nistelrooy , who required surgery on his hernia . Wes Brown and Louis Saha were also ruled out because of injury , so David Bellion and Eric Djemba @-@ Djemba came into the first team .

= = = Summary = = =

Arsenal kicked @-@ off the match and within the first two minutes forced Manchester United defender Gary Neville to concede a throw @-@ in . In the fifth minute , Manchester United won a free kick , but nothing came out of it as José Antonio Reyes blocked Paul Scholes 's shot . Good play by Reyes and Henry fashioned a chance for Bergkamp in the ninth minute , but his strike was off target . Two minutes later a shot by Bergkamp from outside the box was saved by Manchester United goalkeeper Tim Howard . Before Henry was about to take a corner for Arsenal in the 16th minute , a cigarette lighter was thrown at him from the section occupied by Manchester United supporters ? this resulted in police making two arrests during the game . Quinton Fortune used his pace to get the better of Lauren , but his cross into the Arsenal penalty area was cleared by Pascal Cygan . Arsenal continued to threaten ? Henry 's free kick prompted Howard to make a save and tip the ball over the crossbar , and Bergkamp came close to scoring in the 27th minute after clever play to lose his marker John O 'Shea . The football continued to move from one end to the other , with Giggs and Reyes causing problems for their respective defences . In stoppage time at the end of the first half , Henry had his shot saved by Howard , while Scholes was similarly denied by Arsenal goalkeeper Jens Lehmann .

Manchester United made a slight change before the second half commenced , with Neville and O 'Shea switching positions , while Arsenal brought Robin van Persie on in place of Henry . Arsenal began the half more strongly ? Reyes sprinted past the Manchester United defence and went past Howard in the 48th minute , but his shot hit the side @-@ netting . A minute later Arsenal scored .

Bergkamp 's pass put Reyes clear to run down the right @-@ hand side of the pitch . He squared the ball to Gilberto , who side @-@ footed it into the empty goal net . Manchester United responded by making three substitutions ? Fortune , Giggs and Roy Keane off for Phil Neville , Diego Forlán and Darren Fletcher . Five minutes after going behind , Alan Smith equalised for Manchester United . A mistake in the Arsenal defence presented him with the chance to hit a half @-@ volley ; the ball dipped over Lehmann in goal . Arsenal retook the lead in the 59th minute ? a disjointed move that ended with Reyes shooting the ball low in the bottom left hand corner . Phil Neville was shown the game 's first yellow card in the 62nd minute , after fouling Reyes . Van Persie 's free kick a minute later was deflected for a corner , which came to nothing . Jérémie Aliadière who came on for Bergkamp sustained a knee injury and had to come off after only a few minutes on the field . He was replaced by Gaël Clichy , whose arrival according to journalist Henry Winter " ? accelerated Arsenal 's drive further , particularly down the left where he kept combining well with Ashley Cole . " In the 72nd minute , Eric Djemba @-@ Djemba and Cole were each shown a yellow card for clashing with one another . Arsenal scored their third goal of the match 11 minutes before the end . Cole carried the ball into United 's penalty box and his attempted cross hit defender Mikaël Silvestre , who was helpless to prevent the ball going into his own net .

= = = Details = = =

= = = Statistics = = =

= = Post @-@ match and aftermath = =

Wenger clarified Vieira 's future after the match : " My intention is clear : to keep him [?] The challenge in front of us is hugely difficult and we need a complete focus . I 'm not resigned to let the story go on . It has all to be sorted out before the season . " He added that if Vieira chose to leave , the club could sufficiently replace him : " We 've worked very hard in the last five years to get good young players in and you saw that today . " Reyes , who was named man of the match , was frustrated at his missed chance early in the second half , but continued : " I set one up and then scored myself so I was much happier . " Bergkamp was impressed with Fàbregas 's performance in the match : " Normally at 17 , you might be a bit unsure when you step out . But with players like Cesc , the way he has developed in one year is quite amazing . "

Ferguson congratulated Arsenal on their win and said of the game : " It was about trying to make sure everyone was fit for Wednesday . I think we have managed to do that . There are no new injuries so far . Hopefully by tomorrow morning it will be a definite . " He believed it was important to substitute Giggs and Keane early in the second half in order for them to recuperate in time for the Dinamo Bucure?ti game . Scholes , however , " ? needed a game , which is why I left him on that bit longer . " Ferguson felt Manchester United 's preparations to the new season were hampered because of the injuries : " It 's got a lot to do with summer football . It 's not down to the European Championship , but you do wonder why the Copa América can 't be at the same time . That harmony is never quite right , from Africa to America to Europe . Something should be done about that . " Giggs said Manchester United needed to take the positives out of the match and anticipated Arsenal as their main rivals in the league : " [They] know what to do and how to handle the pressure when it comes around . "

The two clubs next faced each other in a league fixture at Old Trafford on 23 October 2004 , where Arsenal 's unbeaten league run of 49 matches came to an end as Manchester United beat them 2 ? 0 .