



Leeds United: Trials and Tribulations

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Leeds United have arguably experienced the most dramatic upheaval in fortunes of any club in the recent history of English football. From their rise to a championship challenge in the Premiership and subsequent participation in the Champions League semi-finals, they plunged to the brink of bankruptcy and were relegated to the Coca-Cola League - for the first time in their proud history.

There is a story of financial mismanagement on a grand scale. In living the dream, they ran up debts of £100 million, and the dream became a nightmare, not just on the pitch, but also in the tabloids, with the trials of Lee Bowyer and Jonathan Woodgate. A succession of managers - David O'Leary, Terry Venables, Peter Reid, Kevin Blackwell and Dennis Wise - have come and gone. Following on from the departure of Peter Ridsdale, a succession of businessmen have also tried to steady the ship in the boardroom, culminating in the dramatic purchase of the club by a certain ex-chairman of Chelsea - Ken Bates - in early 2005.

Under Dennis Wise, an inexperienced team was rejuvenated, with the club overcoming a 15-point penalty imposed by the Football League and pushing for automatic promotion. Sadly, their young manager departed to pastures more lucrative mid-season and the challenge died in yet another play-off defeat under the new regime of former hero Gary McAllister. What lies in store for Leeds United now? Can they regain past glories and taste Premier League football once more?

Revised and updated, *Leeds United: Trials and Tribulations* continues the story of Leeds' struggle, with exclusive interviews with many of the club's leading figures during this turbulent period - including Allan Leighton, Peter Ridsdale, Dominic Matteo and Peter Reid.

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