

## The Greatest Goals of all time – Join the debate

In the week that Lionel Messi single-handedly destroyed Arsenal, [Jake Farrell](#) picks his favourite five goals that not only displayed exemplary class and technique but came at the most crucial of times

Friday 9 April 2010



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Sky Sports News is a curious enterprise. Populated by infeasibly attractive presenters it serves as a metronome in the life of a football fan, ceaselessly beating a rhythmic pulse of news stories large and small. Want to know first that Cristiano Ronaldo has moved to Real Madrid? Sky Sports News is the place. Want to know first that Chris Dagnall is back in full training for League Two leaders Rochdale? Sky Sports News is still the place. Beyond mixing the magical with the mundane Ian Payne, Georgie Thompson and Co. specialise in somehow managing to make the endless repetition of the same footage over and over and over vaguely acceptable. The 15 minute loop of identical News footage should induce a viewer to violent suicide or at least existential torpor.

My reasoning for this analysis of the institution beloved by sporting geeks and the patrons of Weatherspoons is down to the fact that my current situation entails seeing hour after hour of this brain melting monotony in the background of my working day. In the last couple of days, such is my exposure, I can estimate that I have watched both Lionel Messi's four goals against Arsenal at least 30,000 times. I have also watched his Maradona-esque waltz through half of the Getafe team a good 10,000 times as SSN (as we die-hards call it) sought to give the viewer a thorough, and unsurprisingly repetitive, overview of his astonishing career.

Hearing people around me proclaim that goal as the best ever got me thinking and, knowing that I needed a point to this rambling sports news channel nonsense, I tried to list what I considered to be the best five goals ever. As I reached for the some old staples from mid table Premier League clashes I began to wonder what the criteria was for truly amazing goals. I realised that although sport is undoubtedly about talent it is equally important to produce said talent at the most important times, to deliver for your team when your team mates are hiding. This criteria is ultimately used to decide whether a player is

simply good rather than great (how many times has a have you heard a commentator or friend say “he never turns up for big games’?”); why shouldn’t it be used for goals? So here are my five selections for the best goals ever, picked with the aforementioned in mind.

Disagree? Then use the comment box below. Provide video evidence.

#### [5.David Beckham: England Vs Greece, October 6th 2001](#)

Every time somebody criticises David Beckham in my presence my default reaction is to cite this goal and, perhaps more importantly, this game. As his team mates shrunk around him, stalwarts like Paul Scholes and Gary Neville anonymous and ineffectual, Beckham grew before the eyes of a nation vindicated and redeemed. When it looked as though even his gargantuan efforts would be in vain the former World Cup hate figure decided to haul England to the finals on his own. Perhaps the thing that makes the goal so special is that Beckham is fully in the knowledge that the dead ball opportunity in front of him is it. It’s somewhat reminiscent of Johnny Wilkinson’s World Cup winning drop goal in that they both had the mental capacity to produce their best when it was most needed; in Beckham’s case a swirling, unanswerable pearl of an effort is past the Greek keeper before he has begun to arrange his wall. Perfect.

#### [4.Cristiano Ronaldo: Manchester United Vs Porto, 15th April 2009](#)

I am not the biggest fan of the Portuguese preening tosser that is Cristiano Ronaldo but, just like Richard Littlejohn, Stalin and Robert Mugabe, he’s bloody good at what he does. After a poor first leg display United were in desperate need of some inspiration in order to progress through to the semi finals and, on a wet and windy night in his homeland, Cristiano Ronaldo found some. Again the goal is not only brilliant because of the sheer impossibility of beating a professional goal keeper from just shy of 40 yards but because Ronaldo stood up to be counted when those around him retreated into the background. The difficulty of the away tie, the conditions and the sheer distance between him and the goal are all simply distractions to a man whose talent usurps the boundaries that normal humans are beholden to.

#### [3.Steven Gerrard: Liverpool Vs Olympiakos, 8th December 2004](#)

You need three goals to go through to knock-out stages of the Champions league. You are 2-1 up with seconds to play and your offensive line up consists of Sinama Pongolle and Neil Mellor. It’s fair to say that the odds are stacked against you. Who then do you want a 25 yard half-volley to fall to? I can think of no better man in world football than Steven Gerrard in this situation and just how he proves it arrowing in an effort that I looks for one glorious second as though it will break the net. “You beauty!” as Andy Gray elegantly opines.

#### [2.Marco van Basten: Holland Vs The Soviet Union, 25th June 1988](#)

Holland: pioneers of “sexy football”, the fluid formation and legalised marijuana. Also the birthplace of ruthless goal automaton Marco van Basten more recently known for being unable to steer a group of players, manifestly worse than him, to European Championship glory. Had his 2008 Dutch squad had the same stones as their boss they may have carried home the title. As it was their last triumph was in 1988 when Van Basten himself scored one of the finest goals in history to kill the final against the soviet union. As the improbably floated cross drifted towards him at the back post so many things must have shot through his mind; shall I nod it back across goal? Shall I bring it down and cross? Did I leave the gas on? He ignored these unimaginative suggestions to score a ludicrous volley and render every volley for the rest of time to look like a poor imitation.

#### [1.Zinedine Zidane: Real Madrid Vs Bayern Leverkusen, 15th May 2002](#)

Lionel Messi has been newly anointed as the best player of all time, and he is incredible, but aren’t we all forgetting a little French-Algerian fella with intimidating hair and a penchant for chest butts? “Zizou” or ZZ Tops as my Dad always called him knew how to play the beautiful game beautifully. The Champions League final against Bayern Leverkusen was important for so many reasons. It signalled the fruition of the Galacticos movement and was poignant in as much as Real Madrid returned to the spiritual home of their

greatest ever team; Hampden Park where Ferenc Puskas and Alfredo di Stefano had crushed Eintracht Frankfurt. This match was Zidane's formal coronation as Di Stefano's heir and will be remembered for that goal. The Frenchman, mixing his uncanny knack of being in the right place at the right time with his ungodly poise, watches Roberto Carlos' miss hit cross descend from the heavens, plants his favoured right foot and raises his left to smash the ball in to the near top corner. The biggest game. The biggest moment. The best goal.



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## 45 comments

Barry Venison

9 Apr '10 at 11:33 am

Two words. Dalian Atkinson. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oArLA8e4Dww>

Report

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Leigh Clarke

9 Apr '10 at 11:50 am

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uakiLk2K0Wg>

Too soon?

Report

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Julian Dicks

9 Apr '10 at 11:57 am

I noticed the criteria about doing it when your teammates are hiding but just look at the skill needed to score this goal.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgqsaDnsEq8>

Report

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Huw Harrow

9 Apr '10 at 11:57 am

I'm not sure but I bet it's by Bobby Zamora. In fact all of Bobby Zamora's goals merit inclusion. The top five places should all be Bobby Zamora. I love Bobby Zamora. Bobby Zamora.

Report

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Javier Mascherano

9 Apr '10 at 11:58 am

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk-kXwjASEE>

I know he's a little cheat, but he was quite talented.

Report

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Chorley Barman

9 Apr '10 at 12:01 pm

My God! I'd never seen that Atkinson goal. Pretty damn good!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSsdfe4Z69g>

All 10 are worth a look

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzSOiBKuFzk> (yes I am a forest fan)

 Report

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Severus Snape

9 Apr '10 at 12:03 pm

@ Barry Venison. Do you not remember this one you scored? Surely that's up there?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYmmCAjuPrU>

 Report

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Chorley Barman

9 Apr '10 at 12:10 pm

Obviously you've already got one Gerrard goal but can't forget this...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD80XYD1FvU>

 Report

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Huw Harrow

9 Apr '10 at 12:13 pm

Simply stunning.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRBktWx7-\\_0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRBktWx7-_0)

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 12:15 pm

Cheers for all the responses guys. Some of the goals on here are exactly the ones that I initially thought of as some of the best goals I had ever seen (Le Tissier was actually a prominent part of the debate I had with the other guy i am currently doing work experience with). All are incredible goals but I have become a devout believer in the criteria that a goal should be judged on the importance of the game and the moment. It's not totally about being there when your team mates aren't its more about that mental strength to produce at the most important times not just when you are four nil up at home to Burnley. It's kind of like how Tiger is always there or thereabouts in the majors, how Federer always plays his best in finals as opposed to Henman who couldn't produce on the truly big occasions. Thats what makes sport and the moments with in it properly brilliant.

 Report

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Jan Molby

9 Apr '10 at 12:19 pm

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUo4va\\_Ua6E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUo4va_Ua6E)

Young Ian Ashbee's screamer at Torquay makes Zizou's look like child's play. Video doesn't do it justice because it took an age to come down from orbit. I would add another one but I'd just been sacked & Peter Taylor banned me from the club's video archives after the "Molby's Moobs" incident.

As for a big moment, this was at 0-0 in first-half injury time after a drab opening 45. Without this beaut Hull may well have never been inspired to win this game, finish the season 13th, build on that with promotion from Div 3 the following season and subsequently rise through the divisions to be a substandard Premiership team on the brink of relegation with only Iain Dowie to save them. So yeh...

Great goal on the big stage I reckon.

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 12:21 pm

Spelling mistakes ahoy, I apologise for the previous post. terrible

 Report

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schwerpes

9 Apr '10 at 12:41 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD80XYD1FvU>

fa cup final, 90th minute goal to make game go to extra time

<http://footballcommentator.blogspot.com/2007/11/george-bests-greatest-ever-goal.html>

was in america but still

 Report

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Miles Preston

9 Apr '10 at 12:49 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYHJZoqvAmk>

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3XZXOQZD\\_k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3XZXOQZD_k)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oU7XAr3BPg>

Take your pick guys.....

Up the 'cuin

x

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 12:50 pm

I think goals like this are the epitome of what I mean, technically amazing. Against Wimbledon in the league.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUh-NcHi5ug>

 Report

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Rudiger Nosworthy

9 Apr '10 at 1:21 pm

these are all good goals, however its interesting given your sky reference that all bar one of these are from the 'sky era' and three of these players - ronaldo, beckham, gerrard- are particular sky darlings. this will obviously influence peoples opinions (having the goals blasted at them on sky 24/7 and the hyperbole that goes with it), but understandable as it may be with that in mind, its important to consider pre-sky goals of genius- maradona 86, carlos alberto 70 etc

 Report

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Robert Mugabe

9 Apr '10 at 1:25 pm

Thanks for the vote of confidence Jake, glad someone can still recognise what a great job I'm doing, if you could put a good word in for me at the next UN summit that'd be grand?

I like your choice at #1 but the Maradona goal is a rather shocking omission, especially given the criteria you have designated.

With regard to criteria, why is it that we always rank long range 'blasts' as the best goals? Give me a dozen chances and I might be able to fluke one in from outside the box too. The skill required to pull off something like this is far far higher.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R\\_iYLca2gc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R_iYLca2gc)

Ps - I agree with Huw Harrow that Bobby Zamora should go to the world cup, in fact I think I would like to be known as 'Bobby' Mugabe from now on as a show of support.

 Report

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Damian Pickard

9 Apr '10 at 1:31 pm

What about my goal in the Alcuin 1s v Alcuin 2s College Cup warm up game last year? I think that deserves a mention. BAG.

 Report

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Sol Campbell

9 Apr '10 at 1:44 pm

Aside from Prickard's goal, I nominate <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-Xofyd3dKI>

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 2:26 pm

The cambiasso goal didn't make it in because it was against Serbia and the Carlos Alberto is more an example of a team goal by, perhaps, the greatest team ever to play the game. Maradona should probably be in in there although whatever gear he was on at various stages of his career somewhat tempers his brilliance.

 Report

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Ty Cuondo

9 Apr '10 at 2:27 pm

I agree with Rudiger, efforts from 25-30 yards are nowhere near as special as moments of genuine individual class. Maradona's effort against England has to be the best goal ever, if not it's Cambiasso's.

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 3:47 pm

Maradona's goal is incredible but I had a check and these are the players that he ran past: Gary Stevens, Kevin Sansom, Terry Fenwick, Terry Butcher, Glen Hoddle, Steve Hodge, Peter Reid , Trevor Steven - not really any Beckanbauers amongst them

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 3:57 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItEaUSTiIZQ>

 Report

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Rudiger Nosworthy

9 Apr '10 at 4:13 pm

thats fair enough jake and i take your point but gerrards goal vs olypiakos and, although im not certain, beckham vs greece were both most probably past that clown keeper who looks a lot like george clooney. To be fair youre right about Alberto's goal but team goals are surely as important/valid as its shows the players ability to operate in a unit successfully. My original point was just that given that your article references sky, it is perhaps a demonstration of the impact sky has had on football that the goals were mostly from the sky era. using your criteria though i would say bergkamp vs argentina 98 should be in there. it is interesting long range goals get such credit, there are some pretty shabby footballers who are long range specialists (darren gibson) personally i'd always opt for goals that the particular player has pulled off that no other player could do/would even conceive like- to continue my bergkamp love in- bergkamp vs newcastle

 Report

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 4:53 pm

The Bergkamp goal against Newcastle is still one of my all time favourites - individual genius

 Report

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~J

9 Apr '10 at 5:01 pm

That last one that Jake Farrell posted is astonishing. Never seen it before and it's amazing.

Agree with the Zidane goal being one of the best. However I disagree with the other choices;

Van Basten - this goal is better. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzGe5sYnhA4>

And far, far better than David Beckham's free kick was this one by Roberto Carlos. I like the three angles because it shows a) the power, b) the fact that it hit the post and c) the insane amount of curl that Bobby Carlos could put on it. The last few seconds of the video shows the ridiculous angle that he was initially aiming at. Just wow: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-t5MF7NRQh4>

Though my favourite goal of all time is a different one by Roberto Carlos. Just insane - when you're travelling that fast, why would you go for a shot with the outside of your boot instead of just powering it low? Awesomeness, that's why. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhVDFEW5348>

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Barry Venison

9 Apr '10 at 5:21 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mui7cTfsZAA>

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Rudiger Nosworthy

9 Apr '10 at 5:25 pm

similar to your last one jake: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIECYh9JfPA&feature=PlayList&p=CF8812117AD0D736&playnext\\_from=PL&playnext=1&index=12](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIECYh9JfPA&feature=PlayList&p=CF8812117AD0D736&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=12) I am fairly certain I would dislocate my ankle, fall over and my shorts would fall down with a comedy noise if i tried this

[▲ Report](#)

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Jake Farrell

9 Apr '10 at 5:35 pm

Not sure I agree on the Van Basten one ~J; to produce that volley in a major final as opposed to that bicycle kick against Den Bosch seems incomparable to me.

The Roberto Carlos freekick is incredible but I have gone off it since I also saw an article in FourFourTwo a couple of years ago in which they tested that ball (the addidas tango? correct me if wrong) and it was shown to hold its line in roughly the same way as a feather. Mitigating circumstances methinks.

the only suggestions I think I'd include on reflection are maradona and giggs. Still amazing to see so many incredible goals. Thanks for all the responses everyone!

[▲ Report](#)

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Stan Collymore

9 Apr '10 at 5:42 pm

This <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vAOUgmRXsc>

This <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dk2bNYG5p-Y>

This <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=va6NyR42vf0>

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Erik Edman

9 Apr '10 at 7:25 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wP7z7SXQnrY>

Otherwise, Maradona's goal against England

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rW-IK9F6TU>

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Sam Asfahani

9 Apr '10 at 11:50 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESI0-qZxlik>

Dennis Bergkamp, 89th minute, goal to knock out Argentina from 1998 World Cup Quarter Finals.

And it has eye of the tiger playing in background. What more do you want Jake?

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Matt Baker

10 Apr '10 at 12:49 am

Don't knock Neil Mellor, he was the greatest striker we never had:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdgKLFAYrZI>

Also, surely you can't get a better goal in a more important game than this one at 1.09 mins:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsKcuUp0yG8&NR=1>

[▲ Report](#)

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Bill O'Reilly

10 Apr '10 at 10:44 am

Hope Powell for Croydon ladies against Arsenal, 1997 FA cup final. Great header

 Report

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~J

10 Apr '10 at 12:07 pm

I thought you were looking for the best goals and not the most important.. Sorry, Jake. In which case there isn't any comparison to the Maradona wondergoal (that knocked England out of the World Cup), the amazing goal that Carlos Alberto scored - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZkR5Wb2KQs> - in The World Cup Final 1970, in which Brazil's defence just completely walked around the entire team and Pelé passed into a massive gap where Alberto was nowhere to be seen. Tostao, the centre-forward, was sitting in defence at the time and \*all but two\* of the Brazil players got a touch. Remember that it's at a time when defenders didn't score goals and the strike is phenomenal too. No doubt whatsoever.

Also in 1970, Jairzinho's goal - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H66KpCONjk> - is just incredible. In fact, many of the Brazil 1970 goals are great :P <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq06QssMHk8>

Oh and this! Don't forget this! Look at this! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAjWi663kXc> The sole reason that Italy won the 2006 World Cup Final >.>

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'Stand still'

11 Apr '10 at 2:44 pm

So chuffed that Edman has posted HIS goal - SCREAMER.

BUT...<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0O7KkZn4rk>

Goodnight.

x

 Report

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Dan

11 Apr '10 at 8:07 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HL7ls-yksoc>

Gazza against Hendry

 Report

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Peter

12 Apr '10 at 10:37 pm

Argentina's team goal vs Serbia in the world cup has my vote. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0O7KkZn4rk>

Rivaldo's overhead kick was another fabulous goal. But closer to home, Van Persie's astonishing volley on the run at what seemed like shoulder height is really underrated. Also Le Tissier vs Newcastle.

 Report

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~J

13 Apr '10 at 11:44 am

Did somebody say screamer?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJTfFpFme20>

It barely slows down when it enters the goal too, incredible!

I also love this goal - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fb5\\_ULy16-4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fb5_ULy16-4) - because Robinson scores against Foster... It's about the best way anyone could ever say "pick me for England" :P

 Report

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rich

14 Apr '10 at 4:47 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGQ6speL4Ww>

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James Croydon

15 Apr '10 at 8:20 am

Its extra time in a world cup and you pull this out of the bag. It deserves a mention.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVVSOGlyAcU>

 Report

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Hugo Almeida

16 Apr '10 at 4:12 pm

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wWO\\_iC42IY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wWO_iC42IY)

guys, seriously, this one is greater than any other goal scored in the history of the game. Focus on:

- the distance
- technique
- accuracy
- placement
- speed/power

no-one could repeat this - ever! the ball is struck so sweetly without even a degree of swerve or spin!

 Report

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Pete

2 May '10 at 5:17 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJ8rGXSjPEg>

 Report

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Barbarian Scouser

2 May '10 at 6:16 pm

How original Pete, first time I have ever seen that! Bill as fuck.

 Report

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Ryan

4 May '10 at 6:35 pm

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgqsaDnsEq8>

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