



Hans Segers

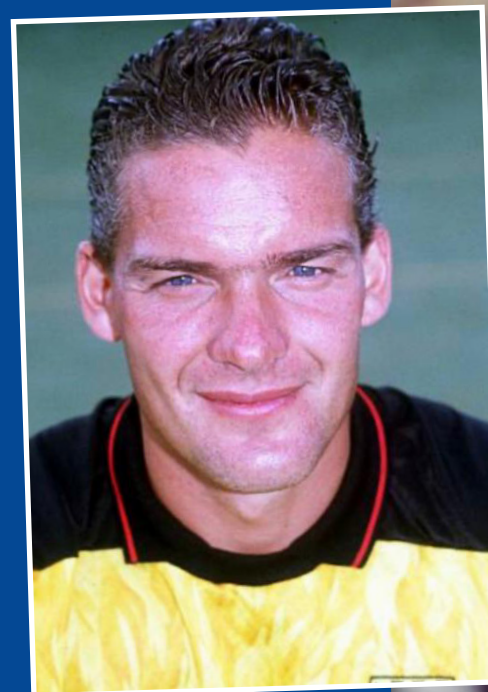
Wimbledon had won the FA Cup barely four months earlier, but their talismanic captain and goalkeeper Dave Beasant had moved to Newcastle United in a then-record £850,000 deal. Homegrown Simon Tracey was thrust into the vacant number one jersey, but after a 3-0 Charity Shield defeat and a 5-1 home reverse on the opening day of

the 1988/89 season, he made way for lower league journeyman Ron Green. That was never going to be a long-term option and so manager Bobby Gould paid Nottingham Forest £125,000 to bring Hans Segers to Plough Lane.

There were big boots (and gloves) to fill, but the Dutchman took just 13 minutes to announce himself to the SW19 faithful. His booming downfield punt reached

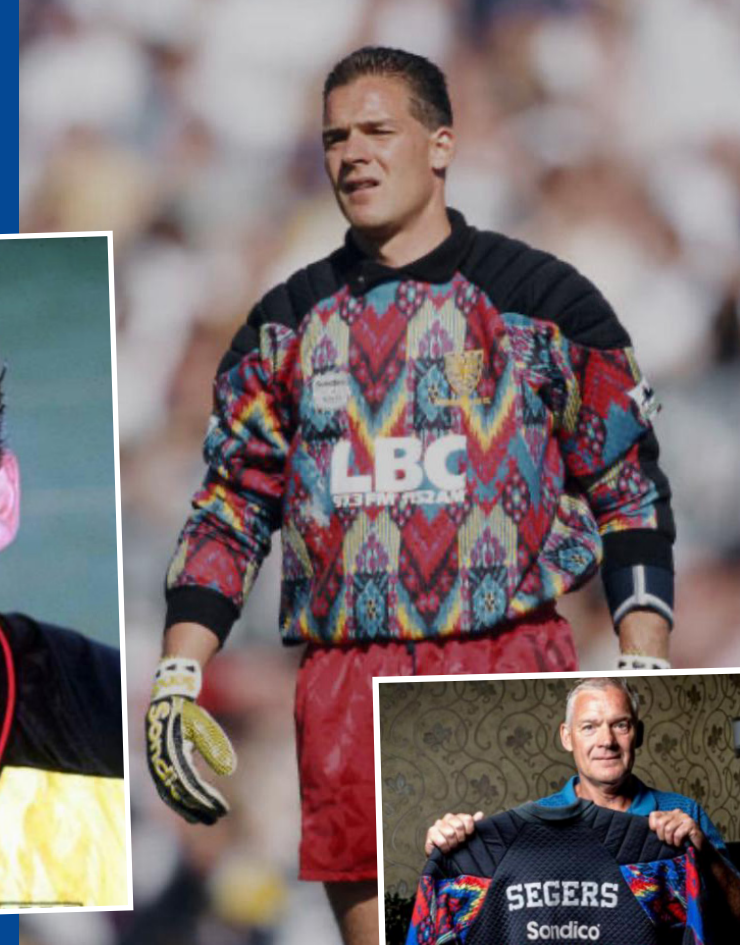
the head of John Fashanu who nodded it home beyond Everton's Neville Southall. It was Route One Wimbledon at its finest and the Dons fans loved it. "Segers, SEGERS" roared the West Bank as their new custodian turned to them with what became a trademark clenched fist salute and a smile. The vacancy had been filled. "I never practise my kicking – it just comes naturally. I appreciated the help from the supporters. It was tremendous when they all cheered my first kick. I never expected anything like that!"

Segers began his career with home-town PSV Eindhoven before joining Brian Clough's Nottingham Forest in 1983 where he totalled 66 appearances before losing his spot to Steve Sutton and going on loan to Stoke City, Sunderland and Dunfermline Athletic. He would be Wimbledon's first choice for the next seven seasons however, racking up 317 games in Dons colours, before making way for Neil Sullivan. Aside from that eventful debut, there was an even more epic game that the likeable Dutchman took centre stage for – a Coca Cola Cup Fourth Round replay against Liverpool at Selhurst Park in December 1993 during blizzard conditions. Dean Holdsworth put the Dons ahead, Neil Ruddock equalised for the Reds and the hosts looked to be heading for the quarter-finals when Robbie Earle put them back in front, but in injury time Segers punched a Steve Nicol cross into his own net under pressure from Robbie Fowler and looked distraught as the two sides faced extra time. But Segers atoned for that error with a superb spot-kick save from John Barnes and with no further score, the tie moved into a penalty shootout.



The flying Dutchman then saved two more attempts – from Jamie Redknapp and Mark Walters – to help his side go through 4-3 in the most dramatic of circumstances. "Penalty shootouts – I love 'em" he joked afterwards, adding "I wanted the ground to swallow me up after that goal. Thank God I made amends afterwards. But, typical Wimbledon – we fight for every ball. We fought for that result. The secret is to stand up. There's always going to be one or two iffy shots that go in the middle, so you've got a chance."

Moving on in 1996, he joined Wolves as understudy to Mike Stowell, but there was more drama – this time in the FA Cup when he saved another penalty,



against Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink – to send the Black Country side through. A solitary appearance for Spurs was the end of his playing career at the age of 39 and he became a goalkeeping coach at White Hart Lane, leaving in 2007 when fellow countryman Martin Jol was dismissed as manager. The pair linked up again at PSV and Segers' career also took in spells with the Australian national side and FC Eindhoven.

We are delighted to welcome Hans back to Plough Lane today!

