

seen such numbers and that was when Sheffield Wednesday played Coventry City in an FA Cup 6th Round match in 1987 when the Coventry fans came to Sheffield in their thousands.

Around this time radio messages were coming thick and fast and any times from this point can only be estimated approximately. A request came from the Leppings Lane end asking for Leppings Lane to be closed to traffic due to the volume of persons in the road.

The radio system was operating on talk through and at around 2.35 -2.40pm I received calls that my radio transmissions were poor and breaking up. Within seconds of hearing this a civilian communications officer was at the control and began looking at the equipment. He changed the Tulip Microphone for a telephone handset but the fault remained. After a very short time the back-up set with the telephone handset with central depression was taken into use by myself. The fixed ariel lead meant that the base station had to be placed under the desk. As a result the base station had to remain under the desk and this meant that the microphone lead would not reach above the level of the desk top making it difficult to use. After only two or three calls with the handset, which were not acknowledged, I believed that it was faulty and I remember throwing the handset on to the control desk. I took a normal hand held radio and from that time all transmissions were relayed in that fashion. We were on talk through so the use of a hand held radio provided the same service. In view of the above difficulties I asked the Communications man to arrange for the Home Office Engineer to test the equipment on Monday.

2.40pm A call came from Superintendent MARSHALL requesting that the Leppings Lane gates be opened because of the volume of persons outside. Further call from Superintendent MARSHALL asking for gates to be opened (means Gate C). Stated that people were being crushed against turnstiles and if gates were not opened someone would be killed. I remember something being said about large numbers of non ticket holders who would get in and cause serious problems for legitimate ticket holders.

Mr MARSHALL again came through asking for gates to be opened. This was not a request but an order. Mr MURRAY asked Mr DUCKENFIELD for his decision and he okayed the gates to be opened. 'C' gate was opened but believed at this time it had been forced and someone said "They've broke through" I cannot remember if this was a radio message or said

in box.

Mounted officers retrieved the situation and only a few persons got through. More manpower deputed to Leppings Lane including mounted. Mr MARSHALL again asked for gate to be re-opened a second time. Gates were opened and many more people went through than the first time. Would estimate many hundreds went through this time. Radio traffic heavy and much distortion.

At approximately 2.52pm Sergeant HIGGINS of 'F' C and V came through saying "The gates at 'A' have got to be opened as if not somebody will be killed". On receipt of that I said words over the radio, "If that is the case we have no option open the gates". The 'A' gate was opened and access to North Stand only was gained. By the time 'A' gate opened the gates at 'C' had been closed.

During this time I am unable to say whether it was before or after the gates being opened PC1863 BUXTON came through asking for the kick off to be delayed. As he said this the Liverpool team took to the field and I replied "It's too late one team is already on the field."

I saw that in the Leppings Lane end there was ample room in the pen nearest the control box and the centre pens appeared full but not out of the ordinary for a big match of this kind. I did see swaying in those pens but again this is a regular occurrence on big match days.

I was not aware that the game had started when a track officer on the Leppings Lane end came through with an unreadable message. I then saw a few people climbing the fencing in the central pens area to get on to the pitch and at that time my first thought was "Christ there's a pitch invasion". Within seconds people started coming on to the track via a perimeter gate, although there was not a large flood. Even at this stage I did not realise the enormity of the problem and made comment about a Policewoman who was on the track serial by Gate 1. I would have anticipated that she would have opened this gate to put the persons on the track back into the outer pen. Chief Inspector MCROBBIE was in the Control Box at this time and said words to the effect "I'll go and sort it out".

It was about this time that I saw Superintendent GREENWOOD behind the Leppings Lane

goal. It was obvious he was trying to transmit but without success. I saw then he was waving his arms in a cross, across his body. Many officers were now on the perimeter track helping people from the central pens.

It was approximately 3.05pm when Superintendent GREENWOOD came through "Stop the match, Stop the match" and I saw Superintendent GREENWOOD run on to the field of play. I didn't see the match stopped nor the players leave the field.

All personnel were directed to the perimeter track at the Leppings Lane end. I recall PC. BICHARD going via VHF to Force Control requesting ambulances - a fleet of ambulances.

Inspector CHARLES 'C' came through requesting deployment of 5 and 50 at his disposal. I directed him to the tunnel Leppings Lane end to enter the rear of the terraces. A request came through for bolt croppers. I phoned Claywheels Lane asking for some, to be told there was none. On completion of the call I said, "No bolt croppers," and PC BICHARD said "Shall I get the Fire Brigade" I didn't answer but just stuck my thumbs up. Operation Support was requested and I remember a telephone call from Operations saying "Is it you that's requested Operation Support" to which I replied, "Yes".

By now there were many hundreds of people on the playing area and it appeared to be total mayhem. I saw Chief Superintendent NESBIT by the goal at Leppings Lane and it was obvious he was in the midst of organising things in that a tunnel was formed and persons were being brought on to the pitch. I saw Police helmets in the rear of central pens making their way to the front and my thought was "John CHARLES and his teams". People were still climbing the perimeter fencing and many were being lifted up into the West Stand and my thoughts re the access to the stands was not one of being rescued from the crowd but getting up there so they could have a seat.

A Tango mobile which I believe was T.G. came through stating manpower was required in Leppings Lane outside the ground because of the numbers of hostile Liverpool supporters and he assisted fire and ambulance personnel with injured persons.

Throughout this time PC RYAN had been on the tannoy at the Liverpool end requesting

It will be seen that I have not included the opening of the gates because I believe that Superintendent MARSHALL had no alternative other than to ask them to be opened and the Chief Superintendent who gave the order obviously and rightly believed that the gates required to be opened. One thing does come to mind here and that is stewards or should I say lack of stewards in the standing areas of SWFC. From the Control Box it is easy to see around the ground and the South, North and West Stands are more than adequately stewarded with the stewards being easily identifiable by their yellow tabards.

However, on the Spion Kop and Leppings Lane terraces there are no stewards or should I say I have never seen a steward. I know this matter has been brought up with the Club in earlier years and attached to this report is a typewritten agenda prepared I believe by Inspector CALVERT when he organised the football duties at Hillsborough. Certain points on that agenda have been implemented by the Club.

In relation to (a) it is obvious that the supporters used the centre tunnel to gain access. I do not even remember the tunnel gates being closed before and the only times a serial manned the tunnel was a few years ago when both home and away supporters were allowed to use the Leppings Lane terraces and West Stand. The reason for the Police presence was segregation of fans and had nothing to do with safety.

In relation to (b) and (c) there is nothing I can say except hopefully the public inquiry will make their findings known. When one talks about feelings, it is only after the event can one realise the scale yet whilst it was happening I felt a feeling of total disbelief witnessing the events before my eyes - that this can't happen at Hillsborough but with things going on at such a pace I do not believe that I had the time to take it all in and the events and incidents I have outlined form only a small portion of what took place that afternoon when a minute seemed an eternity and an hour a split second.

One thing that does remain vividly in my mind is the actions of the Police Officers, the Special Constables and the St John's Ambulance plus all unknown persons who ferried the dead and injured away from the perimeter track.