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# THE TIMES

## Injudicious comment to referee earns Rush a sending-off

Liverpool .....0 Manchester City .....

Players and officials were involved in after-match controversy when Ian Rush was sent off in the aftermath of the goal-less draw at Anfield. The Welsh international, who moves to Juventus for pounds 3 million at the end of the season, was 'sent off' for 'foul and abusive' language as he was leaving the field. 'He made a comment to me and I sent him off,' Ken Walmsley, the Blackpool official, said.

The ill-feeling dated to an 84th minute incident when a shot by MacDonald, a substitute, struck Clements on the arm but the referee waved play on.

As the players and officials left the field there was a good deal of arguing and dissent. 'There is one law for the players and one for officials,' Kenny Dalglish, the Liverpool player-manager, said. 'An official swore at one of my players but the lad could not send the official off.' Rush declined to comment on the incident.

Liverpool, who last season won the League and FA Cup, proudly displayed the latest additions to their unique collection of trophies before the kick-off but were then unable to reproduce the match-winning qualities which captured them. The champions were frustrated and ultimately mesmerized by a defensive display of commitment that contained everything - including the necessary luck.

Manchester City had arrived with a record of one win at Liverpool in 13 attempts dating to 1953, but they can never have worked harder to improve those sad statistics.

It was a day when nothing that Liverpool tried in attack worked out right. In contrast City's defence, around Clements and McCarthy could do little wrong. How the champions needed one of those winning goals by Rush.

They started slowly, squandered a chance or two, became enmeshed in a rear guard which often numbered 10 and went through a range of moods from casual to frantic.

By three-quarter time Liverpool had been reduced to launching one frenzied assault after another on the goal at the foot of a Kop becoming more alarmed by the minute. Lawrenson missed twice, Whelan ran the ball past a post and defensive deflections and interceptions added to the mounting tail of those that got away. In truth Suckling, City's new young goalkeeper from Coventry, had few saves to make, though he did dive to keep out Whelan late on.

Johnston's right wing surges were the greatest threat to a retreating defence though Gillespie, a defender, almost broke through with a long shot which curved the wrong way.

City were granted the rare luxury of two scoring chances in the early minutes.

Both fell to Christie, the ex-Derby striker, conceded by a defence temporarily vulnerable as Gillespie and Hansen sorted out their positional duties. Christie failed to connect firmly with the first allowing Hopper to save. He then stubbed his studs in the turf as he attempted to improve on it.

The opposition at Anfield get few such favours and City had wasted theirs.

However, Liverpool proved to be equally charitable with their finishing. Whelan was a fraction off target from the left hand side then fired straight at the goalkeeper from the right.

In the absence of the famed Liverpool brand of finishing the crowd chilled by wet, raw November-like conditions, were forced to concentrate on the delicate skills of Dalglish for first-half consolation.

Most of the build-ups were directed through him allowing the player-manager to demonstrate his repertoire.

City's contribution was essentially one of closing down the opposition and denying space wherever possible. However, it worked to perfection helped by Liverpool's shortcomings and will frustrate opponents at lesser venues than this.

LIVERPOOL: M Hooper; B Venison, G Gillespie, M Lawrenson, R Whelan, A Hansen, K Dalglish, C Johnston, I Rush, J Molby, S McMahon (sub: K MacDonald).

MANCHESTER CITY: P Suckling; A May, C Wilson, K Clements, M McCarthy, S Redmond, G Davies (sub: E Barrett), M McNab, T Christie, P Simpson, I Brightwell.

Referee: K Walmsley (Blackpool).