

Date: 12 December 1987  
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Times		

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# THE TIMES

## Liverpool pay for arrogance

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The rest of the first division will do well not to take too much heart from the fact that **Liverpool** have once again shown that they are prone, like everyone else, to human fallibility.

If Kenny Dalglish could remember the last time they had squandered a two-goal lead, **Liverpool's** manager eas not saying. It hardly ever happened with the old **Liverpool**, of course. They went to away grounds and shut up shop when they went ahead. The present **Liverpool** is so brimful of attacking alternatives, however, that they have no need of such caution.

Southampton could not conceal their delight at exposing the visitors adventurous policy at The Dell on Saturday but they were lucky. Not many more sides will be so fortunate, not even if **Liverpool** suffer the kind of injury, a pulled hamstring, that deprived them of Lawrenson for the last 70 minutes. Even Dalglish, who is still depressingly suspicious of the media, could see the funny side when asked if his squad's seemingly unlimited resources would be stretched by the injury.

Ablett, who came on as substitute, showed himself to be a more than capable deputy apart from one alarming back pass. Nicol, who was forced to switch from left to right back, merely carried on overlapping up the right as he had been doing on the left. **Liverpool** were that unflustered at having to reshuffle.

Such was their arrogance that **Liverpool** were eventually lured into complacency by the lead given them by the latest brace of outstanding goals from Barnes. The first was volleyed in with his left foot after a shrewed pass by Aldridge and the second driven in with his seemingly less effective right at the end of a flowing move of first time passes that encapsultated all that is best about the first division leaders. Even though Clarke was to loop a header from Danny Wallace's cross over the transfixd Grobbleaar, Southampton, according to their manager, Chris Nicholl, 'came in at half-time with glazed expressions, such was the quality of **Liverpool's** goals.' Nicholl added, tongue firmly in cheek: 'We were nearly outplayed in the first half.'

Whatever he did say at first time Nicholl's outburst did the trick. Clarke's aerial dominance was threatening to undermine **Liverpool** long before Townsend drove in Cockerill's cross for the equalizer.

The substitution of Clarke was quite a surprise, even more so when in the light of what has been such a guelling week for British sportsmanship, Nicholl apeared to condone the Irishman's belligerent gesture at Dennis Rofe, the trainer, as he came off. 'I'd have been worried if he had accepted it too easily,' Nicholl remarked. On that basis, Baker, who meekly accepted his substitution, will presumably be in hot water with the manager when he reports for training today.

----- SOUTHAMPTON: J Burridge; G Forrest, D

Statham, J Case, K Moore, K Bond, A Townsend, G Cockerill, C Clarke (sub: M Letissier), G Baker (sub: R Wallace), D Wallace. -----

**LIVERPOOL:** ----- B Grobbleaar; G Gillespie, M

Lawrenson (sub: G Ablett), S Nicol, R Whelan, A Hansen, P Beardsley, J Aldridge, R Houghton, J Barnes, S McMahon. ----- Referee: H W King.