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A question of team priorities

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Sheffield Wednesday might have been forgiven for believing that their chances of inflicting what would have been only **Liverpool's** third League defeat of the season on Saturday were high. It would have been understandable had the champion coated through, more intent on protecting weary limbs.

But **Liverpool** will not ease up until after the FA Cup Final on Saturday because those players who have provided such entertainment over the past 10 months are living in fear.

Bearing in mind the ease with which the championship was won and the obvious gulf in class between themselves and their opponents at Wembley, Wimbledon, it is perhaps a curious notion. But Kenny Dalglish, fiercely loyal to those from whom he had had to distance himself since his appointment as manager three years ago, unashamedly puts the club first, which means that friendship counts for nothing on the team sheet.

It would be foolish to suggest that no one is guaranteed to a place at Wembley but there are still question marks against a couple of positions. How many other managers would even toy with the idea of leaving out Johnstone after his brilliant performance?

Molby and Whelan, the long-term injury victims, were also given run-outs at Hillsborough as Dalglish guaranteed that the guessing game would continue. This continuing battle to impress on a personal level resulted in an overall team performance so compelling that Wednesday capitulated.

After coasting into a two-goal lead courtesy of Johnstone and Barnes, **Liverpool** gave the scoreline the one-sided slant it deserved in the last five minutes.

Beardsley scored twice, Hirst reduced the arrears only for Johnstone to ensure that **Liverpool** had the last word.

----- SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY: -----

----- K Pressman; M Sterland, L May, L Madden, N Worthington, S

Jonsson, G Megson, M Proctor, C West, L Chapman, D Hirst. -----

----- **LIVERPOOL**: ----- B Grobbelaar; S

Nicol, A Hansen (sub: J Molby), G Gillespie, G Ablett, R Houghton, N Spackman, S

McMahon (sub: R Whelan), C Johnstone, P Beardsley, J Barnes. -----

----- Referee: D Shaw.