

Date: 27 February 1993 Opposition: Sheffield Wednesday Competition: League		Guardian	Sunday Times	27 February 1993
	British Soccer Wk			

BRITISH SOCCER WEEK

Rush dropped by Liverpool

Veteran Viv Anderson kept Wednesday's unbeaten record intact on an otherwise miserable afternoon for his side.

A dreadful back-pass by Nigel Worthington had let in Don Hutchison for Liverpool in the opening half.

Peter Shirliff was stretchered off with a broken arm. And, 12 minutes later, Wednesday were down to ten men after Worthington was sent-off for a professional foul.

But 36-year-old Anderson finally gave home supporters something to cheer by heading home an equaliser to stretch Wednesday's unbeaten run to 16 games.

They had been chasing their ninth straight win, which would have set a post war record, and had all the early pressure with John Sheridan going close with a free kick and Mark Bright shooting inches wide in the 16th minute.

Liverpool, who sensationally dropped Ian Rush, swept into the lead in the 20th minute when Worthington tapped a weak back-pass to Chris Woods and Hutchison pounced - taking the ball round the stranded 'keeper and slotting the ball over the line.

Stand-in striker Paul Warhurst, who had scored in his last seven games, almost made it eight on the trot in the 32nd minute - rifling a fierce shot which 'keeper David James parried but could not hold and the ball was finally cleared by the hard-pressed Liverpool defence.

Steve McManaman set up a chance for Mark Walters minutes after the restart with a curling cross from the left but the ex-Glasgow Rangers striker volleyed across the face of the goal.

Shirliff was stretchered off after falling awkwardly as he tackled John Barnes while Worthington went for a professional foul on Hutchison.

Liverpool manager Graeme Souness refused to comment about his decision to drop Rush. Souness parried questions about the controversial axing of the Welsh striker and would only comment: "This is a game we should have won. We had more chances today than we have had in our last four matches. A 1-1 draw is a bad result for us under the circumstances."

Wednesday boss Trevor Francis revealed that point-saver Anderson had responded to orders when he came on as a substitute. "The only thing I said to Viv when he went on was 'get us a goal from a corner', and he did just that," said Francis. "He has done it regularly for us from corners and free-kicks. He is very difficult to mark. I was pleased with the draw, I would say that it was probably the best draw I've had as a manager. In the last three or four minutes we were on the ropes but Chris Woods made one or two excellent saves."

the guardian

Francis fighters

THIS was, as John Cleese might have put it, an exercise in the 'bleeding obvious'. After all the build-up about Wednesday needing one more win for a club record and Warhurst two goals for another, it was almost bound to end in anti-climax. Not only was there no Wednesday win, no Warhurst goal and no records, but in battling back from behind to provide the new pools coupon's first 11 draw, the club lost their central defender Shirliff with an arm broken in a freak fall and the full-back Worthington for a professional foul.

But then, had the game gone more Wednesday's way we might never have seen revealed a quality many would have doubted in a Trevor Francis team - the ability to battle.

Francis was always a stylish player and his Wednesday side reflects that. But he was never a battler. However, even he was moved to describe his side's point in adversity 'one of the best draws I have ever had as a manager'.

In the coming weeks they will need all that fight, and the team spirit which underpins it. Shirliff's injury, plus a statutory ban for Worthington, comes on top of the absence through injury of another regular central defender, Pearson, a key man in midfield, Wilson, and the striker Hirst. And Bart-Williams is off to this mad March youth tournament down under. Not the time to be facing crucial FA and Coca-Cola Cup ties.

As for Worthington, he could be fairly said to have had a bad day. Sent off in the 63rd minute for tripping Hutchison having let the player through on goal, he had earlier gifted the same man a Liverpool lead on 21 minutes with an underhit backpass.

The closest Wednesday had come to equalising was on 69 minutes when Sheridan contrived to slice a piece-of-cake-chance wide. It took the substitute Anderson to score the goal that extended Wednesday's unbeaten run to 16 games, heading in a pinpoint cross from the impeccable Waddle, whose absence from the England team has gone from mystery to joke.

Liverpool's latest attempt to move out of sniffing distance of the relegation swamp involved dropping Rush, which angered him because he found out via the newspapers and perhaps cost the team the match as the reorganised attack squandered chances.

But at least Liverpool looked more of a unit and with a bit of self-confidence and a goal-taker might yet prove critics wrong. As for Wednesday, they are in sight of a European place in the league and attacking on two cup fronts. It is just the problems at the back and in midfield that are a worry.

SCORERS: Sheffield Wednesday: Anderson (82min). Liverpool: Hutchison (21). Sheffield Wednesday: Woods; Nilsson, Worthington, Palmer, Harkes, Shirliff (Anderson, 53), Hyde (Bart-Williams, 90), Waddle, Warhurst, Bright, Sheridan. Liverpool: James; Redknapp, Jones, Nicol, Wright, Bjernebye (Marsh, ht), McManaman, Hutchison, Walters, Barnes, Stewart.

Referee: V Callow (Solihull).

Date: 27 February 1993
 Opposition: Sheffield Wednesday
 Competition: League

	Guardian	Sunday Times	27 February 1993
British Soccer Wk			



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Wednesday's treble chance

Sheffield Wednesday 1, Liverpool 1.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 1

(4-4-2): Woods; Nilsson, Shirliff (Anderson 53min), Palmer, Worthington; Waddle, Hyde (Bart-Williams 90min), Sheridan, Harkes; Warhurst, Bright.

LIVERPOOL 1

(4-4-2): James; Jones, Nichol, Wright, Bjernebye (Marsh 45min); Walters, Stewart, Redknapp, Barnes; Hutchison, McManaman.

Goals: Hutchison (20min) 0-1; Anderson (82min) 1-1.

Weather: cold. Ground: hard.

Referee: V Callow (Solihull).

THE passion was extraordinary, the commitment immense, and there were times when the underlying tension flickered towards malice. But even in the billowing snowstorm that engulfed the last five minutes nobody could complain at the excitement. Wednesday, reduced to 10 men after Worthington was sent off, played with the guts of a squadful.

Had Wednesday won, they would have surpassed their post-war record of eight successive victories. Had Liverpool lost, they would have added to the ignominy of winning only one of their previous 12 games. In reality both statistics were irrelevant.

Liverpool had periods of passing that were as good as anything they achieved at their height; Wednesday had periods of play as good as anything in an unbeaten run that began in mid-December. But at other times, both teams spluttered badly enough for Worthington of all people to give away a goal with an appalling back-pass and for Liverpool's Nicol to give the ball away under minimal pressure.

Worthington misjudged Woods's position and Hutchison, collected the ball between the two of them and scored with aplomb. Hutchison came close on another three occasions, including a free header in the heart of Wednesday's box, and McManaman would probably have scored twice, including at the death, had he not immaturely snatched at chances he should have passed on.

Liverpool's asset was their passing. But there was more to it than that. Wright, for instance, had a superb game, as much for the team as an individual. He stopped two Wednesday shots that few defenders would have dealt with so adeptly. His work load was the heavier because Bjernebye lashed out wantonly time and time again, while Redknapp was subtler, but little better.

When Worthington stopped Hutchison in full flight during one of his clearest runs on goal, that was the end of Worthington's day. As if that was not sufficient disruption to Wednesday's shape, they also lost Shirliff with a broken arm after an innocuous tackle by Barnes. Somehow, incredibly, Wednesday battled on. They understandably spluttered for periods, and Waddle was even forced back to his own penalty area to collect the ball.

Sheridan missed an early chance for Wednesday; James pulled off two excellent saves. The pace, ebb and flow was beyond belief, and when Hillsborough was engulfed in a snowstorm, and the floodlights briefly failed, it did not skip a beat. Trevor Francis said he thought it was Wednesday's best draw of the season. If this is what Liverpool can do without Rush, you have to wonder if he still belongs in their side. Anderson's equaliser was a snap header direct from a corner, in a final surge when Wednesday's guts made up for their lack of shape. And leaves them dreaming of an impossible treble.