

Date: 9 December 2012

Opposition: West Ham United

Competition: League

BBC	Times	Telegraph	Echo
	Guardian	Mirror	Post
	Independent	Mail	Evening Standard

9 December  
2012

## THE TIMES

Liverpool rise to challenge of life without Suarez

West Ham United 2  
Noble 36 (pen), Gerrard 43 (og)  
Liverpool 3

Johnson 11, Cole 76, Collins 79 (og)  
Referee L Probert Attendance 35,005

There had been plenty of shrugs beforehand. Liverpool travelled to East London without a recognised striker and there were doubts that Brendan Rodgers's side would be able to score one goal, let alone three, without the suspended Luis Suarez.

On the High Street leading to Upton Park, there are lots of shops selling human hair. Rodgers might have considered using them as a starting point to create a new striker from scratch so desperate did his need seem to be, but his faith in what he had left over once the vitality of Suarez, who has scored ten goals in 15 league games this season, was removed.

Certainly without the Uruguay forward, Liverpool were different. They were less exciting but also less frenetic. They were more effective.

Really. The statistics do not lie. This was their third victory in a week and, crucially, the first time they have won back to back games in the Barclays Premier League all season.

And there was room for others to shine. Joe Cole last scored a league goal in April 2011 but was composed when he beat Jussi Jaaskelainen for Liverpool's second. Jonjo Shelvey had been described only in negative terms in the build-up to this encounter but he forced the winner.

"For us there was no drama," the former Swansea City manager said of losing Suarez. This could have been billed anyway as the Glen Johnson show with the full back, who came through the academy at Upton Park, on a run of scoring against his former club. In the eleventh minute he claimed his third in three games against West Ham United and it was quite breathtaking.

Steven Gerrard fed Johnson, who, from just outside the penalty area, unleashed, almost casually, a vicious shot that Jaaskelainen had no hope of reaching. So far so good for Liverpool. Johnson then set up Raheem Sterling but the teenager's shot was just wide.

Everything that was threatening about Liverpool involved the full back. But then the rhythm faltered. Joe Cole replaced the injured Jose Enrique and it felt as if someone had thrown a pebble into the polished propeller of a vintage aircraft. Joe Cole was too eager to please and his passing was off kilter. Liverpool stuttered and sensing the frailty, West Ham increased the pressure and won a penalty with Mark Noble scoring from the spot after Joe Allen was punished for a handball in attempting to block Guy Demel's shot.

Suddenly the Merseyside team looked bereft and it was not hard to see why they had arrived here having won only one away game all season. Just before half-time a Matt Jarvis cross was met by Gerrard, whose clearance went horribly wrong and he headed the ball beyond Pepe Reina.

They rarely announce an own goal in such situations, preferring to find a way to give it to a player from the home side but on this occasion the Upton Park faithful were delighted to hear the truth.

Indeed there was speculation over the PA system at half-time as to what an enjoyable own goal it was; which it had to be hoped, from a Liverpool perspective, Gerrard overheard; or maybe not, given that he had already been cautioned. The Liverpool captain led out his team early for the second half, tugging at the neck of his shirt in exasperation.

West Ham resumed confident in their passing and as slick as Rodgers's side had been in the early stages. But then Sterling forced a dramatic save from Jaaskelainen and the sparkle returned. Shelvey might have done better with his header from Stewart Downing's cross but he was looking brave, interested -- even fascinated by his new role.

Sterling then fed Joe Cole with the sort of ball that even the most inhibited player would lap up and Cole made amends for all that had gone wrong by scoring a quite delightful goal, placing the ball beyond the West Ham keeper.

Shelvey stuck his foot out to reach an excellent cross from Jordan Henderson and it looped off James Collins beyond Jaaskelainen -- but having been described in the build-up to the game as "not a natural striker" he exhibited a real forward's hunger.

"Shelvey was outstanding," Rodgers said. "He's only 20, he has a big future ahead of him."

It almost got better for Liverpool. Sterling neatly wrong-footed Collins to leave himself with a clear run at the keeper, but the ball drifted too far ahead of him and Shelvey could well have won a penalty after a weaving run was ended by the challenge of Winston Reid, but the referee was unconvinced.

Sam Allardyce did not, he said, expect a game without Suarez to be packed with goals and he certainly did not expect two former West Ham players to be on the scoresheet. But worst of all was an injury to Mohamed Diame, who suffered a suspected torn hamstring and could be out for up to 12 weeks. "I would sooner deal with the aggravation of agents trying to move him on in January than make do without him," Allardyce said of the player who has a clause in his contract that allows bids of [pounds sterling]3.5 million to be considered. "It was a bizarre game," Allardyce said and he was right. Liverpool not only survived without Suarez but flourished.

## RATINGS

West Ham United (4-3-3): J Jaaskelainen 5 -- G Demel 6 (sub: G McCartney, 46 5), J Collins 4, W Reid 5, J O'Brien 5 -- M Taylor 5, (sub: M Maiga, 86) M Noble 6, M Diame 6 (sub: J Tomkins, 73) -- C Cole 5, K Nolan 5, M Jarvis 6. Substitutes not used: R Spiegel, J Tomkins, J Spence, G O'Neil, G Moncur. Booked: Taylor. Liverpool (4-1-2-3): J M Reina 5 -- G Johnson 7, M Skrtel 5, D Agger 5, J Enrique (sub: J Cole, 27 6) -- Lucas Leiva 5 (sub: J Henderson, 71) -- S Gerrard 5, J Allen 5 (sub: S Coates, 86) -- S Downing 5, R Sterling 6, J Shelvey 6. Substitutes not used: B Jones, J Carragher, Suso, A Morgan. Booked: Shelvey, Gerrard.

## the guardian

### Shelvey digs deep to inspire Liverpool fightback

Jonjo Shelvey was the only Liverpool player to celebrate a goal at Upton Park and as well he might. Cast in the role of the false nine, as his club arrived in London without a recognised striker, due to the suspension of Luis Suarez and Fabio Borini's injury, Shelvey compensated for his lack of comfort as the line's leader with old-fashioned blood and sweat.

His reward was glorious. Shelvey will struggle to claim the winning goal, as the crucial touch came off the West Ham United defender James Collins, but he was the central figure from a Liverpool perspective when the substitute Jordan Henderson flashed in his 79th-minute cross.

Shelvey supported West Ham as a boy and his goalscoring team-mates, Glen Johnson and the substitute Joe Cole, began their careers at the club. They did not celebrate their goals, which were of the highest class, particularly Johnson's, yet Shelvey basked in his moment, perhaps feeling a release of frustration. He cavorted in front of Liverpool's fans, shaping his hands as a pretend pair of spectacles: he is, apparently, the only member of his family that does not need glasses.

It was the final act of what Sam Allardyce, called a "bizarre" game. The West Ham manager noted that Liverpool matches were normally tight and without Suarez, the club's goalscoring talisman, this one would surely be more so. "I certainly didn't expect two ex-West Ham players to score for them," Allardyce said. Or, maybe, the Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard to give the home side a half-time lead with the first own goal of the game.

The winning goal, Allardyce said, was "freaky" yet the disappointment of the defeat was compounded for him by the loss of Mohamed Diame, his most creative player. Diame had thrilled with his rampaging runs from midfield but he felt his hamstring snap on 73 minutes and collapsed in agony. "The signs are not good," Allardyce said. "It's a serious tear and that can be anything up to eight, 10, 12 weeks. It's yet another injury blow for us."

At least, it might deter the January transfer window predators, who have indicated a readiness to exploit the release clause in Diame's contract. "I'd sooner have the aggravation in January of people trying to get him and him playing like he has done for us than lose him like this to injury," Allardyce said.

West Ham conceded the decisive goals after Diame's departure but they had been advertised, as Liverpool, composed upon the second-half restart, had taken a grip on proceedings. Stewart Downing created chances for Raheem Sterling and Shelvey before Cole took Sterling's pass and finished with ice-cool confidence. His first Premier League goal since April of last year would have been enough for the headline writers but Shelvey helped to trump him and secure a big win for Brendan Rodgers.

"Even without Luis, there was quality and fight in the team," the Liverpool manager said. "The players were brilliant. We have been through a lot this week, in terms of getting back a day late [from Thursday's Europa League win over Udinese] and I thought we thoroughly deserved this. We are making steady progress."

Suarez's absence had overshadowed the buildup but the outstanding Johnson seemed intent on filling the creative void. The right-back pushed high up the field at the outset to worry Matt Jarvis, West Ham's covering winger, who was rather more comfortable in the attacking third. Johnson's goal was stunning, banged in unerringly with his right foot into the far top corner from the edge of the area. Sterling missed a glorious chance for 2-0, after Johnson had beaten Jarvis to cross, but West Ham fought their way back. The game turned for the first time on West Ham's penalty. Guy Demel's rasping shot struck Joe Allen's outstretched arm, as the Liverpool midfielder attempted to close him down and Mark Noble showed no sympathy with a clinical low conversion.

Things got worse for Liverpool when Gerrard, under no real pressure, misdirected an attempted clearing header and watched the ball loop apologetically beyond his own goalkeeper, Pepe Reina. Liverpool, though, regrouped and the second half was theirs. So were the points.

Man of the match Glen Johnson (Liverpool)

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# The Mail

**COLE'S A CLASS ACT; Old boy shines in Rodgers revival**  
 AFTER taking baby steps in his first few months in charge of Liverpool, Brendan Rodgers is beginning to talk of a revival. There was mention of momentum after this impressive comeback, settling into a rhythm as they string together a decent run of results. Liverpool's manager is breathing life into this great club, restoring Joe Cole to the matchday squad and filling Jonjo Shelvey with self-belief. Without their leading goalscorer Luis Suarez, who sat this one out through suspension, the fear was that the visitors would come up short. Instead they relied upon some of Rodgers' tactical wizardry, promoting Shelvey to the position of the false nine and watched it all take effect during a stunning second-half recovery.

'There are two types of No 9 in this country and one of them is the big man up front,' said Rodgers. 'The other is the player who can drift across the back line and offer something different.' Shelvey offered an alternative to Suarez, switching play with his neat touches and fizzing the ball back in to the feet of Steven Gerrard and Joe Allen. There was something very real about Liverpool's stubbornness at Upton Park, with a tingling sensation spreading through their impressive away following stationed in the Sir Trevor Brooking Stand.

This win is big, a message for the teams with pretensions of finishing in the top four of the Barclays Premier League that Liverpool have staying power. They had to live with Sam Allardyce's side in the first half, particularly as the driving runs of Mohamed Diame in the centre of midfield threatened to break the away team's resistance.

He was awesome until he succumbed, regrettably, to a hamstring injury in the 73rd minute when West Ham were still 2-1 in front. Allardyce spoke of a gradethree tear -- as good as 12 weeks on the sidelines to you and me. If his bursting runs had continued, West Ham would surely have followed up last Saturday's stunning victory over Chelsea by seeing this one home. Instead they can consider themselves very unfortunate to have been beaten by Cole's equaliser in the second half and a winner that was put through his own net by James Collins.

Cole had class, stifling the enormous temptation to celebrate his first goal in the Premier League since a 5-0 win over Birmingham in April 2011.

He had been applauded on to the field by 32,000 West Ham fans when he replaced Jose Enrique after 27 minutes and an East End old boy was not about to forget his heritage. It took an age for him to adapt but when he did, it was classic Cole. His equaliser was a reminder of the times when he ran the show for Chelsea, operating on the left and playing a full part in three Premier League title triumphs and as many FA Cups. He read the runs and quick feet of Shelvey and Raheem Sterling for his goal, making his way into the box and beating Jussi Jaaskelainen with a deceptive finish. Until then, West Ham had the pace, energy and the exuberance of a team who have been reinvigorated by Allardyce. The Hammers recovered after Glen Johnson's muted celebrations following the exceptional 25-yard strike that put Liverpool in front in the 11th minute.

West Ham fans do class and were respectful -- yet again -- of one of their own after the full back scored in his third successive game against his former club. He has been gone more than nine years but Johnson is a reminder of the talent that comes through Tony Carr's incredible academy.

There were lessons for Liverpool, particularly after Allen was punished for handball when Guy Demel blasted the ball at him inside the area.

Mark Noble tucked away the penalty and then it was all about West Ham as they launched themselves into ceaseless attacks in search of another.

They got it, deservedly, just before the break when Matt Jarvis swung the ball towards the Liverpool penalty area.

Gerrard, perhaps unnerved by some uncharitable abuse from a section of the home fans during the first half, inexplicably headed into his own net.

West Ham is a hot spot right now, their team thriving in the Premier League only seven months after winning promotion via the play-offs.

They are Olympic standard, winning the bid to move into a thumping 60,000-seat stadium just up the road at Stratford in August 2015.

Allardyce is already planning for the future, but he has every right to be annoyed about the present.

The fans are a demanding bunch and instead of encouraging the players to put their foot flat to the floor again, they should have settled for a point.

Instead they were vulnerable, opened up from the right as Jordan Henderson sent in a cross and Collins put through his own net under pressure from Shelvey.

It was a touch fortunate, but Liverpool are beginning to move in the right direction.

# The Daily Telegraph

**SHELVEY steps into Suarez's shoes with ease**

West Ham United 2 Noble pen 36, Gerrard og 43

Liverpool 3 Johnson 11, Cole 76, Collins og 79 Att: 35,005

At last, Liverpool have discovered the existence of life without Luis Suarez. With a dramatic if belated riposte to thwart an obdurate West Ham, Brendan Rodgers' players proved they could muster a sustained attacking threat without their

talismanic Uruguayan up front. How strangely poetic that two of Suarez's understudies should have been Glen Johnson and Joe Cole, both West Ham alumni, and both delivering memorable flourishes upon their return to the East End. First Johnson, a West Ham academy product a decade ago, silenced Upton Park for the third time here, unleashing one of his customary outside-the-area specials into the top corner. Then Cole, shrugging off his pedestrian first half, paused for a split-second on his left foot before angling his finish beautifully beyond Jussi Jaaskelainen. But for the outstretched boot of James Collins, Jonjo Shelvey, once a West Ham youth player and a fan of the home club from the cradle, could have joined a triumvirate of former claret-and-blue assassins. Shelvey, naturally desperate to impress in the absence of the suspended Suarez, was claiming the winner as his own. In Liverpool's 15 league matches to this point, Suarez had scored 10 of their 19 goals and created another two of them. The imperative to find an able deputy was glaring, and Rodgers was gushing about Shelvey's contribution.

"You see young Jonjo, at 20 years of age, playing the No9 role in a different way, combining with the midfield players. I thought the kid was outstanding, especially as people are trying to compare him with Suarez."

This sounded suspiciously like a way of burying Liverpool's deficiencies for the first 75 minutes by trumpeting their resurgence in the final 15. For there should still be no understating the club's predicament.

While disciples might argue that they lie only four points adrift of the top four, the same could be said of Norwich, Swansea and Stoke. Such is the intensity of mid-table jostling that Rodgers' players remain a couple of defeats from a relegation scrap. The cold reality, as owner John W Henry keenly appreciates from a freezing New England, is that the team have won just five of 16 league games.

For this season at least, Henry and Fenway Sports Group have hitched their wagon firmly to Rodgers. One senses that so long as the young manager produces a top-eight finish for Liverpool, coupled with a respectable Europa League run, he will be safe. But the aspirations at such an august institution could, and should, be far greater. Rodgers is never shy of acknowledging this, but as he spelt out his credo his words were less those of an inspiring philosopher than of a mightily relieved man. "This is a unique club," he said. "To be the manager is an incredible pleasure. But you have to create that spirit, it doesn't just happen. It comes from working hard, developing, learning. Just keep moving steadily. We want to keep making progress, building our game, enhancing the structure of the team and the club. That's there for everyone to see." It is a moot point. Liverpool started superbly, as Johnson signalled their intent with his 11th-minute missile, but from there they sank into a peculiar funk. While Johnson continued to torment his old club with his slaloming runs, Gerrard was sitting too deep and Joe Allen gave a dismal display. Rodgers, perhaps, put it best: "In the last 20 minutes of the first half we stopped playing." Allen's anonymity lasted long enough for West Ham to strike back, as the midfielder conceded a penalty by blocking Guy Demel's volley with his hand.

Mark Noble stroked the ball in from 12 yards with aplomb, even if there was scant fluidity in open play. It was perhaps in keeping with the game's disjointedness that the home side's second should have come courtesy of an own-goal. A swift freekick was passed to Matt Jarvis on the left, before Steven Gerrard arrived at the scene first to put the ball through his own net. West Ham were in the ascendancy, but the balance of the game tilted upon a serious injury to Mohamed Diame, their most creative force. The Senegal midfielder pulled up with a hamstring tear, which manager Sam Allardyce estimated could force him out for up to 12 weeks, and from there Liverpool redoubled their efforts. Raheem Sterling found the perfect deadweight pass for Cole, who contrived an elegant shot in front of goal to beat Jaaskelainen. Then Shelvey, seizing upon a dangerous cross from Jordan Henderson, pounced at the near post, even if the luckless Collins had the final touch. "It was a bizarre game in many ways," Allardyce reflected. "I wouldn't have expected there to be five goals. You know that without Suarez, Liverpool don't score many." After a late salvo by the Suarez stand-ins, that wisdom might have to be revised.

Hammers old boys return to haunt them

**GLEN JOHNSON**  
 The right-back came through the West Ham youth system and signed a contract in 2001, playing 15 times for them in the Premier League before signing for Chelsea for [pounds sterling]6million when the club were relegated in 2003.

**JOE COLE**  
 One of West Ham's golden generation, Cole came through the youth ranks and signed as a professional at 16 in 1998. He scored 10 goals in 108 league starts before joining Chelsea for [pounds sterling]6.6million when West Ham were relegated.

**JONJO SHELVEY**  
 After a spell as an Arsenal youth player, Shelvey was at West Ham, the team he supported, from 2004-2007 before moving to Charlton, where he signed his first professional deal.

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## THE INDEPENDENT

Cole goes back to the future to show that he can do more than just warm benches

In those long ago days when Joe Cole emerged at West Ham, he was going to be the future of English football. It never quite worked out like that - it rarely does in England for players of his ilk - but yesterday he returned to the East End and rediscovered the joy. Cole began the afternoon in his now customary role as bench-warmer but injury gave him his chance and after a hesitant start he turned a match which had been shaping up to provide further confirmation of Liverpool's modern mid-table mediocrity. He also provided a hint that his glorious future may not all be behind him as his gamecraft enabled Liverpool to overcome the absence of a recognised striker. Liverpool had arrived drained after an arduous journey back from playing Udinese on Thursday and without a striker, the suspension of Luis Suarez and Fabio Borini's foot injury robbing the manager, Brendan Rodgers, of his only two options. Rodgers' solution was to deploy Jonjo Shelvey in what he described as the "false nine" role popularised by Spain. Shelvey came good in the end, forcing James Collins into own goal which enabled Liverpool to leapfrog West Ham into 10th, but for a long time he was a "false nine" only in the sense that he seemed an imposter in the centre-forward position. In the first half he played on the shoulder of West Ham's centre-halves like a conventional striker, but never looked comfortable. He closed defenders down, but he rarely held the ball up, nor did he drag his markers around. And when it came to threatening a goal, the one chance he did have, from a Stewart Downing cross in the final minute of the half, he stubbed wide. Meanwhile Shelvey's strengths, such as breaking forward from midfield, were lost to the team. Then Cole, who was sent to the right-wing when he replaced Jose Enrique on 27 minutes (Downing going to left-back) began drifting inside, Liverpool became more fluid and West Ham's defence more porous. The Spanish "false nine" position could have been designed for Cole, but given difficulties on Merseyside it was no surprise Rodgers did not entrust him with the role. Indeed, when he came on he gave the ball away with his first three touches. "He took time to get into game, but in the second half his quality came through," said Rodgers. Cole coming inside enabled Shelvey to drop deeper and affect the play ahead of him, and Downing to push on from left-back. West Ham were stretched and when they lost Mohamed Diam[c] to a hamstring tear they were broken. With 15 minutes left Sterling combined with Shelvey, and Cole timed his run perfectly to score his first Premier League goal since April 2011. For a few seconds the joy and relief showed, then he remembered where he was - Hammers' fans gave him an ovation when he came on - and stilled his celebrations. Three minutes later, with West Ham reeling, Jordan Henderson crossed from the right and Collins deflected it over Jussi Jaaskelainen to hand Liverpool the points. "We have to take it on the chin," said Sam Allardyce, who was as depressed with the prospect of losing Diam[c] for eight to 12 weeks as with losing the match. It does mean West Ham will not have to worry about losing Diam[c] in the January window but, said the manager, "I'd sooner have the aggravation of agents and people trying to buy him." Rodgers's contrasting delight was palpable. "It's a brilliant win," he said. "Sam's made this a very difficult place to come. I thought for 25 minutes we were outstanding." Liverpool had deservedly taken an 11th-minute lead. Glen Johnson, who had an excellent opening quarter, took a pass from Steven Gerrard, skipped inside Matt Jarvis, and rocketed a drive into the top left corner from 25 yards. Johnson, who began his career at West Ham, did not celebrate, something he should be practised at, having scored in his last three matches against them. Gradually West Ham settled, and in one of the most significant developments Jarvis began to test Johnson's defending rather than vice-versa. The momentum of the game swung and Daniel Agger, having earlier rescued Enrique when he lost possession to Matt Taylor, had to make an excellent clearance as Carlton Cole shaped to convert a 27th-minute Jarvis cross. West Ham kept pressing with Shelvey and Gerrard booked for fouling Diam[c], who had begun to usurp Gerrard's midfield dominance. Diam[c] also provided the breakthrough when, following excellent work by Mark Noble, the ball fell to him on the edge of the box and his volley struck Joe Allen's raised arm. "The penalty knocked us back. We thought it was a wee bit unjust," said Rodgers. Seven minutes later a free-kick was played quickly out to the unmarked Jarvis and Gerrard inadvertently headed past his own goalkeeper. "A very good own goal," said Hammers' half-time announcer. Although Liverpool controlled much of the second half it appeared West Ham would keep them at bay. When Cole's dummy enabled Sterling to run on to Downing's cross Jaaskelainen saved acrobatically, when Downing laid on a cross for Shelvey he headed wide. Then Diam[c], whose half-time arrival turned last week's game against Chelsea, departed and Liverpool took full advantage.

### LUCKY LIVERPOOL

Four Liverpool(tm)s second top scorer this season is own goals

WEST HAM UNITED 2 LIVERPOOL 3

Substitutions: West Ham United McCartney 6 (Demel, 45), Tomkins (Diame, 73), Maiga (Taylor, 86). Liverpool Cole 7 (Enrique, 27), Henderson (Leiva, 71), Coates (Allen, 86). Bookings: West Ham United Taylor. Liverpool Shelvey, Gerrard. Man of the match Raheem Sterling. Match rating 8/10. Possession: West Ham United 39%. Liverpool 61%. Attempts on target: West Ham United 4. Liverpool 3. Referee Lee Probert (Wiltshire). Attendance 35,005.

## DAILY MIRROR

NO SUAREZ ..NO SWEAT; Cole & Co prove they are NOT a one-man team as Reds raise roof without 10-goal Uruguayan  
WEST HAM 2 LIVERPOOL 3

BRENDAN RODGERS has spent the season confounding the doubters.

He has lifted Liverpool into the knockout stages of the Europa League with the club's reserves.

He has kept the club competitive with arguably the thinnest squad for many a year.

And now this. A win - without top scorer Luis Suarez - that could yet prove the most satisfying of the campaign come next May.

Especially with no other orthodox striker to take the Uruguayan's place.

Especially against a West Ham side defeated just once at home this season.

A HAMMERS side that had beaten Champions League holders Chelsea in such dramatic fashion barely a week before.

And especially when you consider the Liverpool team were forced to spend an extra night in Italy on Thursday after their Europa League win over Udinese. Their plane home developed engine trouble.

The Reds now sit just four points off the Champions League places, a target dismissed as fantasy by so many at the start of this season.

But there is an invincible spirit, instilled by Rodgers, running through this team. A spirit that now has them targeting better resourced clubs, with deeper squads, that are squandering points.

With two home games to come against Aston Villa and Fulham, followed by winnable contests at Stoke and QPR, Rodgers' men could yet be in the top-four mix by the time reinforcements arrive in January.

In the meantime, wins such as this one will do very nicely indeed.

The suspended Suarez had scored 10 of Liverpool's 19 league goals before yesterday. He had provided two assists. His absence gave many watching this game a bad feeling about the Merseysiders' prospects.

Glen Johnson, however, eased visiting nerves when he shot Liverpool into an 11th-minute lead.

The former Hamster teased and tormented Matt Jarvis before cutting inside to unleash an unstoppable, dipping drive past keeper Jussi Jaaskelainen.

It was a goal symptomatic of an explosive start by the Reds who were intent on showing they meant business.

Indeed, West Ham struggled to live with their opponents in the opening exchanges.

Then referee Lee Probert ruled harshly that Joe Allen had handled from Guy Demel's shot and awarded a penalty.

Mark Noble made no mistake with his effort into the bottom corner.

It was then that things really started to go wrong for the Reds.

First, Probert decided Matty Taylor's karate kick on Raheem Sterling was worth only yellow when it almost cut the youngster in half and should have been red.

Then Steven Gerrard headed into his own net from Jarvis' cross. When Jonjo Shelvey sent an effort wide from Stewart Downing's deflected centre, Liverpool's luck seemed to be deserting them.

The second-half injury to Mohamed Diame, however, played a huge part in the Reds' resurgence. The French midfielder pulled up with a hamstring injury on 72 minutes, was carried off on a stretcher and could now miss 12 weeks.

He had been man of the match until that point with Liverpool unable to contain him - just as Chelsea had the week before.

Once he departed, Sterling released Joe Cole - on for the injured Jose Enrique - and the Upton Park academy graduate shot past Jaaskelainen to level with 15 minutes left.

Three minutes after that, Shelvey pressured defender James Collins to such an extent that the centre-back turned a ball sent in by Jordan Henderson into his own net.

The reversal of fortune was complete.

Rodgers later expressed his pride in the performance of his players and their refusal to feel sorry for themselves without their Uruguayan main man.

He was right to do so. Liverpool were full value for this impressive win.

WEST HAM: Jaaskelainen 6, Demel 6 (McCartney 46, 6), Collins 6, Reid 6, O'Brien 7, Taylor 7 (Maiga 85), Diame 6 (Tomkins 73, 6), Nolan 7, Noble 7, Jarvis 7, Cole 7. Goals: Noble 36 pen, Gerrard 43 og Liverpool: Reina 6, Johnson 9, Skrtel 6, Agger 6, Jose Enrique 5 (Cole 27, 8), Allen 6 (Coates 85), Lucas 6 (Henderson 70), Gerrard 8?, Sterling 7, Shelvey 8?, Downing 8. Goals: Johnson 11, Cole 76, Collins 79 og REFEREE: Lee Probert ATTENDANCE: 35,005

WEST HAM v LIVERPOOL MAN OF THE MATCH GLEN JOHNSONGreat opener and return to old club BALL POSSESSION 61% 39% SHOTS ON TARGET 3 4 SHOTS OFF TARGET 8 3 CORNERS 5 2 OFFSIDE 15 FOULS 12 CARDS 2 10 0

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No Luis Suarez, no problem

NO LUIS SUAREZ? No problem - this was the perfect riposte to all that talk of Liverpool FC being a one-man team.

In the absence of their Uruguayan goal machine, Liverpool dug deep to secure the most significant victory of Brendan Rodgers' tenure.

A collective show of character inspired a heart-warming late fightback in the capital to turn an entertaining contest on its head.

No wonder Rodgers was waiting on the touchline to embrace each and every one of his players as they strolled off triumphantly.

With just 14 minutes remaining at Upton Park the Reds appeared to be slipping towards a painful defeat with Glen Johnson's stunning opener an increasingly distant memory.

Little had gone right for Rodgers' side with Mark Noble's harsh penalty restoring parity before Steven Gerrard's own goal put West Ham in front.

Shorn of the attacking talents of Luis Suarez, this looked set to be a predictable tale of Liverpool being made to pay for their alarming lack of firepower.

The excuses were ready made with their top scorer's suspension coupled with the fact that preparations had been affected by an extended stay in Italy due to plane trouble following the Europa League win over Udinese.

But rather than meekly accept their fate, Rodgers' side stood tall and finished with a flourish.

On a day when the Hammers old boys returned to haunt them, substitute Joe Cole fired home the equaliser before James Collins put through his own net under pressure from Jonjo Shelvey to hand Liverpool maximum points.

For only the third time in 16 league matches this season, Rodgers' side had netted more than twice and they had done it without Suarez.

It was also the first time since last December that the Reds had achieved back to back league wins as they climbed into the top half of the Premier League table.

With those successes sandwiched by a pivotal triumph in Europe, it's been some week for Rodgers.

Now only four points adrift of fourth place with home games against Aston Villa and Fulham to come before Christmas, Liverpool have a platform to build on.

Spend wisely in January and what was always going to be a season of transition could yet end with something tangible to celebrate.

The result is to be cherished but in the cold light of day this was also a contest which laid bare the lack of depth Rodgers is working with.

After Jose Enrique was forced off midway through the first half with a tight hamstring, Liverpool had £20million winger Stewart Downing at full-back with Cole stationed in front of him. Both are likely to be gone by the end of January if the right offers are received.

There was also the small matter of Shelvey operating as a makeshift striker. The young midfielder found life tough with his back to goal but his afternoon mirrored Liverpool's as he kept battling away and ultimately had the last laugh.

West Ham had beaten Chelsea 3-1 at home a week earlier but for half an hour yesterday Liverpool had them chasing shadows.

With Gerrard, Lucas Leiva, Daniel Agger, Raheem Sterling and Shelvey returning to the side, the Reds took control and dominated the contest.

They grabbed the lead in breathtaking fashion in the 11th minute. Johnson is in the form of his life and the Hammers couldn't contain him.

The right-back burst forward, cut inside past Matt Jarvis and unleashed an unstoppable 20-yarder into the top corner.

Johnson has revealed he's studying for an Open University degree in maths and his angles were spot on. For the third successive occasion he netted against the club where he began his career.

Rodgers' side were rampant with Gerrard pulling the strings and they should have swiftly added to their tally. Collins' hurried clearance was pounced on by Sterling but the teenager, who had turned 18 a day earlier, failed to hit the target.

Johnson continued to shine and once again he burst past Jarvis before unselfishly teeing up Sterling who blazed wide from 12 yards.

After Enrique's departure, the Hammers began to establish a foothold in the contest and it took a timely tackle from Agger to prevent Carlton Cole from turning home Jarvis' cross.

From a position of authority, passes started to go astray and Liverpool allowed themselves to get bullied.

Nine minutes before the break the Hammers were gifted an equaliser. Joe Allen was stood barely a yard away when Guy Demels blistering volley struck him on the hand but referee Lee Probert pointed to the spot. It was a cruel blow and Noble stepped up to slot the spot-kick into the bottom corner.

Matt Taylor was fortunate to escape with only a yellow card after a poor studs up challenge on Sterling and West Ham got even luckier in the 43rd minute.

Jarvis delivered from out on the left and Gerrard, knocked off balance after colliding with Agger, headed past the stranded Pepe Reina.

The Reds should have hit back on the stroke of half-time but Shelvey couldn't convert Downing's deflected cross.

In the second half it slipped into a war of attrition with the hosts sitting deep and Liverpool lacking the tools to break them down.

Sterling's rasping drive was tipped over by Jussi Jaaskelainen but the Reds were in need of inspiration.

It came from the most unlikely of sources. Rodgers' decision to bring on Jordan Henderson for Lucas did the trick as the midweek hero carried on where he left off against Udinese.

Sterling, Cole and Shelvey had all struggled to impress up to that point but they combined expertly in the 76th minute.

Sterling played a one-two with Shelvey and threaded the perfect pass into the path of Cole, who arrowed a clinical finish into the far corner. It was his first Premier League goal since April 2011.

Three minutes later the comeback was complete as Henderson got away down the right and delivered an inviting cross towards the near post. Shelvey darted in front of Collins and the ball struck the defender's boot and looped over the stranded Jaaskelainen.

Having proved they can do it without Suarez, the supporting cast need to keep delivering.



Reds enjoy London success

LIVERPOOL climbed into the top half of the Premier League table for the first time this season after producing a gutsy late fightback to clinch a 3-2 victory over West Ham at Upton Park.

The Reds led early on courtesy of Glen Johnson's stunning strike but they were rocked before at half-time as first Mark Noble equalised from the penalty spot and then Steven Gerrard nodded into his own net.

With Luis Suarez serving a one-match ban, Brendan Rodgers' side were short of firepower and they struggled to find a way back into the contest.

However, with 14 minutes to go substitute Joe Cole fired home to make it 2-2 before James Collins' own goal handed the Reds maximum points.

It's the first time this season Liverpool have clinched back to back league wins and they are up to 10th in the table.

Gerrard, Lucas Leiva and Daniel Agger returned to the Liverpool side after being left out of the squad which had travelled to Italy for the Europa League game against Udinese in midweek.

There were also starts for Raheem Sterling and Jonjo Shelvey as Jamie Carragher, Suso, Jordan Henderson, Nuri Sahin and Suarez were replaced.

The Hammers went into the game on a high after a 3-1 home win over Chelsea a week earlier. Sam Allardyce made two changes with Mohamed Diame and Matt Taylor called up in place of James Tomkins and Gary O'Neil.

There was an early scare for the Reds after they failed to deal with Matt Jarvis' cross and Diame's effort struck Carlton Cole and bounced narrowly wide.

However, the Reds soon settled and they took the lead in breathtaking fashion in the 11th minute. Johnson burst down the right, cut inside past Jarvis and unleashed an unstoppable 20-yarder into the top corner.

It was the third successive occasion that the in-form full-back had netted against his former club.

Buoyed by the breakthrough, the Reds grew in confidence and should have swiftly added to their tally.

Collins' hurried clearance was pounced on by Sterling but he failed to hit the target.

Johnson continued to shine and once again he burst past Jarvis and into the penalty area. The right-back unselfishly teed up Sterling but the teenager blazed wide from 12 yards.

Liverpool were forced into a change before the half hour mark as Jose Enrique was forced off due to a hamstring injury. Joe Cole came on with Downing moving to left-back.

West Ham began to establish a foothold in the contest and it took a vital tackle from Agger to prevent Cole from turning home Jarvis' cross.

Matt Taylor tested Pepe Reina with a long range free-kick and the hosts equalised in controversial circumstances nine minutes before the break.

Joe Allen was stood barely a yard away when Guy Demel's blistering volley struck him on the hand but referee Lee Probert pointed to the spot. Noble stepped up to slot the spot-kick into the bottom corner.

Taylor was then lucky to escape with only a yellow card after a poor studs up challenge on Sterling.

Having dominated for so long, Liverpool got sloppy with passes going astray and they fell behind in the 43rd minute.

Noble's quickly taken free-kick found Jarvis out on the left and his curling cross was headed into his own net by Gerrard, who had been knocked off balance after colliding with Agger.

The Reds had a glorious chance to restore parity on the stroke of half-time.

Downing's cross deflected into the path of Shelvey but he shovelled his shot wide.

In the second half the Hammers defended in numbers and Liverpool struggled to carve out opportunities.

Too often Rodgers' side were bullied into coughing up possession cheaply. Eventually, Agger ventured forward to fire over from 25 yards before it took a fine finger-tip save from Jussi Jaaskelainen to deny Sterling.

Shelvey nodded Downing's cross wide and Rodgers opted for some fresh legs as Henderson replaced Lucas.

Date: 9 December 2012

Opposition: West Ham United

Competition: League

BBC	Times	Telegraph	Echo
	Guardian	Mirror	Post
	Independent	Mail	Evening Standard

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It did the trick as with 14 minutes to go the Reds were level. A slick move saw Sterling and Shelvey exchange passes before Sterling played a brilliant pass into Cole's path.

The former West Ham man took a touch to steady himself and arrowed a sweet strike into the far corner. It was his first Premier League goal since April 2011.

Three minutes later Liverpool were in front. Henderson got away down the right and delivered an inviting cross towards the near post.

Shelvey darted to get in front of James Collins at the near post and the ball struck the defender's boot and looped up over the stranded Jaaskelainen as the Reds bagged their first away league win since September.



#### Reds fight back for Hammers victory

Liverpool proved they could win without talismanic striker Luis Suarez as they fought from behind to take three points from a 3-2 victory over West Ham at Upton Park.

Uruguay international Suarez was serving a one-match ban but the Reds struck twice late in the game to seal a win that sees them leapfrog West Ham in the table.

Former Hammers' defender Glen Johnson opened the scoring with a tremendous effort before a Mark Noble penalty and a Steven Gerrard own goal turned the game in West Ham's favour. It was another West Ham academy graduate in substitute Joe Cole who pulled the visitors level with a James Collins own goal completing the comeback for Liverpool.

West Ham's Matt Jarvis was getting a lot of the ball down the left flank but was soon found wanting when he was tested defensively. Gerrard played the ball out to Johnson on the touchline and the England full-back cut inside Jarvis with ease before arrowing a strike past the out-stretched hand of Jussi Jaaskelainen.

Nine minutes before the interval, a West Ham set-piece was cleared as far as Guy Demel whose shot hit the arm of Joe Allen as the former Swansea man closed him down. Referee Lee Probert deemed the block to be intentional and pointed to the spot, with Noble stepping up to coolly convert the penalty.

The spell of pressure yielded a second goal for Sam Allardyce's side, albeit it in fortunate circumstances.

Liverpool switched off after conceding a free-kick which Noble took quickly and found Jarvis in space on the left. The 26-year-old produced yet another fantastic delivery into the box and the ball was sent flying past Jose Reina off the head of Gerrard.

A serious looking leg injury suffered by Mohamed Diame made Allardyce's afternoon even worse after 73 minutes, with the in-form midfielder replaced by James Tomkins after pulling up hurt.

Joe Cole had little impact on the game until he struck a venomous equaliser after being played in by Raheem Sterling and, like Johnson, he refused to celebrate the goal out of respect for his former team.

The turnaround was completed just 12 minutes from time as Jordan Henderson swung in a low cross that Jonjo Shelvey and Collins competed for with the balling looping up off the boot of the West Ham defender and over a helpless Jaaskelainen.

Date: 9 December 2012  
 Opposition: West Ham United  
 Competition: League

BBC	Times	Telegraph	Echo
	Guardian	Mirror	Post
	Independent	Mail	Evening Standard

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90:00+6:33 Full time The referee signals the end of the game.  
 90:00+6:13 Glen Johnson gives away a free kick for an unfair challenge on Kevin Nolan. Jussi Jaaskelainen takes the direct free kick.  
 90:00+5:30 Free kick awarded for an unfair challenge on Jonjo Shelvey by George McCartney. Glen Johnson takes the direct free kick.  
 90:00+3:30 Free kick awarded for an unfair challenge on George McCartney by Glen Johnson. Direct free kick taken by Jussi Jaaskelainen.  
 90:00+1:58 Winston Reid concedes a free kick for a foul on Raheem Sterling. Stewart Downing restarts play with the free kick.  
 90:00+1:28 Unfair challenge on Joe Cole by Kevin Nolan results in a free kick. Free kick taken by Steven Gerrard.  
 90:00+0:59 Free kick awarded for an unfair challenge on Raheem Sterling by Joey O'Brien. Raheem Sterling takes the free kick.  
 89:52 Free kick awarded for an unfair challenge on Jordan Henderson by Modibo Maiga. Jose Reina restarts play with the free kick.  
 88:05 Free kick awarded for a foul by Sebastian Coates on Carlton Cole. Shot comes in from Modibo Maiga from the free kick.  
 85:09 Substitution Substitution Sebastian Coates replaces Joe Allen.  
 85:09 Substitution Substitution Modibo Maiga replaces Matthew Taylor.  
 85:09 Stewart Downing has an effort at goal from just outside the box which goes wide of the right-hand post.  
 78:41 Assist on the goal came from Jordan Henderson. Centre by Jordan Henderson, blocked by James Collins.  
 78:41 Goal scored Goal - James Collins - West Ham 2 - 3 Liverpool An unfortunate own goal is conceded by James Collins. West Ham 2-3 Liverpool.  
 81:05 Joe Cole has an effort at goal from outside the penalty box missing to the wide right of the target.  
 80:36 Steven Gerrard concedes a free kick for a foul on James Tomkins. Jussi Jaaskelainen restarts play with the free kick.  
 78:41 Assist on the goal came from Jordan Henderson.  
 78:41 Goal scored Goal - Jonjo Shelvey - West Ham 2 - 3 Liverpool Jonjo Shelvey gets on the score sheet with a goal from close range to the top left corner of the goal. West Ham 2-3 Liverpool.  
 75:13 Assist by Raheem Sterling.  
 75:13 Goal scored Goal - Joe Cole - West Ham 2 - 2 Liverpool A goal is scored by Joe Cole from inside the penalty area to the bottom right corner of the goal. West Ham 2-2 Liverpool.  
 72:31 Substitution West Ham makes a substitution, with James Tomkins coming on for Mohamed Diame.  
 72:31 Substitution Substitution Matthew Taylor leaves the field to be replaced by James Tomkins.  
 69:42 Substitution Substitution Jordan Henderson on for Leiva Lucas.  
 69:42 Stewart Downing crosses the ball, Jonjo Shelvey has a headed effort at goal from deep inside the area missing to the left of the target.  
 68:28 A cross is delivered by Matthew Jarvis, Matthew Taylor takes a shot. Jose Reina makes a save.  
 66:51 Raheem Sterling produces a curled left-footed shot from 18 yards. Save by Jussi Jaaskelainen. Corner taken by Steven Gerrard from the right by-line, clearance made by Joey O'Brien.  
 66:33 Raheem Sterling fouled by Mark Noble, the ref awards a free kick. Direct free kick taken by Jonjo Shelvey.  
 64:57 Shot by Daniel Agger from outside the box goes over the net.  
 60:21 The official flags Matthew Taylor offside. Jose Reina takes the indirect free kick.  
 58:50 The referee blows for offside against Matthew Taylor. Indirect free kick taken by Jose Reina.  
 58:08 Jonjo Shelvey takes a shot. James Collins gets a block in.  
 56:42 Matthew Taylor takes the outswinging corner, James Collins has a headed effort at goal from deep inside the area missing to the left of the target.  
 54:30 Kevin Nolan takes a shot. Daniel Agger gets a block in.  
 53:13 The assistant referee flags for offside against Carlton Cole. Jose Reina takes the free kick.  
 51:39 Unfair challenge on Glen Johnson by Matthew Jarvis results in a free kick. Jose Reina takes the direct free kick.  
 50:21 Free kick awarded for a foul by Joey O'Brien on Joe Allen. Stewart Downing takes the direct free kick.  
 47:00 The offside flag is raised against Kevin Nolan. Free kick taken by Jose Reina.  
 46:33 Free kick awarded for a foul by Joe Cole on Matthew Taylor. Free kick taken by James Collins.  
 45:01 The referee gets the second half underway.  
 45:01 Substitution Substitution George McCartney comes on in place of Guy Demel.  
 45:00+3:08 Half time The referee calls an end to the first half.  
 45:00+2:25 The referee blows for offside against Jonjo Shelvey. Jussi Jaaskelainen takes the indirect free kick.  
 45:00+0:31 Corner taken by Raheem Sterling from the left by-line played to the near post, save by Jussi Jaaskelainen.  
 44:39 Jonjo Shelvey produces a left-footed shot from deep inside the six-yard box which goes wide of the left-hand post.  
 42:35 Assist on the goal came from Matthew Jarvis.  
 42:35 Goal scored Goal - Steven Gerrard - West Ham 2 - 1 Liverpool Steven Gerrard heads into his own net. West Ham 2-1 Liverpool.  
 42:34 Matthew Jarvis produces a cross.  
 38:43 Steven Gerrard takes the outswinging corner, clearance by Carlton Cole.  
 37:46 Joe Allen restarts play with the free kick.  
 37:46 Booking The referee shows Matthew Taylor a yellow card for unsporting behaviour.

37:40 Free kick awarded for a foul by Matthew Taylor on Raheem Sterling.  
 35:52 Assist by Guy Demel. Joe Allen gets a block in.  
 35:52 Goal scored Goal - Mark Noble - West Ham 1 - 1 Liverpool Penalty taken right-footed by Mark Noble and scored. West Ham 1-1 Liverpool.  
 35:24 Guy Demel takes a shot. Joe Allen is penalised for handball and concedes a .  
 32:59 Matthew Taylor shoots direct from the free kick, Jose Reina makes a save.  
 32:59 Booking The referee books Steven Gerrard for unsporting behaviour.  
 32:54 Steven Gerrard concedes a free kick for a foul on Mohamed Diame.  
 32:02 Corner from the right by-line taken by Steven Gerrard, clearance made by Joey O'Brien.  
 31:16 Booking Jonjo Shelvey is booked.  
 29:24 Steven Gerrard concedes a free kick for a foul on Kevin Nolan. Mark Noble takes the direct free kick.  
 29:03 Effort on goal by Raheem Sterling from just outside the area goes harmlessly over the target.  
 28:29 Stewart Downing takes a shot. Blocked by Winston Reid.  
 26:33 Substitution Substitution Joe Cole is brought on as a substitute for Sanchez Jose Enrique.  
 25:22 Carlton Cole fouled by Martin Skrtel, the ref awards a free kick. Direct free kick taken by James Collins.  
 24:50 Kevin Nolan gives away a free kick for an unfair challenge on Leiva Lucas. Martin Skrtel restarts play with the free kick.  
 23:48 The ball is swung over by Matthew Jarvis, save by Jose Reina.  
 21:09 Unfair challenge on Daniel Agger by Matthew Taylor results in a free kick. Free kick taken by Jose Reina.  
 16:40 Free kick awarded for an unfair challenge on Mohamed Diame by Leiva Lucas. Centre by James Collins, Carlton Cole takes a shot. Save by Jose Reina.  
 14:00 Raheem Sterling produces a drilled right-footed shot from deep inside the penalty area which goes wide of the right-hand post.  
 12:50 Effort from the edge of the penalty area by Raheem Sterling goes wide of the left-hand post.  
 12:17 Steven Gerrard takes a shot. James Collins gets a block in.  
 11:31 Carlton Cole is ruled offside. Jose Reina takes the indirect free kick.  
 10:20 Assist on the goal came from Steven Gerrard.  
 10:20 Goal scored Goal - Glen Johnson - West Ham 0 - 1 Liverpool Glen Johnson scores a goal from just outside the area to the top left corner of the goal. West Ham 0-1 Liverpool.  
 9:26 Matthew Jarvis produces a cross.  
 8:05 Inswinging corner taken from the left by-line by Mark Noble, save made by Jose Reina.  
 7:44 Mohamed Diame fouled by Stewart Downing, the ref awards a free kick. Joey O'Brien takes the free kick.  
 6:13 Mohamed Diame takes a shot from 20 yards.  
 5:05 Unfair challenge on Steven Gerrard by Joey O'Brien results in a free kick. Jose Reina takes the direct free kick.  
 3:39 Matthew Jarvis produces a cross, Matthew Taylor takes a shot. Save by Jose Reina.  
 3:15 The ball is delivered by Carlton Cole, Daniel Agger manages to make a clearance.  
 1:06 Steven Gerrard takes a shot. Joey O'Brien gets a block in. Short corner taken by Stewart Downing from the right by-line.  
 0:00 The referee gets the match started.