

Date: 14 August 2016

Opposition: Arsenal

Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

14 August 2016

THE TIMES

Brittle Arsenal floored by 18-minute mauling

Arsenal 3 Walcott 31, Oxlade-Chamberlain 64, Chambers 75

Liverpool 3 Coutinho 45, 56, Lallana 49, Mane 63

Referee: M Oliver Attendance: 60,033

This was chaos, absolute chaos. It was a basket-case of a game, seven goals and no end of thrills and spills, but the feeling inside the Emirates Stadium was established long before the final whistle. If an enthralling victory seemed like a portent of exciting times ahead for Jurgen Klopp's resurgent Liverpool, so did Arsenal's shambolic defeat herald a darkening of the mood towards Arsene Wenger. No season was ever determined on the opening weekend, of course, but when Sadio Mane put Liverpool 4-1 ahead with a quite glorious goal -- their fourth in a stunning 18-minute purple patch that began with Philippe Coutinho's free kick in first-half stoppage time -- the febrile atmosphere boiled over into fury towards Wenger. As well as the chants of "You don't know what you're doing" there were furious screams at Wenger from some of the fans near the dugout. Stewards intervened, asking for calm. Calm? This was no place for calm. Just ask Klopp, who admitted he too had been wrapped up in the moment as he joined his players in giddily celebrating Mane's debut goal. There was still almost half an hour left and Liverpool's three-goal lead was quickly whittled down to one by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and Calum Chambers. That brief second-half rally at least quelled some of the animosity towards Wenger, but it was still fairly toxic as frustration poured out at the final whistle. Remarkably, this is the sixth time in seven seasons that Arsenal have failed to win their opening Premier League game. A solid start felt vital, such is the sense of agitation that has built up around Wenger's regime in the 12 years since his "Invincibles" stormed to the Premier League title, but, once again, Arsenal have begun a campaign in disarray, another early season injury crisis leaving them with a makeshift defence. Liverpool, after a slow start, showed them no mercy, the damage inflicted by two goals from Coutinho and one piece from Adam Lallana and Mane.

It was the type of performance that Klopp, with his love of "heavy metal football", might have been expected to describe in the onomatopoeic terms he likes -- boom, bang and more than the odd clang involving Alberto Moreno, still such a weak link at left back. Moreno crassly conceded a first-half penalty, from which Theo Walcott was denied by Simon Mignolet, and was out of position minutes later when Walcott redeemed himself with a low shot to put Arsenal 1-0 up. At that point, there was no sign of the Liverpool blitz that was to follow in that period when Georginio Wijnaldum and Mane, two of their summer signings, combined so well with Coutinho, Lallana and Roberto Firmino. That Liverpool's goals all came within 18 minutes reflected (a) just how devastatingly incisive their football was during that period and (b) the way that Arsenal disintegrated. There should be sympathy for Arsenal's inexperienced central defensive partnership. Chambers and Rob Holding, the 20-year-old acquisition from Bolton Wanderers, were thrown together as an emergency measure in the absence of Per Mertesacker, Laurent Koscielny and Gabriel. They performed reasonably well in the first half, but had no answer, predictably, when they were left exposed against the speed and clever movement of Liverpool's forwards.

Arsenal, Klopp admitted, had been the more impressive team for much of the first half. They made the better progress in the early stages, with Aaron Ramsey testing Mignolet, and succeeded in isolating Moreno. One mistake from the full back, miscontrolling a high ball into the penalty area, led to another as he crashed into Walcott in a desperate attempt to undo the damage. "Garbage," said Gary Neville in the Sky Sports commentary box. "Penalty," said Michael Oliver, the referee. Walcott shot, but Mignolet saved, diving to his right.

Walcott was quick to make amends. After Francis Coquelin tackled Lallana in midfield, Alex Iwobi spotted Moreno out of position and found Walcott with an excellent pass. This time Walcott beat Mignolet with ease and Arsenal were ahead. Briefly, the tension among the home crowd was replaced by a kind of cautious optimism. Liverpool had been surprisingly slow out of the blocks, but gradually built up a rhythm as half-time approached as Mane, Firmino and Coutinho grew influence. Petr Cech was forced into a save by Wijnaldum, but the Arsenal goalkeeper was helpless in first-half stoppage time, when Coutinho curled an exquisite free kick into the top corner from 25 yards for the equaliser.

As for what happened next, Arsenal capitulated. Wenger claimed it was all a psychological consequence of that untimely equaliser. If his team, even this depleted version, is really that brittle, then that hardly augurs well, though in mitigation -- slight mitigation -- Liverpool's football in that period was far beyond anything else seen in the opening weekend of this Premier League season.

Liverpool took the lead four minutes after the restart when Wijnaldum crossed from the left and Lallana took the ball in his stride, sliding a neat shot past Cech and sending Klopp into wild celebration. If Klopp liked that one, he cannot fail to have enjoyed their third, when, after a patient build-up in which they moved the ball from right to left and back again, Nathaniel Clyne's cross was converted stylishly by Coutinho. Seven minutes later, almost unthinkably, it was 4-1, with Mane streaking down the right wing and checking inside before striking a wonderful left-foot shot past Cech.

Klopp's team were guilty of carelessness after that, some poor defending helping Arsenal back into the game as Oxlade-Chamberlain made it 4-2, cutting inside and beating Mignolet with the help of a deflection, and then Chambers rose to head home Santi Cazorla's free kick. Just for a time, it looked like a comeback might be

on the cards. Ultimately, though, Arsenal ran out of ideas and Liverpool held firm. At the end, Klopp joined his players on the pitch to celebrate. The contrast with his opposite number could hardly have been more stark.

Arsenal (4-2-3-1): P Cech 4 ? H Bellerin 4, R Holding 4, C Chambers 4, N Monreal 4 ? F Coquelin 5, M Elneny 4 (sub: G Xhaka, 67min 4) ? T Walcott 6, A Ramsey 6 (sub: S Cazorla, 61 6), A Iwobi 6 (sub: Oxlade-Chamberlain, 59 6) ? A Sanchez 5.

Substitutes not used: D Ospina, K Gibbs, J Wilshere, C Akpom. Booked: Coquelin, Iwobi, Xhaka.

Liverpool (4-3-3): S Mignolet 6 ? N Clyne 7, D Lovren 6, R Klaven 5, A Moreno 4 ? GWijnaldum 7 (sub: K Stewart, 88), J Henderson 6, A Lallana 7 (sub: D Origi, 76) ? SMane 8, R Firmino 7, P Coutinho 9 (sub: E Can, 70 6). Substitutes not used: A Manninger, J Matip, T Alexander, M Grujic. Booked: Lovren, Moreno, Lallana

the guardian

Liverpool and Coutinho stun stuttering Arsenal in seven-goal thriller Jürgen Klopp lost himself in the moment. The Liverpool manager beat his chest and, in the frenzy, he knocked his glasses from his face. Adam Lallana had just put his team 2-1 up early in the second half and, when the passions had cooled, Klopp fished around on the ground in order to reacquire himself with his lenses.

It was an afternoon when Klopp and everybody else inside the Emirates Stadium could rub their eyes in disbelief. Liverpool were irresistible for a golden period after the interval, which climaxed in Sadio Mané, the £30m signing from Southampton, fizzing home their fourth goal. Klopp was central to the celebrations on the touchline, allowing Mané to clamber on to his back. He would later say that he regretted that. The game was not over, even if it felt like it was. Liverpool were vibrant and clinical, with their other expensive new boy, Gini Wijnaldum – the £23m purchase from Newcastle United – also prominent. Then, there was Philippe Coutinho who, not for the first time at this venue, was a joy to watch. He had equalised for 1-1 in first-half stoppage time with a scintillating 30-yard free-kick while he also scored his team's third goal.

It was some game to open the season in north London but it was enjoyable only for Liverpool, where it feels that something is stirring. Klopp restored belief and unity last season and, after a full pre-season in which to hammer home his high-intensity methods and play the transfer market, he has talked of this as being *his* team. There were defensive glitches on display but the optimism could surge. For Arsenal, there was bitter frustration and the same old questions, despite a gallant attempt to bounce back off the canvas after Mané's goal for 4-1. The substitute Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain scored a fine solo goal and when Calum Chambers flicked home a header for 4-3, there could be thoughts of the crazy 4-4 draw between the teams at Anfield in 2009. An Arsenal equaliser, however, never looked like materialising and, instead, there was the familiar sound of a chorus of boos from the home crowd at full-time. Arsène Wenger had been without seven players because of fitness issues and his makeshift central-defensive pairing of Chambers and Rob Holding, the new signing from Bolton Wanderers, was left exposed, although he did not blame them. Arsenal started brightly and they were the better team in a first half during which Theo Walcott missed a penalty and then scored the opening goal. But it was shocking to see how sharply the tide turned and, yet again, there could be questions about the team's mental fortitude. Wenger lamented the timing of Coutinho's equaliser while he also referenced the lack of experience in his team and how, physically, they had not been ready, which felt like an indictment. He can now count another couple of injuries, after Alex Iwobi and Aaron Ramsey were forced off with muscular problems around the hour and there will surely be renewed calls for Wenger to reinforce the squad with one or more signings. Wenger had chosen to leave his one big-money purchase, Granit Xhaka, on the substitutes' bench until the 67th minute while his decision to start Walcott ahead of Oxlade-Chamberlain on the right had been another surprise. Walcott showed his character to fashion the breakthrough, because the penalty miss had come moments earlier. From Iwobi's pass, his instincts took over and the low finish flashed into the far corner. Klopp would complain about the penalty award, claiming Alberto Moreno played the ball rather than Walcott but it did not matter when Simon Mignolet went the right way to beat away the kick. Moreno's challenge was clumsy, at the very least. It was the first penalty Walcott had taken in 10-and-a-half years as an Arsenal player. Liverpool allowed Arsenal too much space in the first half and, apart from the 40th-minute counter, when Roberto Firmino and Coutinho worked a shooting opportunity for Wijnaldum, which Petr Cech kept out, they had not hinted at an equaliser. Coutinho's execution was a "genius" moment, according to Klopp. Holding had conceded the free-kick when he nibbled into the back of Coutinho. Ramsey had enjoyed a couple of early chances but Liverpool turned the game on its head after half-time. It felt as though they were holding an in-house competition for the goal of the month and there might have been another during that devastating spell only for Cech to save from Coutinho. Lallana could not convert the rebound. Lallana scored with a crisp finish after Coutinho had released Wijnaldum; the third came when Coutinho touched in Nathaniel Clyne's driven cross and Klopp was in raptures when the outstanding Mané sliced inside to send a rising drive into the far, top corner. Coutinho was forced off on 69 minutes but Klopp reported that it was merely because of cramp. Arsenal's rally featured Oxlade-Chamberlain beating three men and embarrassing Mignolet at his near post and Chambers rising to glance home the substitute Santi Cazorla's free-kick. It was not enough.

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The Mail

WENGER STUCK IN A TIME WARP; Same old story as Liverpool run riot
ARSENAL 3

Walcott 31 Oxlade-Chamberlain 64 Chambers 75 3

LIVERPOOL 4

Coutinho 45, 56 Lallana 49 Mane 63 4

FORGET the drama for a moment, forget the utterly beautiful chaos of this game. The salient point is that already, after one game, Arsenal are behind. They are behind Manchester City and behind Manchester United, too. By 10pm, they may be behind Chelsea as well.

As such, it is the same old story for Arsene Wenger and his team. Three times in the last four Premier League seasons, Arsenal have started with defeat here.

Already, they are in the slipstream of their title rivals.

This defeat was different in its make-up. It was beguiling; a crazy, helter-skelter kind of game.

If day one of the season had left us wanting a little more by the time we were shielding our eyes from Gary Lineker's orange glow on Saturday's Match of the Day, here was the game to rescue the weekend. It may well be that May comes around without us witnessing another one quite like it.

Jurgen Klopp's outrageous Liverpool team went from 1-0 down to 4-1 up in 16 minutes. In that period they played some sublime football to overwhelm their opponents, like a tidal wave crashing over a row of palm trees.

Then they almost gave it all back again. The final act saw Arsenal's Santi Cazorla smash a cross into the backside of a team-mate and that just about summed everything up. Carry On football.

So, yes, this was all rather special in its own ridiculous way. But for the Arsenal supporters who jeered their manager down the tunnel at full-time, it still smacked dismally of *deja vu*.

Another disappointing return to action after another disappointing summer -- in their eyes at least -- in the transfer market. They have been here too many times and they were quick to let Wenger know it.

There were mitigating factors yesterday. No Mezut Ozil and no Olivier Giroud, for example. No first-choice central defenders either, with 20-year-old debutant Rob Holding playing alongside Calum Chambers. Not ideal, that.

But that plays straight into the hands of those who believe Wenger has lost his ambition and his vision in the transfer market.

Before this game, Wenger had defended his summer policy. New does not always equal better was his message. Here, though, was early evidence to suggest his faith in a squad who failed to win an open Premier League last season may well be misplaced.

At first there was no sign of the horrors to come. Arsenal were positive and dominated the opening stages. It was Liverpool who had problems and their left back Alberto Moreno had more than most.

Early thrusts did not lead to a goal or many clear chances for Arsenal. But Moreno conceded a penalty with a rash challenge on Theo Walcott after half an hour and, though the Arsenal forward saw his kick pushed away by Simon Mignolet, Moreno then gave him enough space a minute later to drive a low shot across the keeper and into the corner.

A goal up, Arsenal were comfortable, but it was not to last. Slowly, Liverpool's key players grew into the game and when young Holding laid an arm on Philippe Coutinho in first-half injury time, the Brazilian stood up and whipped a 30-yard free-kick beyond Petr Cech to bring his team level.

Wenger would have been frustrated at half-time. Fifteen minutes later he was raging as Liverpool returned to roll Arsenal aside with devastating ease.

Coutinho, as is often the case, was at the heart of it and one wonders how Liverpool -- even this reassembled version -- would cope without him if, as feared, he chooses to move on next summer.

He was not involved as Liverpool took the lead in the 49th minute. That was a goal created by the steady Georginio Wijnaldum and finished with a neat reverse shot by Adam Lallana.

Soon after, though, Coutinho arrived like a train to volley in a cross from Nathaniel Clyne after the full back had burned Nacho Monreal to reach the byline. This game had been turned completely on its head.

Liverpool have these passages of play in their locker. They used to do it in Brendan Rodgers' better days as manager, too. Arsenal, though, proved staggeringly supine and when Saido Mane cut in past Chambers from the right to beat Cech with a rising left-foot shot in the 63rd minute, bedlam threatened to engulf the Emirates.

In front of the Liverpool dugout, Klopp gave his goalscorer a piggy back. It was premature and later the German admitted as much.

Wenger, on the other hand, was under siege from Arsenal supporters as he sat motionless 30 yards to his rival's left.

Ultimately, the uprising in co.uk/sport by tute Cham becalmed by two home goals. Substitute Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain wriggled free to score via a deflection, then Chambers rose to head in a free-kick.

The scoreline and the excitement should not distract from the truth, though.

Arsenal head to champions Leicester next and already their need feels great. Last night Wenger could only shrug and suggest his team had not been ready for the opening day. When are they ever?

The Daily Telegraph

Wenger relives the nightmare as Arsenal lose their first game again

No club does false starts quite like Arsenal, whose manager Arsene Wenger seems to operate under the impression the big kick-off comes around at the start of September.

For the Arsenal fans who spend the summer dreaming of fresh beginnings and shiny new signings, and buy their season tickets and shirts in readiness for mid-August, the start of the season must seem like a recurring nightmare.

There cannot be another Premier League team who regularly appear so ill-prepared for the beginning of a campaign. Whether it be a lack of signings, injuries or players getting over international tournaments, nobody does it better than Arsenal and Wenger.

So it proved again as a team with no senior defenders and not a single out-and-out striker were beaten by a Liverpool team who themselves took their time to get going.

But when Jurgen Klopp's side, boasting three signings, clicked into gear, Arsenal fell apart to condemn Wenger's men to their third opening-day defeat in four seasons at the Emirates.

Without injured Per Mertesacker and Gabriel, and with Laurent Koscielny resting after the Euros, Wenger partnered Calum Chambers with PS2.5 million signing from Bolton, Rob Holding, at the back.

The inexperienced pair were ripped apart by Philippe Coutinho, Adam Lallana and debutant Sadio Mane during 18 minutes either side of half-time. The Gunners rallied after going 4-1 down to give the scoreline an air of respectability, but the damage had been done.

Arsenal should wrap up a deal for Valencia's Shkodran Mustafi this week, but Wenger should have moved for a defender already.

Similarly, Wenger has not signed a striker after failing in bids for Jamie Vardy and Alexandre Lacazette and, with Olivier Giroud putting his feet up with Koscielny after the Euros and Danny Welbeck injured, Alexis Sanchez was asked to start the season as a frontman.

Wenger admitted his team were not ready for the start of the season and revealed Aaron Ramsey and Alex Iwobi had suffered injuries that could see them miss Saturday's trip to champions Leicester City.

"We are not ready physically," said Wenger. "You are in a catch-22 situation with the Euros. The players are not ready and they play this kind of game and get injured, like Ramsey today. Or you give them the needed rest and you start the season without many of your players. We will try to get players back for Leicester, but when they have not the volume of preparation they get injured and you could see we dropped physically today. We are not stupid and we prepare well the players we have in."

"You also have to consider we have been a bit unlucky. We have lost Mertesacker and Gabriel in the preparation and Koscielny is not fit. Sometimes you have to accept you cannot control everything."

On the prospect of any signings, Wenger added: "I have said many times we are working very hard to get one or two players in."

Liverpool did not click into gear until late in the first half as Arsenal started more positively and took the lead through Theo Walcott 69 seconds after he missed a penalty.

Walcott won the spot-kick after drawing a foul from Alberto Moreno and took the ball himself, but Simon Mignolet dived to his left to keep the winger's effort out. Barely a minute later, the fans who were moaning about Walcott were on their feet as Moreno was caught out again by an Iwobi pass and Walcott fired a low drive into the corner of the net.

The goal sparked Liverpool into life and, five minutes before halftime, Roberto Firmino robbed Mo Elneny and found Mane, who pulled the ball back for Georginio Wijnaldum, whose tame shot was saved. But two minutes into added time, Holding, 20, showed his Premier League inexperience by giving away a silly foul that Coutinho punished with a stunning free-kick.

Just four minutes after the break, Wijnaldum made up for his first-half miss by twisting and turning in the Arsenal area before picking out Adam Lallana with a high ball for the forward to control on his chest and beat Petr Cech.

Klopp lost his glasses in the celebration, but there was better to come. Firmino bamboozled Chambers and sent in a low 56th-minute cross that Coutinho turned in.

Liverpool swiftly added a fourth with the goal of the game. Mane beat Nacho Monreal and Chambers, before drilling a stunning shot into the top corner of the net.

As Mane jumped on to the back of Klopp in celebration, the Arsenal supporters were turning on Wenger and each other. Familiar chants of "spend some f---ing money" were directed at the home dug-out, while others shouted at the dissenters.

It went almost unnoticed that substitute Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain had cut in from the left to reduce the deficit 60 seconds after the restart. When another Wenger substitute, Santi Cazorla, sent in a free-kick that Chambers headed home with 15 minutes left, the most unlikely of comebacks looked a possibility. But Arsenal and Wenger could not find their get-out-of-jail card and the boos that greeted the final whistle were all too familiar.

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THE INDEPENDENT

Gunners start in disarray as fans turn on Arsene Wenger in woeful defeat

Arsenal's opening day 4-3 defeat by Liverpool was not as concerning as Arsene Wenger's admission after the match that his side are "not ready" for the Premier League, with frustrations boiling over at the Emirates Stadium in scenes that threatened to turn ugly. The Wenger out brigade were still on their summer holidays when Theo Walcott put Arsenal ahead shortly after the half-hour mark, less than two minutes after seeing a penalty saved by Simon Mignolet, and there were still plenty of positives to take despite Philippe Coutinho levelling the scores in first-half injury time with an inch-perfect free-kick.

Yet after Adam Lallana, Coutinho again and the rampant Sadio Mane put Liverpool 4-1 up 18 minutes into the second half, north London resembled scenes not witnessed since the 2011 riots. That Arsenal managed to fight their way back into the game to 4-3 said something about their character – and more about Liverpool's defence – but there were far more negatives here than positives.

"Physically we are not ready," Wenger said. "You're in a catch 22 situation with the Euros because you give the players a rest. We are not ready to play this kind of game and they get injured like [Aaron] Ramsey today, or you give them a rest and you start the season without many of your players."

Wenger's failure to find a new defender and striker came to light in the second half, and while this is only the first weekend of a 10-month season, it could be Wenger's most important year of his 20 in the Premier League. His contract is up at the end of this campaign, and a renewal is no longer the certainty it once was.

The good cheer that comes with the start of a new season was in full display in the build-up to kick-off, where fans could lay their hands on a free matchday programme, complete with new signing Granit Khaka plastered across the front cover. If Arsenal were determined to push their marquee summer signing in an effort to make fans forget about their transfer failings over the last month, no one had informed Wenger, as he left his new acquisition out of the starting line-up.

Francis Coquelin and Mohamed Elneny filled the centre of the pitch in an obvious effort to protect Wenger's young centre-back pairing of Calum Chambers and new addition Rob Holding, a £2.5m addition from Bolton Wanderers after they were relegated to League One. With every opening weekend comes the admission that it's a big season for Walcott, and each year he fails to deliver. There were understandably plenty of concerned faces then when, after winning a penalty from a rash Alberto Moreno lunge, Walcott's poor spot-kick effort was saved by Simon Mignolet to his right. Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insisted afterwards that referee Michael Oliver had made the wrong decision. "It's not important of course but it's not a penalty," he said. "He [Moreno] played the ball is how I saw it but it's not important because Simon could make the save."

Walcott's luck was about to change though. Moreno, himself lucky to be still on the pitch given he had followed up his booking for conceding the penalty by furiously reacting towards assistant referee Stuart Burt after Mignolet's save, abandoned his defensive responsibilities, and when Philippe Coutinho lost the ball twice in the space of 15 seconds, a committed slide tackle from Coquelin on Lallana released Hector Bellerin, who found Alex Iwobi on the edge of the area. Iwobi elected to play in an unmarked Walcott on the right, with Moreno by now realising the error of his ways as he sprinted back, but it was too late.

Walcott took a touch before sliding the ball to Mignolet's right and into the side-netting, his reprieve triggering a passionate celebration and relief around the Emirates that Arsenal had been able to convert their superiority into a lead.

Liverpool had their chances though, with the Arsenal defence allowing summer signing Mane far too much space whenever he got the ball, yet Liverpool's front three were failing to test Arsenal's unproven centre-back pairing. Luckily for the visitors, they wouldn't need to equalise.

As the clock ticked over into time added on, Holding was harshly penalised for grappling with Coutinho. From 30 yards out, Coutinho unleashed a sublime curling effort into the top left corner that had Petr Cech beat, and the midfielder was already running to celebrate by the time the ball nestled into the net.

Arsenal could take heart from their first half showing, but they started the second half terribly. A lapse of concentration from Bellerin allowed Mane to break down the right, and the Senegalese cut back as he entered the area before chipping a cross towards an on-rushing Lallana in the middle of the box. The midfielder, who had a rather forgettable first 45 minutes, used his chest to cushion the ball before neatly placing it to Cech's right. Arsenal were rattled, and it didn't take long for Liverpool to find a third. Nathaniel Clyne burst down the right in the 55th minute to skin Nacho Monreal and fizz in a low cross to the centre of the box, where Coutinho was poised to hit the ball past Cech first time.

With Liverpool firing on all cylinders, what followed was one of the most bizarre periods seen in Premier League football. Mane by now was terrorising the Arsenal defence, and he burst past Monreal before beating Chambers, the pair both struggling with anything that came their way. The Senegalese cut inside and lashed the ball past Cech for Liverpool's fourth – the tipping point for many inside the Emirates. Boos rang out, some made their way for the exits after just 63 minutes citing "disgraceful" and "dèjà vu" as they passed the press box. But more alarmingly was the surge towards the Arsenal dugout by a selection of 'fans' who felt it necessary to let Wenger know they weren't impressed with the 4-1 scoreline. Stewards were required to keep them at distance, with the aggressors

completely oblivious to the fact that Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain – on for the injured Iwobi – had worked the ball beyond Clyne and Lallana and fired a shot past Mignolet via the boot of Dejan Lovren to make it 4-2.

With the boos silenced, Arsenal pressed on again and found a third 11 minutes later. Coquelin was fouled towards the left touchline with Arsenal deciding to flood the box and put Mignolet under pressure, the Liverpool goalkeeper beginning to have one of those games. It worked, and Chambers rose highest to meet substitute Santi Cazorla's floated cross to find the corner of the net.. It wasn't enough though, and Arsenal's failure to at least salvage a draw did not sit well with a frustrated Wenger, who after the match was in no mood to talk. It would get worse still, as captain Petr Cech managed to crash his car as he left the Emirates. It was described as a write-off, just like Arsenal's season unless they make a major statement in the transfer market in the next two weeks.

Teams

Arsenal: Cech; Bellerin, Holding, Chambers, Monreal; Elneny (Khaka, 67), Coquelin; Walcott, Ramsey (Cazorla, 61), Iwobi (Oxlade-Chamberlain, 68); Sanchez.

Liverpool: Mignolet; Clyne, Lovren, Klavan, Moreno; Wijnaldum (Stewart, 88), Henderson, Lallana (Origi, 76); Mane, Coutinho (Can, 69), Firmino.

Referee: Michael Oliver (Northumberland)

Att: 60,038



GOOD KLOPP BAD KLOPP

JURGEN KLOPP shouldered the blame for a thrilling Emirates climax after Sadio Mane jumped on his back during wild celebrations over Liverpool's fourth goal. The German's vibrant side proved defence is the best form of attack by scoring three times in 14 mad second-half minutes.

But Liverpool's fragile defence was still capable of conceding another two goals in a rollercoaster performance which lurched between brilliant and the bizarre.

Wherever Liverpool finish this season, it promises to be quite a ride.

As Arsene Wenger cut a familiar forlorn figure on the touchline, Klopp's enthusiasm matched his team after the break. He looked like the future while the Frenchman, 66, seems stuck in the past.

You certainly cannot imagine anyone jumping on Wenger's back as part of a goal celebration.

But then you cannot see the Arsenal boss investing PS100million in his team like Klopp has done over the summer. The German still admitted that, like his team, he had not been perfect.

"We came out after halftime and scored wonderful goals," he added.

"Then I made a big mistake as I was involved in the celebrations. There was still half an hour to go - I played a part in the excitement in the last 30 minutes. It was hard work, but a brilliant win.

"A deserved win. We made mistakes and scored some wonderful, wonderful goals."

But Klopp acknowledged this was not the whole story.

"Scoring four is wonderful, conceding three is the opposite," he said. "We can score, but we have to defend much better. It gives us the confidence and knowledge that we can score goals, but we have to defend better together."

And he was not just talking about the back four. Asked about Mane's full debut, Klopp said: "Mane was very good, but can do better. He can defend better."

While Liverpool were joyously unpredictable, the same cannot be said about a typically horrendous Arsenal start to the season. Another shambolic summer transfer window - where top signing Granit Khaka started on the bench - was followed by another defeat. Once again, the Gunners are playing catch-up from day one.

With Liverpool in a black away kit, Arsenal had started the brighter. Alberto Moreno, the villain of the Europa League final defeat, gave away a penalty when he upended Theo Walcott. But Simon Mignolet saved the England forward's spot kick.

It took only 69 seconds for Walcott to make amends - and Moreno to make another error after Adam Lallana was caught in possession.

The Gunners would have deserved a one-goal lead at half-time. But in injury time, Philippe Coutinho smashed a free kick into the top corner from 30 yards.

"I was happy half-time came, but our mistakes were so big they were easy to speak about," Klopp said.

His team talk worked as Lallana controlled Georginio Wijnaldum's pass on his chest before sliding home. Then Coutinho netted his second when he diverted home Nathaniel Clyne's low cross.

And Mane marked his Reds debut with a ridiculous finish when he scorched between the Arsenal centre-backs before firing a left-foot shot into the top corner to put the visitors 4-1 up.

With the chaos over the fourth Liverpool goal - it also sparked fan protests around the Arsenal dugout - Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain's deflected strike almost went unnoticed.

And a tense finale was set up when sub Santi Cazorla curled in a free kick for Calum Chambers to head home.

On this evidence, Liverpool are stronger title contenders than last season's runners-up.

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Coutinho nets twice as Reds claim Emirates thriller

Liverpool got their Premier League campaign off to a flying start with a thrilling 4-3 victory over Arsenal on a dramatic afternoon in the capital.

Philippe Coutinho struck twice before limping off as the Reds secured only their second win in 14 attempts at the Emirates.

Jurgen Klopp's side hit back after an error-strewn first-half display which saw Simon Mignolet save Theo Walcott's penalty before he was beaten by the Gunners winger.

Coutinho equalised just before the break with a classy free-kick and then in the second half Liverpool ran riot.

Adam Lallana, Coutinho and Sadio Mane put them 4-1 up before goals from Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and Calum Chambers set up a nervy finale.

Klopp sprung a surprise with his selection as Emre Can was left out with Gini Wijnaldum making his debut in midfield alongside captain Jordan Henderson.

A defensive injury crisis meant Arsenal fielded a makeshift centre-back combination of Rob Holding and Calum Chambers but they were rarely tested during a first half which Arsenal dominated.

Liverpool were sloppy in possession and gifted the hosts the initiative.

Aaron Ramsey forced an early save from Mignolet before the Wales international pounced on Alberto Moreno's woeful defensive header. The Spanish left-back got across to atone for his error.

Nathaniel Clyne tested Petr Cech but the Reds struggled to create clear cut chances.

Just before the half hour mark Moreno pressed the self-destruct button - making a reckless challenge on Walcott inside the box.

Mignolet dived to his right to expertly keep out Walcott's spot-kick but Liverpool's joy didn't last long.

Just seconds later Moreno was caught napping again and this time Walcott made him pay, drilling low into the far corner.

Liverpool's initial response was muted. Wijnaldum fired tamely at Cech after being teed up by Coutinho.

However, on the stroke of half-time they bagged an equaliser as Coutinho curled a stunning 25-yard free-kick into the top corner.

It was the perfect lift for the Reds and in the second half they simply blew Arsenal away.

Within four minutes they were in front. Coutinho released Wijnaldum and his cross picked out the run of Lallana, whose took it down on his chest and finished in style.

Liverpool were rampant and it was soon 3-1 as Coutinho tucked away Clyne's drilled cross.

Mane then took centre stage, bursting away from Nacho Monreal and Chambers before lashing a left-footer into the top corner.

The travelling Kop were in dreamland but Arsenal rallied.

Substitute Oxlade-Chamberlain's shot deflected off Dejan Lovren and left Mignolet beaten.

Liverpool's cause wasn't helped by the sight of Coutinho limping off with Emre Can replacing him.

With 15 minutes to go it was 4-3 when Chambers nodded home Santi Cazorla's free-kick.

Divock Origi replaced Lallana and Kevin Stewart came on for Wijnaldum as Liverpool regained their composure to clinch a precious three points.

EveningStandard.

Philippe Coutinho stars as Arsene Wenger's defence crumbles in seven-goal thriller

Philippe Coutinho scores two fine goals as Liverpool fought back from a goal down to beat Arsenal 4-3 and consign the Gunners to yet another Premier League opening-day defeat at home.

Theo Walcott put Arsenal on 31 minutes - just ahead 68 seconds after missing a penalty - but Jurgen Klopp's visitors ruthlessly exploited a weakened Arsenal defence to take all three points from Emirates Stadium on Sunday.

Arsenal are closing in on a £28million deal for Valencia centre-back Shkodran Mustafi, but Arsene Wenger will now surely have to spend more in the transfer market to avoid more anger from the stands as his make-shift backline conceded four goals.

Things looked to be going the Gunners' way after a bright start with youngsters Rob Holding and Calum Chambers in central defence, with Walcott making amends after seeing his spot-kick saved by Simon Mignolet by beating the Liverpool goalkeeper barely a minute later.

However, Coutinho struck a wonderful long-range free-kick into the top right-hand corner of Petr Cech's net to send the teams in level at half-time - and Liverpool then made Arsenal pay after the break.

Adam Lallana scored soon after the restart with Coutinho quickly adding a second, with only a fine save from Cech denying the Brazilian playmaker his hat-trick.

Things got worse for the Gunners as Liverpool's summer signing Sadio Mane thrashed home a wonderful effort to make it 4-1, though substitute Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain raised hopes of a fightback with a deflected effort moments after before alum Chambers headed home with 15 minutes to go.

But Arsenal continued to look lost in defence as Liverpool threatened on the counter, and an astounding home defeat - their third in four seasons on the opening day at the Emirates - will give Wenger and the Arsenal fans plenty of food for thought before the transfer window shuts on August 31.

Date: 14 August 2016
 Opposition: Arsenal
 Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

14 August 2016



Liverpool held on to beat Arsenal in a stunning Premier League opening-weekend encounter at Emirates Stadium. Theo Walcott fired in the first goal for the Gunners in the 31st minute, moments after missing a penalty. Philippe Coutinho equalised with a brilliant free-kick before Adam Lallana fired in after the break. Coutinho poked in his second and Sadio Mane slammed home, before Arsenal's Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain scored a great solo goal and Calum Chambers headed in. It was billed as the best game of the Premier League opening weekend and more than lived up to expectations.

After quite a dour 30 minutes, Alberto Moreno's second defensive mistake lit the flame for the encounter that followed. It was the second half that will long live in the memory. Four of the five goals were exceptional. There was Lallana's chest control and strike followed by a 19-pass move finished off by Coutinho. Mane then capped off an impressive debut with a goal reminiscent of his strikes at Southampton - driving at the defence before a fierce finish. And substitute Oxlade-Chamberlain then produced a delightful cameo when he dazzled the Liverpool backline and then slotted past Simon Mignolet. Chambers' header left Liverpool wondering whether a great win would become 'what could have been' - but they hung on.

Where does this leave Arsenal?

During the 2013-14 season, the Gunners capitulated horribly on three occasions in the league - conceding six against Manchester City and Chelsea and five against Liverpool. Home fans watching must have thought it was a case of history repeating when, from 1-0 up in the first half through Walcott's drilled effort, they were 4-1 down by the 63rd minute. The difference between then and now is that Arsenal are a far more potent proposition in attack, which is why the Reds were left celebrating a narrow win rather than a mauling. It is the issues at the back that appear to be a perennial problem. On Sunday they were without injured senior defenders Per Mertesacker and Gabriel, while Laurent Koscielny is still not match fit after his exploits at Euro 2016. That meant manager Arsene Wenger was forced to play Rob Holding, 20, a £2m summer signing from Bolton, alongside Calum Chambers, 21, in central defence.

Their inexperience was brutally exposed by Liverpool's attack in the second half. The question is whether Wenger dips into the transfer market or waits for his senior players to return. The fans will want the former.

Has time already run out for Moreno?

The reaction on social media was damning and who knows what his manager Jurgen Klopp was thinking. Liverpool's full-back Moreno had a match to forget after twice making crucial mistakes. He should have been punished by Walcott for his first - a wild lunge on the England forward inside the area which resulted in the penalty. Simon Mignolet's save bailed him out. His second error was arguably more inexplicable when he allowed Walcott acres of space on the right of the box - before the England winger drilled his angled effort past the Belgian keeper. Derided by his own fans last season, memorably for his performance in the Europa League final, the 24-year-old Spaniard's display is surely now giving Klopp food for thought with the transfer window shutting in two weeks.

Man of the match - Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool)

hat the managers said

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger:

"We lacked experience at the back and we were physically short. Liverpool did well and we were for 15 minutes completely shocked.

We pushed players today like Aaron Ramsey. It is an impossible situation to get players back from the Euros and prepare.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp:

"I played a big part in the excitement of the last half-hour, because it's not allowed to celebrate the fourth goal like this with 35 minutes to go.

"At this moment, we switched off the machines. The game was not over. Arsenal lost, but we gave them a path back into the game.

"Nothing is sure until the final whistle. Over the whole of the 90 minutes it was a deserved win. "We can always score goals and we can defend much better. It's the Premier League and nothing should be easy in this league. Nothing is easy."

The stats you need to know

Arsenal conceded four goals in a league game at the Emirates for the first time since May 2009 (4-1 v Chelsea).

Arsenal v Liverpool has seen more penalties missed than any other fixture in Premier League history (seven).

Mignolet has saved five of the 11 penalties he has faced in the Premier League, more than any other Liverpool goalkeeper.

Walcott has scored in 10 different Premier League seasons for Arsenal; only Dennis Bergkamp (11) has scored in more for the Gunners.

Thirteen of Philippe Coutinho's 30 goals for Liverpool in all competitions have been scored from outside the box.

Arsenal had three different English scorers in the same Premier League game for the first time since October 1997 against Barnsley (Parlour, Platt and Wright). This is the first time since 1953-54 in the English top flight that the two top from the previous season have both lost their opening game.

What's next?

The Gunners face champions Leicester next Saturday at 17:30 BST at the King Power Stadium. On the same day Liverpool are away again, this time at Burnley - that match kicks off at 15:00 BST.

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Match ends, Arsenal 3, Liverpool 4.

90'+6' Second Half ends, Arsenal 3, Liverpool 4.

90'+5' Offside, Liverpool. Emre Can tries a through ball, but Divock Origi is caught offside.

90'+4' Granit Khaka (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90'+4' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

90'+3' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Héctor Bellerín.

90'+3' Attempt blocked. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Divock Origi.

90' Calum Chambers (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90' Foul by Divock Origi (Liverpool).

89' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Theo Walcott.

88' Substitution, Liverpool. Kevin Stewart replaces Georginio Wijnaldum.

86' Granit Khaka (Arsenal is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

86' Foul by Granit Khaka (Arsenal).

86' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

86' Offside, Liverpool. Alberto Moreno tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.

85' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Calum Chambers.

85' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Georginio Wijnaldum.

83' Foul by Granit Khaka (Arsenal).

83' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

82' Corner, Arsenal. Conceded by Dejan Lovren.

80' Foul by Granit Khaka (Arsenal).

80' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

79' Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

79' Foul by Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool).

79' Foul by Francis Coquelin (Arsenal).

79' Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

77' Offside, Arsenal. Santiago Cazorla tries a through ball, but Alexis Sánchez is caught offside.

76' Substitution, Liverpool. Divock Origi replaces Adam Lallana.

75' Goal! Arsenal 3, Liverpool 4. Calum Chambers (Arsenal header from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Santiago Cazorla with a cross following a set piece situation.

75' Francis Coquelin (Arsenal wins a free kick on the left wing.

75' Foul by Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool).

73' Attempt missed. Santiago Cazorla (Arsenal right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Francis Coquelin.

72' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

72' Francis Coquelin (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

70' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

70' Foul by Granit Khaka (Arsenal).

70' Substitution, Liverpool. Emre Can replaces Philippe Coutinho because of an injury.

69' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

68' Delay in match Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool because of an injury.

67' Substitution, Arsenal. Granit Khaka replaces Mohamed Elneny.

65' Corner, Arsenal. Conceded by Nathaniel Clyne.

65' Hand ball by Adam Lallana (Liverpool).

64' Goal! Arsenal 2, Liverpool 4. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Arsenal right footed shot from the left side of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Santiago Cazorla.

63' Goal! Arsenal 1, Liverpool 4. Sadio Mané (Liverpool left footed shot from the right side of the box to the top left corner. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

62' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Rob Holding.

61' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

61' Substitution, Arsenal. Santiago Cazorla replaces Aaron Ramsey because of an injury.

61' Delay in match Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal because of an injury.

60' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

60' Foul by Héctor Bellerín (Arsenal).

59' Substitution, Arsenal. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain replaces Alex Iwobi because of an injury.

59' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

58' Delay in match Alex Iwobi (Arsenal because of an injury.

58' Attempt blocked. Adam Lallana (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the six yard box is blocked.

58' Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

57' Alex Iwobi (Arsenal is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

57' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

57' Foul by Alex Iwobi (Arsenal).

56' Goal! Arsenal 1, Liverpool 3. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box to the centre of the goal. Assisted by Nathaniel Clyne with a cross.

53' Attempt blocked. Sadio Mané (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

49' Goal! Arsenal 1, Liverpool 2. Adam Lallana (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box to the centre of the goal. Assisted by Georginio Wijnaldum.

48' Foul by Francis Coquelin (Arsenal).

48' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

46' Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal wins a free kick in the attacking half.

46' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool).

Second Half begins Arsenal 1, Liverpool 1.

45'+3' First Half ends, Arsenal 1, Liverpool 1.

45'+1' Goal! Arsenal 1, Liverpool 1. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool from a free kick with a right footed shot to the top left corner.

45'+1' Foul by Rob Holding (Arsenal).

45'+1' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

45' Foul by Francis Coquelin (Arsenal).

45' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

44' Attempt missed. Calum Chambers (Arsenal header from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Theo Walcott with a cross following a corner.

44' Corner, Arsenal. Conceded by Roberto Firmino.

44' Attempt blocked. Alexis Sánchez (Arsenal right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

43' Alex Iwobi (Arsenal wins a free kick in the attacking half.

43' Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool).

41' Dejan Lovren (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

41' Alexis Sánchez (Arsenal wins a free kick in the attacking half.

41' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool).

40' Attempt saved. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

39' Offside, Arsenal. Nacho Monreal tries a through ball, but Alexis Sánchez is caught offside.

38' Calum Chambers (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

38' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

37' Francis Coquelin (Arsenal is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

37' Foul by Francis Coquelin (Arsenal).

37' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

35' Attempt missed. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

32' Theo Walcott (Arsenal wins a free kick on the right wing.

32' Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool).

31' Goal! Arsenal 1, Liverpool 0. Theo Walcott (Arsenal right footed shot from the right side of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Alex Iwobi.

30' Offside, Arsenal. Nacho Monreal tries a through ball, but Alexis Sánchez is caught offside.

30' Penalty saved! Theo Walcott (Arsenal fails to capitalise on this great opportunity, right footed shot saved in the bottom left corner.

29' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

28' Penalty Arsenal. Theo Walcott draws a foul in the penalty area.

28' Penalty conceded by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool after a foul in the penalty area.

28' Francis Coquelin (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

28' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

26' Adam Lallana (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

26' Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

26' Foul by Adam Lallana (Liverpool).

25' Attempt blocked. Ragnar Klavan (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.

25' Attempt blocked. Sadio Mané (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Alberto Moreno with a cross.

25' Foul by Theo Walcott (Arsenal).

25' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

25' Attempt missed. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

23' Attempt missed. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Jordan Henderson with a cross.

22' Attempt missed. Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal right footed shot from more than 35 yards is too high.

21' Offside, Arsenal. Aaron Ramsey tries a through ball, but Alexis Sánchez is caught offside.

19' Theo Walcott (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

19' Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool).

18' Mohamed Elneny (Arsenal wins a free kick in the defensive half.

18' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

16' Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal wins a free kick in the attacking half.

16' Foul by Ragnar Klavan (Liverpool).

14' Corner, Arsenal. Conceded by Alberto Moreno.

13' Attempt saved. Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

12' Foul by Theo Walcott (Arsenal).

12' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

7' Attempt saved. Aaron Ramsey (Arsenal left footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Alexis Sánchez.

4' Corner, Arsenal. Conceded by Nathaniel Clyne.

2' Offside, Liverpool. Adam Lallana tries a through ball, but Sadio Mané is caught offside.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.