

Date: 10 March 2018

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

BBC	Sunday Times	Guardian	Mail
	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Telegraph
	Times	Mirror	Echo

10 March 2018

THE TIMES

Unsung hero Lukaku breaks new ground

Manchester United 2 Rashford 14, 24 Liverpool Baily 66 (og) 1
Referee C Pawson Attendance 74,855

Despite the brickbats that have come his way, Romelu Lukaku continues to break new ground this season. On Saturday afternoon at Old Trafford, the Manchester United striker set a new personal best. The chances are that the 74,855 people in the stands were unaware of it at the time, and Lukaku himself may have been oblivious to the fact that he had just broken his personal record for the number of assists in one season. When Lukaku outjumped Dejan Lovren to set up Marcus Rashford in the 14th minute of Manchester United's win over Liverpool, he racked up his seventh Premier League assist, beating his previous record of six, set while with Everton. Rashford was the local boy who had just scored a quite superb opener against United's most bitter rivals, but it was Lukaku who was celebrating the loudest in the corner in front of the home supporters of the East Stand and the Sir Alex Ferguson Stand. The Belgium forward hoisted himself on to Alexis Sánchez's shoulders, punched the air and then turned around twice to raise his arms and rouse the crowd as he walked back towards the centre circle.

He had every reason to be pleased with himself. The 24-year-old had done exactly what José Mourinho had asked of him — win the first ball up against Lovren and send another of his team-mates through towards goal. He would do it a second time ten minutes later, muscling Lovren, the Liverpool centre half, off the ball to play in Juan Mata, whose shot fell to Rashford and he did the rest from ten yards to double the lead. Lukaku's presence in this team will always test the purest of United purists. There is something of an emotional struggle within some supporters to accept the fact that the first person David De Gea looks for when he has the ball in hand or at his feet is the 6ft 3in target man a long way down the field. But the truth is that it works.

Gary Neville, a man who is associated with some of the most free-flowing attacking teams in United's history, knows that. "Don't play it short. Put it on Lukaku's head. Why not?" he said in the Sky studio as United's goalkeeper looked for options at one stage in the first half. Lukaku is no slouch when he is facing goal either, of course, and it is also worth noting that he is just five short of breaking his record of 26 goals in all competitions in one season, which he set last year. Indeed if he carries on at his present rate, he could end the campaign with 33 goals. But it is his work rate and link-up play that makes him a favourite of his manager and his team-mates. "His performance was fantastic," Mourinho said, purring. Rashford, the main beneficiary of Lukaku's excellent performance, said: "His determination to improve is the biggest feature I've picked up from his game. He always wants to better himself. When he's doing it, it pushes others to be better."

There was something refreshing about the fact that Rashford and Jesse Lingard went to Paul Pogba's house after the match to have a kickabout on his mini indoor pitch.

It has not been an easy season for the 20-year-old Rashford. Saturday's encounter was his first league start since Boxing Day. In all likelihood, he would not have been in the team had Anthony Martial not been injured.

Some players in his situation over the past three months would want their manager to put an arm around them and tell them everything is going to be all right, but not the young United forward. "He doesn't have to. In football you are going to be up, you're going to be down," Rashford said. "When you are younger than I am and you are learning the game, I think you do need it. But I understand [not being picked] is part of the game. There are 11 players that start — it's just one of those things."

It is easy to forget that Rashford has had to digest a lot in his short career. He has seen Louis van Gaal, the manager who gave him his debut, get sacked; he has had to deal with the pressure of playing for England at a leading tournament at the age of 18; and he has had to learn how to play in a new position under a manager who operates differently to his predecessor. And yet despite starting just 21 matches in all competitions this season, he has 12 goals, one more than he managed in 2016-17. "Right now I'm probably not learning the most on the pitch," Rashford said. "It's in training where I'm doing most of my learning."

"My all-round game is starting to become clearer. The things this manager wants is becoming clearer to me. The more you do that, the easier the results come on the pitch." Mourinho will be hoping Rashford and Lukaku can continue their form this week given that United have make-or-break ties against Seville and Brighton & Hove Albion in the Europa League and FA Cup respectively. "The next two games are 'die or live' games so they are much more important than this one," Mourinho said.

RATINGS

Manchester United (4-2-3-1): D De Gea 7 — A Valencia 7, C Smalling 8, E Baily 8, A Young 8 — N Matic 7, S McTominay 7 — J Mata 8 (sub: J Lingard 89min), A Sánchez 7 (sub: M Darmian 90+6), M Rashford 8 (sub: M Fellaini 70, 6) — R Lukaku 8. Substitutes not used S Romero, V Lindelof, M Carrick, L Shaw. Booked Valencia, Rashford.

Liverpool (4-3-3): L Karius 6 — T Alexander-Arnold 6 (sub: G Wijnaldum 80), D Lovren 5, V V Dijk 6, A Robertson 6 (sub: D Solanke 84) — A Oxlade-Chamberlain 5 (sub: A Lallana 62, 6), J Milner 7, E Can 7 — M Salah 5, R Firmino 6, S Mané 6. Substitutes not used S Mignolet, J Matip, J Gomez, J Henderson.

the guardian

Marcus Rashford's double gives Manchester United victory over Liverpool

As the one Mancunian in José Mourinho's team, Marcus Rashford will know enough about north-west rivalries to understand why this counts as one of the more pleasing results of Manchester United's season. It may not make a jot of difference when it comes to the destination of the league title, with Manchester City haughtily observing from a long distance away, but Rashford chose a good day to remind everyone of his penetrative qualities.

This was Rashford's first league start since the turn of the year and, on this evidence, maybe the break has done him good. He has struggled at times this season and his return to form is certainly well-timed from the perspective of Gareth Southgate. The England manager was watching from the Sir Bobby Charlton stand and will have appreciated Rashford's two diagonal finishes; Southgate's latest England squad will be announced on Thursday. Of more immediacy is the fact those goals have helped consolidate United's position in the battle for second place, albeit they remain 13 points behind City.

For Liverpool that will be a source of intense frustration when they had so much of the ball in promising positions during the second half and the six minutes of stoppage-time. Jürgen Klopp was entitled to say his team could have saved themselves during that part of the match.

Ultimately, though, Liverpool's problem was that none of their big-hitters reached their usual levels. Mohamed Salah in particular picked a bad day to put in one of his least effective performances and it was unusual to see Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mané so subdued.

Perhaps that was because of the way United defended so deeply in the second half, protecting themselves against the counterattack. But that was not so relevant in the opening 45 minutes when the home side were clearly buoyed by Rashford's goals and there was even the sight of Eric Bailly taking the ball around Salah with a little pirouette. The crowd loved Bailly's impudence and, though Mourinho did not look quite so thrilled with that kind of risk-taking, it was a reflection of the home side's confidence in that period.

It was shortly afterwards when Romelu Lukaku's long crossfield pass picked out Rashford on the left, the ball was clipped into the penalty area and Juan Mata flashed an overhead kick narrowly wide. Had that one gone in it would have been a goal-of-the-season contender.

Unfortunately for Bailly, not everything he tried came off so elegantly. Midway through the second half, the centre-back went to clear Mané's left-wing delivery and somehow slashed the ball the wrong way to divert it past David de Gea. It was an eccentric own goal, ensuring a blistering and tense finale and, for United, it was a desperate scramble at times to hold on.

Their tactics throughout the final exchanges could be encapsulated by Mourinho's decision to bring on Marouane Fellaini for Rashford. Fellaini blocked and tackled, jumped and harried and got in the way. It was exactly what United needed.

Liverpool will think back to the moment 10 minutes into the second half, when Andrew Robertson's cross struck Antonio Valencia's hand inside the penalty area only for the referee, Craig Pawson, to give United's captain the benefit of the doubt. Klopp also mentioned a risky penalty-box challenge from Fellaini on Mané but there was no real explanation as to why it took Liverpool so long to get into their stride. Their nervousness in the first half was unusual when they have scored even more away goals this season than Manchester City.

For United, perhaps the only slight downside came in the form of Alexis Sánchez's continuing difficulties in adjusting to his new team. At one stage he had the chance to set Rashford free but chose the wrong pass to Lukaku and overhit it anyway. A bemused Mourinho turned to his coaching staff and drew back his foot to show how it should have been played.

Sánchez had a poor match but that did not matter too greatly when the players around him were rising to the occasion and it did not take long for it to become clear that Rashford could make this a difficult game for Trent Alexander-Arnold. In the 14th minute, Lukaku flicked on De Gea's goal-kick and Rashford had his first chance to take on Liverpool's right-back. He eluded him with a clever cut-back, changing direction at speed, and beat Loris Karius with a shot of power and precision.

Lukaku was involved again for what turned out to be the decisive goal. This time, Mata had the first chance, running on to the striker's weighted pass, but Virgil van Dijk came across to turn the ball away. The problem for Liverpool was that Karius was now out of position and the ball was rolling invitingly towards Rashford.

Again, he went for the corner he had picked out 10 minutes earlier and the ball flicked off Alexander-Arnold's heel to deceive Liverpool's goalkeeper.

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The Mail

Marcus Rashford's deadly double fires Jose Mourinho's side to victory despite Eric Bailly's own goal

It was all about the boy. That's not to say the supporting roles weren't significant, not least Romelu Lukaku who was quite superb, Scott McTominay, who again played beyond his years and Alexis Sanchez who had his best performance to date for United. But Marcus Rashford hadn't started a Premier League game since Boxing Day. If not exactly wasting away, you wondered if he was a case of arrested development. Certainly the stardust which followed him two years ago when he burst into this team and demanded global attention has steadily dispersed. Not so here. Big players win important games. When Rashford did that at 18, he had the air of an ingenue about him. Here he was more than that, a man composed on this stage, the clinical match winner.

'Today was a big game and we trusted him,' said Mourinho. 'Maybe a bit unexpected. But he's improving a lot in training. You don't see what is going on and how well or bad players are playing, the moods, the feeling. And the feeling with him was that he was improving a lot in the last few weeks.'

'We felt putting Alexis in that position could be a good link with Lukaku and that Emre Can would then have to worry with him. The good thing was the first chance Marcus had he got it he scored, because the last three months that wasn't happening and he was feeling that, a little bit, in terms of self-confidence.'

Rashford's first finish was exquisite; the second excellent. The only boos were when Rashford was withdrawn early, Mourinho explaining that his 28th minute yellow card meant he was too precarious to risk for the final twenty minutes. Mourinho also mentioned that Gary Neville had highlighted on TV the numerous other potential cautions Rashford might have received and was concerned, lest referee Craig Pawson had been tuning into Sky at half time.

What was just as heartening was that around the Rashford show, a gripping football match was unfolding. It wasn't quite the title-deciders of old; more like the battle to be the best of the rest, which doesn't have quite the same allure.

Still, given the dearth of quality and excitement in this fixture of late, it was a welcome return to form for this fixture. And a timely reminder from Jose Mourinho as we reached what he described as the 'business end of the season.' United are hitting their stride, putting five points between themselves and Liverpool, their nearest rivals for second. At times, it can seem impossible to disrupt the forward flow of this Liverpool team.

But Mourinho had a plan and it didn't include any bus parking. It was based on counter attacks but was this was far from the dirge of Anfield earlier this season. At times it looked like a throwback to a 1990s United team in shape, almost a 4-4-2. And, though possession was conceded, every attack seemed incisive.

It perplexed Liverpool. James Milner, Emre Can and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain were outplayed by McTominay and Nemanja Matic in the opening 45 minutes, they were also critically outfought at the back. Paul Pogba? He was injured. And not especially missed This was also a defining moment for Lukaku too. In a major fixture, he dominated the centre halves. It was a performance which put you in mind of the best physical centre forwards. Nemanja Matic showed off the dressing room celebrations as the defensive midfielder sits next to match-winner Rashford When Rashford scored his second, it was noticeable that McTominay raced to embrace Lukaku, who provided the flick and pass to start the move.

His contribution was not going un-noticed, nor unappreciated. Both those first half goals came from David de Gea kicks. Not content with being United's best player, the goalkeeper is proving their most-creative one as well. On 14 minutes it was Lukaku's flick on from De Gea's punt which released Rashford. He nodded the ball down and from thereon in, he was simply magnificent. There was the pace to befuddle Trent Alexander-Arnold, a neat check and turn to leave him standing and then an exquisite finish to the far post. Twenty-four minutes in, Lukaku not only won the header, but pounced on the ball and drove on to release Mata. His strike rebounded of van Dijk, fell for Rashford and, just inside the box, full of confidence, he applied another excellent finish. It should really have been 3-0 on half time, Alexis Sanchez crossing for Mata, who, with time and space, attempted a spectacular scissors kick and shot wide. Liverpool were exasperated after calls for a penalty on Sadio Mane were waved away following a foul from Marouane Fellaini On the bench Mourinho held his head in his hands. It was a moment in which a simple control and strike would have ended the contest.

Klopp's frustration were principally with the referee and his defenders. 'The problem is not that we didn't create enough; it's that you are not allowed to concede these type of goals,' he said. 'It wasn't their style won or our style lost. It was two situations with nothing to do with style. Second balls; you have to do, what you have to do. If you go for it, you have to protect the situation. We didn't do that. Our mistake.' Liverpool were much better in the second half but still largely contained until Sadio Mane sent in a cross and Eric Bailly got himself in an unnecessary and terrible tangle. Attempting to clear in an ungainly fashion and hopelessly off balance, he hung out a leg allowing the ball to strike his heel and catch de Gea off guard to put into his own net. But it was potential penalties which really irked Klopp. The first penalty shout was when Andrew Roberston's cross struck Antonio Valencia's hand inside the box on 50 minutes.

But the one which infuriated Klopp was on in the 82nd minute when Marouane Fellaini crashed into Mane. 'You need that,' he said. 'You need some luck with right decisions, not wrong decision.'

MATCH FACTS, LIVE LEAGUE TABLE AND MATCH ZONE

Manchester United (4-2-3-1): De Gea; Valencia, Bailly, Smalling, Young; Matic, McTominay; Mata (Lingard 88), Sanchez (Darmian 90+6), Rashford (Fellaini 70); Lukaku Subs not used: Romero, Shaw, Lindleof, Carrick Goals: Rashford 14, 24 Booked: Rashford, Valencia Manager: Jose Mourinho
Liverpool (4-3-3): Karius; Alexander-Arnold (Wijnaldum 80), Van Dijk, Lovren, Robertson (Solanke 84); Can, Milner, Oxlade-Chamberlain (Lallana 62); Mane, Firmino, Salah Subs not used: Mignolet, Gomez, Matip, Henderson Goals: Bailly (OG) 67 Booked: Oxlade-Chamberlain Manager: Jurgen Klopp
Referee: Craig Pawson Attendance: 74,855

The Daily Telegraph

McTominay helps fill the Pogba gap

Manchester United 2 Rashford 14, 24 Liverpool 1 Bailly 66 og Att: 74,855 The prospect of Paul Pogba being unavailable for the delicately poised second leg of a Champions League round-of-16 tie might have been an alarming one for Manchester United supporters a few months back. Yet it says a lot about Pogba's current predicament and the balance of United's team without him that no one of a red persuasion will get too hot under the collar if the France midfielder fails to recover from an injury in time to face Sevilla at Old Trafford tomorrow. Pogba was ruled out of Saturday's victory over Liverpool after a collision with a team-mate in the final minute of Friday's training session and Mourinho was noncommittal over the player's chances of being fit for the visit of the Spanish side.

However, on the basis of what he saw from his side against Liverpool, what he has seen from Pogba of late and the need for cohesion against Sevilla, Mourinho might not necessarily accommodate the Frenchman in his starting XI even if he is fit. Scott McTominay's decision to pass the ball backwards early in the second half rather than attempt a more ambitious forward pass may have elicited groans from some United fans, something Mourinho later scolded them for, but the 21-year-old had a very good game and certainly helped bring far greater balance and discipline to the midfield than Pogba has in recent times when paired alongside Nemanja Matic.

Matic's praise for McTominay certainly resonated in light of Pogba's struggles.

"Scott is fantastic, it is a joy to play next to him," Matic said. "He fights for the team, he runs a lot. He plays like he's already played five or six years in the Premier League, but he's still young."

Had Alexis Sanchez made a better fist of things in the No10 role, United might have had even more to show for their solid midfield and defensive foundations, in which the return of centre-half Eric Bailly helped to draw outstanding performances from Chris Smalling and Ashley Young.

There was a lot of perspiration from Sanchez but, once again, little inspiration. However, Sanchez's shortcomings were masked, to a large extent, by the penetrative qualities of Marcus Rashford, who claimed two decisive goals on his first Premier League start this year, and Romelu Lukaku, who bullied Dejan Lovren in a fine illustration of how to be the target-man.

Lovren was powerless as the Belgian easily shrugged him off after 14 minutes to flick on to Rashford, who had got the wrong side of Trent Alexander-Arnold. The Englishman had been forced slightly wide but the finish was glorious. The second was slightly fortuitous as his drive flicked in off Alexander-Arnold after Juan Mata had been denied, but it was to prove enough despite Bailly's second half own-goal.

United had done enough as an attacking force to justify sitting back, with Lukaku again instrumental in their third consecutive league win. "His determination to improve is the biggest feature I've picked up from his game," Rashford said of Lukaku.

If Saturday again raised questions about this Liverpool side's ability, like Spurs, to get over the line, it is not a failing that can be levelled at Mourinho. He knows how to win and his mind was already drifting to the next two assignments. "Sevilla and Brighton [in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Saturday] are more important games than Liverpool," he said. "I imagine that if we lose against Sevilla everyone will have forgotten what we did in the last couple of weeks." "Scott plays like he's had five or six Premier League years'

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THE INDEPENDENT

Marcus Rashford scores twice as Manchester United cling onto victory against Liverpool

A 2-1 from the old one-two, in multiple ways. Manchester United came out on top in this battle for second place, as Marcus Rashford scored twice to show why he should be in the first team. What happens next is of course what this match with Liverpool was really about, rather than a relatively meaningless second place.

Jurgen Klopp's side have had their momentum stopped, and looked so much less forceful than at any time this year. They also looked less like the Champions League winners they've been talked up as. Rashford meanwhile got his first goals of that year, to make it three wins in a row for United, and the second of that run against a top-six side. This was probably the most commanding and forceful of those wins, and mostly came down to how well Jose Mourinho's gameplan paid off. That it happened without the injured Paul Pogba - forced out because of a cut received in training on the eve of the game - was all the more encouraging for the manager, all the more pointed. It might even have suited Mourinho, at least for this game, as much as any issues with the midfielder going forward.

Sure, that gameplan was aided by three penalty calls that went in United's favour and Liverpool could fairly complain about those, but they couldn't really complain about the result against the pattern of play. Klopp's team had so much more of the ball, but they only had one big chance - and that wasn't even the somewhat freakish goal they got. Liverpool were instead largely reduced to long shots, and have rarely looked so limited or out of ideas.

Against that, United were clinical, bar one big miss by Juan Mata that can be set against Virgil van Dijk's. Rashford, meanwhile, was clearly in the mood. He was ruthless. For all that Rashford will rightly get praise for making the difference in the game, though, one of the main differences between the teams was that between the centre halves. This United win essentially came down to the assurance set by Eric Bailly against the anxiety of Dejan Lovren - and that's actually only accentuated by the own goal. Still so brilliant at forensically spotting cracks and fragilities in the opposition, Mourinho clearly targeted a weakness between Dejan Lovren and Trent Alexander Arnold.

United, then, went back to basics a little. They looked to hit the big man. It was just fair to wonder which big man that was: Romelu Lukaku... or just Lovren. Either way, all that mattered was that there was only ever one winner: Lukaku. There were occasions when it looked like Lovren was suffering as bad a day as October's 4-1 defeat to Tottenham Hotspur, while Lukaku was meanwhile looking good as he has at Old Trafford. The forward just bullied the centre-half. Lukaku's force both complemented the flourish of Rashford in more than one way, and allowed it to shine twice. The first goal was a supreme piece of proactive intelligence, the second an excellent instinctive reaction.

In that, the entire performance was some display of Rashford's whole range of abilities. Granted time to think to put United into the lead, he completely side-stepped Alexander-Arnold before powerfully whipping the ball right into the corner past Loris Karius. Forced to immediately respond when strengthening that lead, Rashford so accurately sent the ball to the same corner, but through a very different type of finish. That raised two main questions: why the youngster hasn't been in the United team, and why Van Dijk wasn't dealing with those aerial balls, let alone why Lovren was in the Liverpool team. There was no question as to why Jurgen Klopp's attack weren't at their rampaging best, though. This is precisely the type of approach they most struggle with, when they have nothing to react to, when there is no space to run in behind. It is one of the roots of why they have been so good against top clubs, and often struggled against weaker sides, with all of that doubled down when a top club decides to go deep against them.

This, however, is also where Bailly stepped in - and United stepped up. Mourinho's defence has often looked panicked in such situations in the four months since the Ivorian's last start but there was none of that with him there. There was an irony that Bailly scored the own goal that made the last few minutes so nervy - that moment itself more Djimi Traore rather than Lovren - but it was down to the Ivorian that Liverpool's actual play didn't cause more anxiety. He was so strong, so reliable, particularly in one fine block late on to prevent Sadio Mane getting through. All of Liverpool's stellar attack were here so subdued, so quiet. The United backline did a supreme job of shutting out any space for Mane, Mohamed Salah or Roberto Firmino to run into. They were just shackled. An image to sum up the game was that repeated so many times in the first half. It was that of James Milner on the ball, the only Liverpool player ever left with the kind of space those in front of him would thrive off, that would usually have produced a killer moment. He... failed to do so.

It also meant that the identity of United's midfield was much less important, and arguably suited Mourinho. Placing Nemanja Matic and Scott McTominay in front of the defence to shore up everything, the Portuguese was able to play something close to 'trivote' formation he is said to so value, while United could directly bypass midfield to most hurt that Liverpool defence.

That sometimes looked like an old-fashioned route-one and the old one-two - but it was the fair root of this 2-1 win.

This Liverpool have rarely looked so out of ideas. United, meanwhile, are suddenly looking very good for the rest of the season.

DAILY MIRROR

MAN JESTER UNITED - Lingard: Two-goal Rashford feels down when he's left out.. but he can always count on me to cheer him up
MANCHESTER UNITED 2

Rashford 14, 24

LIVERPOOL 1

Bailly 66 og

MARCUS RASHFORD has not been allowed to feel sorry for himself over his lack of starts for Manchester United this season.

His United team-mate, close friend, and chief dressing-room joker Jesse Lingard revealed how he helped lift Rashford after the first real setback of the young striker's burgeoning career.

"You can't be depressed around me," said Lingard. "I'm always winding him up. It's good you can be around him to have a laugh and reassure him that it's going to come good and that, if he gets a chance, he will perform, which he's done.

"It's a big club with big players and, for players like me and Marcus, it's going to be tough to start every game. But, once you're on the pitch, you've got to make an impact and maybe next game you'll be playing.

"He's got good people around him, they always assure him he's in a good place, and what kid wouldn't want to be at United at the moment? "He's doing well, he's come in, he's got the right mentality and shown the manager what he can do. He can do that against any team, he has that level of confidence to do it so, if he can keep doing what he's doing, the sky's the limit."

Being pranked by Lingard clearly had the desired effect on Rashford, who marked his first Premier League start since Boxing Day with both goals to sink arch-rivals Liverpool.

Rashford began season as a regular starter, but then found himself forced back into the supporting cast, the January arrival of Alexis Sanchez compounding his predicament.

Jose Mourinho insisted he never lost faith in Rashford, pointing to the fact the 20-year-old had been involved in every United matchday squad when fit this season to bolster his point.

Indeed, Rashford was philosophical about his plight and stressed the importance of the collective over the individual, although he hinted his prolonged exile from the starting line-up had got to him.

"In football, you're going to be up, you're going to be down," he said. "The most important thing is sticking together as a squad.

"Everyone turns up every day training, we all work hard, we all do the necessary things.

"We're all in it together. Sometimes you're in the team, sometimes you're not."

Asked if he had sought reassurance from manager Mourinho, Rashford said:

"When you're younger than I am now, and you're learning the game, I think you do need it.

"But with experiences of the past, I understand that's part of the game. There are 11 players that start - it's just one of those things. For the future, it's something you've been through before.

"If it happens again, you'll probably deal with it better than the first time it happened to you."

Rashford's sublime opener (left) - cutting inside a befuddled Trent Alexander-Arnold, before unleashing an unstoppable diagonal shot - was a glorious reminder of his precocious talent.

The goal came from a flick-on from Romelu Lukaku, who played a key role in the second, driving forward, with Rashford applying another assured finish to the loose ball.

Liverpool gave themselves hope when Eric Bailly got himself in a tangle and put the ball into his own net, with United spending the final quarter of the contest at deep, defending their slender lead, aided by Liverpool's strangely subdued attack. The win was the perfect way to begin a run of three huge fixtures, which continues with tomorrow's Champions League last-16, second-leg tie against Sevilla, followed by Saturday's FA Cup quarter-final against Brighton, both at Old Trafford.

"These are the games that we want to play in and everybody wants to watch," added Rashford.

"We can use the confidence of this game to push us through the next two. Our focus now is on the Champions League."

STAT IS AMAZING MAN UNITED De Gea 6, Valencia 6, Bailly 8, Smalling 7, Young 8, Matic 7, McTominay 7, Mata 7 (Lingard 88), Sanchez 7 (Darmian 90), Rashford 9 (Fellaini 70, 6), Lukaku 8 LIVERPOOL Karius 6, Alexander-Arnold 5 (Wijnaldum 80), Van Dijk 6, Lovren 5, Robertson 6 (Solanke 84), Can 6, Milner 6, Oxlade-Chamberlain 5 (Lallana 62, 5), Mane 6, Firmino 5, Salah 6

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'Beaten? Yes. Hurt? You bet. Demoralised? No chance'

The new favourite echoed around Old Trafford. Jurgen Klopp and his players had long since departed when the 3,000-strong travelling Kop broke into a stirring rendition of 'Allez, Allez, Allez'. 'We Shall Not Be Moved' soon followed.

Beaten? Yes. Hurt? You bet. Demoralised? No chance. Defeat at the hands of Manchester United is always a bitter pill to swallow but a sense of perspective was retained. This wasn't the kind of damaging setback which has the potential to wreck a season. Liverpool remain well placed to secure a top-four Premier League finish and will await the quarter-final draw of the Champions League with relish. Klopp on United's style of play The immense sense of frustration for Kopites will stem from the fact that the Reds were masters of their own downfall. They weren't outplayed, they certainly weren't outfought, but they headed back down the M62 with nothing to show for their efforts. Their winless Premier League run against United now spans eight meetings. Liverpool gave themselves a mountain to climb with a sloppy first-half performance which played straight into Jose Mourinho's hands. Marcus Rashford struck twice in the space of 10 minutes and both goals were painfully avoidable.

On each occasion the Reds were found wanting by a long punt downfield by David de Gea. Dejan Lovren's recent revival ground to a halt as he came off a distant second best in his battle with Romelu Lukaku, who was too strong and powerful for the Croatian defender. It was also a difficult afternoon for young Trent Alexander-Arnold but this wasn't a day for finger pointing or scapegoats.

During the opening 45 minutes Liverpool were well off the pace in all departments. There was no control in midfield and the front three were desperately quiet. Eric Bailly's own goal gave the visitors hope as Mourinho looked to shut up shop. If United's backline had dropped any deeper they would have been sat in the East Stand. Yet despite enjoying 68% possession, Liverpool mustered just two attempts on target. De Gea has been United's saviour in this fixture so many times but on this occasion he was hardly required. Going forward, the Reds were far from their fluent best. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain failed to build on his recent good form in front of England boss Gareth Southgate. Mohamed Salah endured a rare off day as Ashley Young kept him under wraps, while Sadio Mane was erratic and repeatedly took the wrong option. Klopp raged at referee Craig Pawson and he had a point after seeing a couple of strong penalty appeals turned down. A late onslaught almost rescued a point but ultimately Liverpool paid the price for that sluggish start as their hopes of finish second were dented. The Reds boss had been bold with his team selection – picking Oxlade-Chamberlain ahead of captain Jordan Henderson or Gini Wijnaldum. But it didn't work during a first half when Liverpool failed to achieve any semblance of control in midfield against the United pairing of Nemanja Matic and Scott McTominay. The Reds missed the presence of Henderson as they repeatedly tossed up possession cheaply.

Liverpool had kept five clean sheets in their previous seven matches with the double act of Virgil van Dijk and Dejan Lovren impressing. But there was no sign of that defensive organisation and resilience here as the Reds looked horribly vulnerable. The hosts led inside 14 minutes. Lovren senselessly backed off and allowed Lukaku to flick on De Gea's kick. Rashford got away from Alexander-Arnold, cut inside and hammered a right-footer beyond Loris Karius.

Rashford burst into the box again soon after but Andy Robertson was alert and hacked clear. Van Dijk won't recall his first taste of this rivalry with any pleasure. The big Dutchman should have equalised when he latched on to James Milner's corner but the ball cannoned wide off his shoulder from four yards out.

Midway through the first half it was 2-0. Lukaku shrugged off Lovren far too easily and played in Juan Mata. Van Dijk made the tackle but the ball dropped kindly to Rashford, whose effort was deflected in off Alexander-Arnold.

Roberto Firmino, who twice fired straight at De Gea, was isolated for long periods as Salah and Mane remained on the periphery. United should have killed Liverpool off when some shoddy marking handed Mata the freedom of the penalty box but he volleyed narrowly wide. The travelling Kop did their best to inspire a response after the interval and belatedly Klopp's men raised the bar.

Liverpool started to win battles they had lost before the break. They snapped into tackles and mounted a sustained spell of pressure.

Van Dijk nodded over before Young was fortunate to get away with holding back Salah in the area. The appeals were stronger still when Robertson's cross struck Antonio Valencia on the arm but Pawson waved away protests.

It was no surprise when the ineffective Oxlade-Chamberlain was taken off with Adam Lallana replacing him. Liverpool were crying out for either a bit of luck or a bit of inspiration and they got the former. Bailly made a hash of dealing with Mane's cross as he diverted the ball past the helpless De Gea. It was a lifeline and it got increasingly frantic. United showed no ambition to attack as Mourinho brought on Marouane Fellaini and created a red wall. Klopp brought on Wijnaldum and Dominic Solanke in place of the tiring Alexander-Arnold and Robertson.

Liverpool huffed and puffed but there was no way through as they were reduced to taking pot shots from distance. Fellaini blocked off Mane as he tried to latch on to Salah's flick but again Pawson wasn't interested. The screams of 'six minutes' from the home fans when the board went up laid bare United's unease as they hung on grimly. When Salah volleyed over the game was up.

A day to forget but Liverpool need to dust themselves off and go again. This season remains alive and kicking.

MATCH FACTS
Manchester United : De Gea, Valencia, Bailly, Smalling, Young, Matic, McTominay, Rashford (Fellaini 70), Sanchez (Darmin 90+6), Mata (Lingard 88), Lukaku.
Not used : Romero, Carrick, Shaw, Lindelof.
Liverpool: Liverpool: Karius, Alexander-Arnold (Wijnaldum 80), Lovren, Van Dijk, Robertson (Solanke 84), Can, Milner, Oxlade-Chamberlain (Lallana 62), Salah, Mane, Firmino Not used: Mignolet, Gomez, Matip, Henderson.
Referee : Craig Pawson Attendance : 74,855
Goals : Rashford 14, Rashford 24, Bailly OG 66
Bookings : Rashford, Oxlade-Chamberlain, Valencia
Man of the match : Andy Robertson. Could hold his head high.

Date: 10 March 2018

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

BBC	Sunday Times	Guardian	Mail
	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Telegraph
	Times	Mirror	Echo

10 March 2018

The Sunday Telegraph

Mourinho delight as United perfect the art of defence

Manchester United 2 Rashford 14, 24 Liverpool 1 Bailly 66 og Att: 74,855

For Jurgen Klopp there was the familiar creep of dread as he stood on the touchline watching his team dominating possession but running down the same blind alleys, and the cold realisation setting in that inevitably, inexorably, Jose Mourinho was doing his thing. It should not be a surprise after all these years, when we have witnessed Mourinho's plan of minimal attacking and maximum retreating so many times, the possession an afterthought and everything predicated on a formidable organisation. He got a man-of-the-match performance from Ashley Young at left-back marking Mohamed Salah into anonymity, and he hit Liverpool where they were at their most vulnerable, a figurative elbow to the throat they never saw coming. Marcus Rashford scored twice in the space of 10 first-half minutes when Mourinho went for the soft heart of Liverpool's defence - or rather he put Romelu Lukaku on Dejan Lovren, and the consequences for the away team were severe. Twice the Belgian won critical headers, treating the Liverpool centre-half like an inconvenient backpack, a minor burden to be shouldered and carried around while he went about the true business of the day. When Mourinho was asked later about how he spotted the weakness in Liverpool he protested that he was not "a mechanic" who demanded "A pass to B who passes to C" but he admitted that Lukaku felt he could dominate Lovren and they went from there. Rashford, starting his first league game of 2018, punished Liverpool in front of the watching Gareth Southgate, and young full-back Trent Alexander-Arnold found himself twisted inside out for the first goal.

Mourinho was on a roll after that, calling out the home fans who groaned when Scott McTominay turned and passed backwards in the second half, his manager enthusiastically applauding the decision from the touchline. "That kid who is 20 years old was making all the right decisions and they wanted him to make the wrong decisions," he said. "When the kid decides to break the intensity of the ball, did not lose the ball, kept possession, play a pass back and keep the ball in the opponents' half - it was a wonderful solution that many top, top players with experience don't do. But the fans reacted against the kid. That for me was the bad one." With the faux-sincerity that Mourinho turns on full wattage in moments of triumph he also said that he did not mind the supporters booing his substitution of Rashford - although one can only assume he did not mean a word of it. Then he took a bite at Gary Neville's punditry. All in all, the United manager was thoroughly enjoying his afternoon. He does not care that at home against their most bitter rivals, his side had just 32 per cent of the possession and also defended on the edge of their area for most of the second half.

Klopp was too upset to comment on the contrast of styles. The Liverpool manager wanted a penalty for what he saw as a foul by second-half substitute Marouane Fellaini on Sadio Mane. "No one asked me about it for one second," Klopp lamented, "I had 16 interviews." He acknowledged that Liverpool's key failure had been when they lost those crucial second challenges once Lukaku had shrugged off Lovren and, later in the game, when the Croatian launched himself into a risky challenge, Klopp charged down the touchline to admonish him.

Liverpool's usual swift attacking strategies just got bound up in United's strict organisation. Only once did they get either Salah or Mane away, and that was when the latter was isolated with McTominay in the 66th minute. His cross from the left was one of the few times Liverpool got behind United and Eric Bailly, who was mostly excellent alongside Chris Smalling, managed to make the most extraordinary mess of it. Somehow Bailly contrived to backheel the ball inside David de Gea's near post while looking in the other direction and injuring himself at the same time. Asked about Bailly, Mourinho said: "Fantastic performance, amazing goal." He can joke about these things from time to time.

After the visitors scored, the game became ever more tense. Liverpool had 12 corners over the afternoon and time and again United got something on them. This is Mourinho's way - the performance that fits the opposition and the occasion - and it feels unlikely he will ever deviate from the plan, no matter how long he is in charge. This home crowd loves attacking football but more than anything else they love to go home having beaten Liverpool and Mourinho has given them this for the first time in his reign. By the end it was hardly an issue that Paul Pogba had been injured in training on Friday and was not even on the bench. Before the first goal, Nemanja Matic had given a clue to the masterplan, looking up early to strike the ball into the channels for Lukaku to pursue.

On 14 minutes De Gea launched the ball down the centre and Lukaku planted himself in front of Lovren to leap and flick the ball on to Rashford. There was plenty left for Rashford to do, a jab of the head to nod the ball down into his path, and originally he went from a promising position goalside of Alexander-Arnold before having to come back around the defender on to his right foot. He dispatched a shot past Loris Karius before the Liverpool backline had a chance to reorganise. From there on, the idea of their own weakness was lodged in Liverpool's heads and the rampaging Lukaku could see that it was his for the taking. On 24 minutes De Gea launched another ball and Lukaku won another

header. This time it fell to his feet and he pushed Emre Can away like the archetypal competitive father with a serious weight advantage. At first it fell to Juan Mata but Virgil van Dijk got a block to the ball, which broke left for Rashford to finish again. Mourinho said he substituted his young striker, booked for a bad tackle on James Milner, because he feared losing him to a red card. "Someone told me Gary Neville was asking for Marcus Rashford to get a red card," the Portuguese said. "I was scared because I thought maybe the referee was watching at half-time and was influenced by Gary."

The referee is not permitted to watch the half-time coverage and Mourinho did not appear to be entirely serious. But these are the days the United manager thrives upon, and he feels they answer any doubt over his approach, which may well be right - as long as his team win.

Manager's tactical masterplan Alexander-Arnold targeted by hosts Manchester United's tactical plan was simple - target Liverpool right-back Trent Alexander-Arnold. They did so repeatedly in the first 30 minutes, with almost 60 per cent of their play coming down United's left, as shown by the team's touch map. They scored both their goals down that side in that period. The plan worked perfectly.

**THE INDEPENDENT**
ON SUNDAY

Date: 10 March 2018

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

BBC	Sunday Times	Guardian	Mail
	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Telegraph
	Times	Mirror	Echo

10 March 2018



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Rashford exposes Liverpool's frailty

MANCHESTER UNITED 2 Rashford 14, 24 LIVERPOOL 1 Bailly og 66

Six?" went the scream from a Manchester United fan when the board went up.

There were six minutes of stoppage time and in this vivid game, each one was to feel like an epic in itself. Liverpool swarmed into David de Gea's box. In came the crosses, the corners, the little throughballs, the shots. Ashley Young was a shiny-bonced Rambo. Eric Bailly hurled himself everywhere. Jose Mourinho was crouched on his haunches. Jurgen Klopp twitched and hopped. Liverpool's possession, corner count and fans' heart rates kept going up. But there proved no way back. Mohamed Salah, of all people, lashed a volley into the stand in the final seconds. The ending was so unlike the start, when Mourinho's tactical design held sway over a looser Liverpool approach, his side playing the most positive football with Romelu Lukaku and Marcus Rashford dominant.

The first 25 minutes decided the outcome. United approached it like demolition men. Their defenders flew like sledgehammers at Klopp's gifted forward line. They used their crane, Lukaku, and their dynamite, Rashford. Nemanja Matic and Scott McTominay patrolled like health and safety guys. The edifice of Liverpool's better form and football since the turn of the year was dismantled and Rashford scored brilliantly and then scored again. Juan Mata almost bicycle-kicked in a third.

But Liverpool rebuilt with the indefatigability that is so impressive under Klopp and from half-time on it was their game, the energy, the interplay, the ambition, that held sway. Sadio Mane, a different player when Klopp brought him central, forced a mistake from the otherwise heroic Bailly. Own goal. 2-1. And a final 25 minutes of United besieged. Klopp was hugely aggrieved the finale did not yield at least one Liverpool penalty but Craig Pawson judged that Marouane Fellaini, who replaced Rashford in the most Mourinho of substitutions, was allowed to run in front of Mane to stop him completing a one-two with Roberto Firmino — and he was probably right: it was a pro's trick, but perhaps not illegal.

More contentious was Pawson's decision not to give handball when Andrew Robertson's cross ricocheted off Antonio Valencia's body against his arm.

Accidental? A 50-50 call: Valencia did little to pull his arm out of the way. But while a draw would have been justified, so was United winning. As Klopp said, Liverpool's pressure did not bring many "100% chances".

The Mourinho plan: stay deep and compact to limit space and supply for Salah and co; hit their own passes early and long; use Lukaku's height and Rashford's pace, which he knew to be superior to Trent Alexander-Arnold's. An old Liverpool weakness was exposed: when you beat their press they are stretched vertically, with gaps between their lines. United were also better in the one-on-one battles. There was Valencia diving to block a Robertson cross, Young touchtight and manhandling Salah, McTominay and Matic making their midfield tack-les, and Bailly using his recovery pace to get a toe in. United always had numbers around the ball and in front of their box, choking the Liverpool passing lanes. Klopp was furious about his side's laxity against Lukaku. "Second balls," he kept fuming afterwards. On 14 minutes, Lukaku and Dejan Lovren were under a kick-out, Lukaku bumped Lovren out of the way to gain prime position, and Lovren was on his heels as Lukaku enjoyed a clean jump to soar and flick brilliantly on. His header went exactly where required, down the left channel, and Rashford made his burst with superb timing to stay onside. He drove into the box, then suddenly checked inside with a back-heeled touch that stopped Alexander-Arnold in his tracks. As Klopp lamented, where was the cover? Uncoiling, Rashford whipped a shot past Loris Karius into the far corner of the net for his first league goal of 2018. Having lost his starting place, Mourinho brought him back because of injury to Anthony Martial but also evidence of soaring confidence in training.

A second goal soon followed, bearing similarities to the first. This time Lukaku beat James Milner in the air to knock a De Gea kick down for himself, then ran with the ball before playing Mata into the box. Mata checked inside to shoot and Virgil van Dijk blocked but Rashford arrived onto the loose ball and, from a similar position to his first goal, struck a shot that Karius palmed into his own net.

Moments earlier, Van Dijk had missed from close in when, stooping, he directed his header wide from Milner's corner. Set-pieces, in that first half, were Liverpool's only source of chances. But they emerged from the interval with double the intent, and Klopp gambled well by pushing his full-backs high and giving Mane licence to roam infield. With Adam Lallana coming on to add impetus United were pushed ever deeper. Van Dijk headed over at a corner but Mane went round McTominay on the left, drove in a centre and at the near post Bailly got his body position wrong. The ball skimmed off him past De Gea.

Then came 25 minutes of siege, and those extra six, but United survived and having defeated Chelsea and Liverpool in successive home games, pressure is off Mourinho. His worry — again — is Paul Pogba, injured late in Friday's training and a doubt for Sevilla on Tuesday.

Yellow cards: Manchester United: Valencia, Rashford Liverpool: Oxlade-Chamberlain Referee: C Pawson Attendance: 74,855 Manchester United: De Gea, Valencia, Smalling, Bailly, Young, McTominay, Matic, Sanchez (Darmian 90+6min), Mata (Lingard 89min), Rashford (Fellaini 70min), Lukaku Substitutes: Romero, Lindelof, Carrick, Shaw

Liverpool: Karius, Alexander-Arnold (Wijnaldum 80min), Lovren, Van Dijk, Robertson (Solanke 84min), Oxlade-Chamberlain (Lallana 62min), Milner, Can, Salah, Firmino, Mane Substitutes: Mignolet, Gomez, Henderson, Matip

The Observer

Date: 10 March 2018 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: League	BBC	Sunday Times	Guardian	Mail	10 March 2018
		Sun Telegraph	Independent	Telegraph	
		Times	Mirror	Echo	



Jose Mourinho said he "doesn't care" whether people think his Manchester United side deserved the victory over Liverpool which strengthened their grip on second place in the Premier League.

Marcus Rashford scored twice on his recall to the starting XI to give Mourinho's side the points despite a largely defensive display in which they had just 32% of possession and two shots on target.

"It was a complete performance by us with two different halves," Mourinho said.

"If people don't think we deserved it, I don't care.

"I am a bit tired, we have a match on Tuesday. I don't care what people say. The boys are happy, I'm happy."

The win meant Mourinho's side narrowed the gap on runaway leaders Manchester City to 13 points - at least until City play at Stoke on Monday - but, more pertinently, they are now five points clear of the third-placed Merseysiders.

Rashford, making his first league start since 26 December, will rightly grab the headlines but Romelu Lukaku was instrumental in both goals, and Liverpool simply could not deal with his physical power in the first half.

First, the Belgium striker's header from David de Gea's clearance found Rashford charging into the visitors' box, and he cut inside Trent Alexander-Arnold before firing into the bottom corner.

For United's second goal, Lukaku held up the ball from another goal-kick before feeding Juan Mata and, although he could not get a shot away, the ball fell for Rashford to score via a slight deflection from Alexander-Arnold.

At that stage Liverpool were second best in every area of the pitch and could have fallen further behind when Mata volleyed acrobatically wide from an Alexis Sanchez cross.

Jurgen Klopp's side improved dramatically after the break and, with United defending deep, the visitors cranked up the pressure without ever really opening up their hosts.

It took an own goal for the Reds to reduce the deficit when Eric Bailly turned Sadio Mane's cross past De Gea while attempting to clear at the near post.

That gave Liverpool's travelling fans hope but their side could not fashion any further clear chances, even in six often chaotic minutes of stoppage time.

United survived to clinch victory in the first of three games here in the next seven days that will shape their season.

Next up are Sevilla on Tuesday, with a place in the last eight of the Champions League at stake, before they face Brighton in the FA Cup quarter-finals next Saturday.

'The human brain is a complex thing'

It is the perfect start to a pivotal week for United as Mourinho's side chase more silverware and a guaranteed ticket to next season's Champions League.

His side barely made it out of their own half in the second 45 minutes but De Gea only had two routine saves to make as Liverpool failed to break down the organised ranks.

"You can be in control without having the ball, you can be in trouble when you have the ball," Mourinho said.

"It is an important win. The three games in the league, the Champions League and the FA Cup are independent events, with no relation to the next match.

"But the human brain is a complex thing. A defeat leaves a bit of damage and victory makes happiness even if you are fatigued."

Russia-bound Rashford returns to run riot

The arrival of Sanchez from Arsenal in January has had ramifications for several United players, including Rashford, who had played fewer than 100 minutes in the league as a substitute in 2018 before Saturday.

Rashford has had to wait for his chance but, in front of watching England manager Gareth Southgate, he did not waste it. After the match Mourinho suggested that Southgate has already said that Rashford's place at the World Cup is safe.

"I spoke with Gareth Southgate a few weeks ago and Gareth told me it doesn't matter if he plays or he doesn't play," Mourinho said.

"He trusts the kid and the kid goes to the World Cup, so he didn't need to impress Gareth, Gareth knows what he is and Gareth knows that he can give us things at the World Cup."

With Paul Pogba injured, Sanchez moved inside to play in the hole behind Lukaku, with Rashford and Mata coming back into the team on the left and right.

And while Sanchez again failed to impress, Rashford showed his lack of minutes has not affected his sharpness or his appetite in front of goal.

The 20-year-old now has 12 goals in all competitions this season, making this his most prolific campaign yet, and he received a standing ovation when he was replaced - although some fans were not happy he was withdrawn.

"The fans they can do what they want, I'm not upset at all with that reaction," Mourinho said.

A reality check for Liverpool's defence

Jurgen Klopp's side had conceded only one goal in their previous five games but any suggestions that their problems at the back might be over quickly disappeared in a fractious first half.

Lukaku bullied the Reds centre-halves Dejan Lovren and Virgil van Dijk throughout the first period and the carnage that the big Belgian caused allowed his teammates to capitalise.

True, Liverpool were disjointed all over the pitch before the break, but they were

The Reds did improve in the second half when they at last managed some meaningful possession, but they struggled to break down a well-drilled United back-line.

Bailly's own goal means Liverpool are now the highest-scoring away side in Europe's big five leagues, with 35 on their travels, but this was not one of their attack's better days.

With space at a premium for Mane and Mohamed Salah, their forays forward lacked their usually lethal punch and, other than pick the ball out of the back of his net, De Gea had little else to do.

Klopp felt his side should have had a penalty when substitute Fellaini tackled Mane inside the area, but genuine scares for the hosts were few and far between.

"It was a clear penalty with Fellaini on Mane, in situations like this you need the right decision," he said.

"It is all about the result and we lost.

"We chased the game in the second half and caused them problems but this is a result game and they have the result and we don't."

Man of the match - Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United)

What they said:

Manchester United boss Jose Mourinho, speaking to BBC Match of the Day: "We were quite aggressive in the first half, we wanted to have control of the game, spaces for transition and to try to exploit - not weaknesses - but points where the opponent is not so good.

"The second half it was not our intention to be as defensive as we were. Liverpool pushed us back but I don't remember the chances that needed David de Gea to make the goal safe. I don't remember a dangerous situation to our goal. It was control by them having the ball and control by us without the ball. I think we deserved the three points."

Was this good preparation for the Champions League?

"The three games in the league, the Champions League and the FA Cup are independent events, with no relation to the next match. The human brain is a complex thing. The defeat leaves a bit of damage and victory makes happiness even if you are fatigued. The best thing was to win this match."

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp, speaking to BBC Match of the Day: "It was 2-0 down of course - not a good idea against Manchester United. Lukaku is one of the best strikers in the world, we needed to be around to pick up the ball, we were not and Rashford could use the situation twice.

"We had opportunities to shoot from distance but we were not good enough, we did not score and had to chase the game in the second half. We did that, scored one and I think everyone agrees it was a penalty [Fellaini's tackle on Mane] but that doesn't help us now.

"It is very important [we bounce back] we have no time to waste.

"We chased the game in the second half and caused them problems, but this is a result game and they have the result and we don't."

Two shots on target, two goals

Manchester United beat Liverpool for the 68th time in league competition; this is the most defeats Liverpool have suffered against a single side.

Manchester United have won four of their eight games against fellow 'big six' sides in the Premier League this season (W4 D1 L3), twice as many as they managed in the whole of last season (W2 D4 L4).

Liverpool have won only one of their seven Premier League games on the weekends immediately after a Champions League game this season (W1 D4 L2). Manchester United have won 20 of their 30 Premier League games this season, already surpassing their totals in both 2016-17 (18) and 2015-16 (19) and equalling their number of league wins in 2014-15 (20).

Only Manchester United (67) have profited from more own goals in the Premier League than Liverpool (58).

Manchester United had just two shots on target in this match - both of which were scored by Marcus Rashford.

Rashford has scored with 29% of his shots in the Premier League against 'big six' clubs, compared to 10% against the other teams.

Rashford has scored seven of his 16 Premier League goals against teams in the 'big six' (44%).

Romelu Lukaku now has seven Premier League assists this season; more than in any previous campaign.

What next?

Manchester United look to join Liverpool and neighbours Manchester City in the last eight of the Champions League when they play the second leg of their last-16 tie with Sevilla on Wednesday (kick-off 19:45 GMT), after a 0-0 draw in Spain.

Mourinho's men return to domestic action on Saturday when they host Brighton in the FA Cup quarter-finals (19:45 GMT) and their next Premier League game is after the international break, when they play Swansea on Saturday, 31 March (15:00 GMT) in what will be their fourth successive game at Old Trafford.

Liverpool are out of the FA Cup but they are in league action next weekend, when they play Watford at Anfield on Saturday (17:30 GMT).

Date: 10 March 2018

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

BBC	Sunday Times	Guardian	Mail
	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Telegraph
	Times	Mirror	Echo

10 March 2018



Match ends, Manchester United 2, Liverpool 1.

90'+7' Second Half ends, Manchester United 2, Liverpool 1.

90'+6' Substitution, Manchester United. Matteo Darmian replaces Alexis Sánchez.

90'+6' Attempt missed. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is too high following a corner.

90'+5' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Chris Smalling.

90'+5' Attempt blocked. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

90'+5' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Eric Bailly.

90'+4' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jesse Lingard.

90' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Chris Smalling.

90' Attempt blocked. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Dominic Solanke.

89' Antonio Valencia (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

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

89' Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United.

89' Substitution, Manchester United. Jesse Lingard replaces Juan Mata.

85' Attempt blocked. Juan Mata (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Alexis Sánchez with a cross.

85' Attempt blocked. Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United header from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Ashley Young with a cross.

85' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool.

85' Ashley Young (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

84' Substitution, Liverpool. Dominic Solanke replaces Andrew Robertson.

84' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by James Milner.

82' Foul by Virgil van Dijk (Liverpool.

82' Scott McTominay (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

80' Offside, Manchester United. Ashley Young tries a through ball, but Marouane Fellaini is caught offside.

80' Substitution, Liverpool. Georginio Wijnaldum replaces Trent Alexander-Arnold.

78' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool.

78' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

77' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

75' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool.

75' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

74' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

73' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

73' Foul by Chris Smalling (Manchester United.

72' Foul by Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool.

72' Alexis Sánchez (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

71' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

70' Substitution, Manchester United. Marouane Fellaini replaces Marcus Rashford.

69' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

67' Delay in match Eric Bailly (Manchester United because of an injury.

67' Foul by Andrew Robertson (Liverpool.

67' Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

66' Own Goal by Eric Bailly, Manchester United. Manchester United 2, Liverpool 1.

63' Attempt missed. James Milner (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

63' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

63' Foul by Marcus Rashford (Manchester United.

62' Substitution, Liverpool. Adam Lallana replaces Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain.

62' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool.

62' Ashley Young (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

60' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool.

60' Scott McTominay (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

58' Foul by Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool.

58' Marcus Rashford (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

54' Attempt blocked. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Emre Can.

53' Attempt blocked. Sadio Mané (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain.

52' Foul by Andrew Robertson (Liverpool.

52' Juan Mata (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

50' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nemanja Matic.

50' Attempt blocked. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

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

49' Foul by Scott McTominay (Manchester United.

48' Attempt missed. Virgil van Dijk (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Mohamed Salah with a cross following a corner.

48' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ashley Young.

46' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

46' Alexis Sánchez (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

Second Half begins Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0.

45'+3' First Half ends, Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0.

45'+1' Mohamed Salah (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

45'+1' Foul by Nemanja Matic (Manchester United.

45' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool.

45' Alexis Sánchez (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

45' Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the left side of the six yard box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by James Milner with a cross following a corner.

44' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

42' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

41' Delay in match James Milner (Liverpool because of an injury.

41' Attempt blocked. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

38' Attempt missed. Juan Mata (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Alexis Sánchez with a cross.

35' Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

35' Foul by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Liverpool.

35' Scott McTominay (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

34' Offside, Manchester United. Alexis Sánchez tries a through ball, but Marcus Rashford is caught offside.

32' Hand ball by Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United.

31' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Andrew Robertson.

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

31' Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United.

29' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool.

29' Marcus Rashford (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

29' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from the right side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Andrew Robertson.

28' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nemanja Matic.

27' Marcus Rashford (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

27' James Milner (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

27' Foul by Marcus Rashford (Manchester United.

26' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Eric Bailly.

24' Goal! Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0. Marcus Rashford (Manchester United right footed shot from the left side of the box to the centre of the goal.

23' Attempt missed. Virgil van Dijk (Liverpool header from the left side of the six yard box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by James Milner with a cross following a corner.

22' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

21' Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

21' Foul by Alexis Sánchez (Manchester United.

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

17' Foul by Eric Bailly (Manchester United.

14' Goal! Manchester United 1, Liverpool 0. Marcus Rashford (Manchester United right footed shot from the left side of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Romelu Lukaku with a headed pass.

13' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Chris Smalling.

11' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool.

11' Nemanja Matic (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

6' Offside, Manchester United. Nemanja Matic tries a through ball, but Alexis Sánchez is caught offside.

5' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

5' Antonio Valencia (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.