

Date: 14 December 2014  
Opposition: Manchester United  
Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	MEN
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

14 December  
2014

# THE TIMES

Liverpool deflated by De Gea

Manchester Utd 3 Rooney 12, Mata 40, Van Persie 71  
Liverpool 0

Referee M Atkinson Attendance 75,331

This, at the home of their fiercest rivals, was a very different kind of torture for Brendan Rodgers and Liverpool. For once this season, fluency was not a problem, but it will be of scant consolation that this latest grim scoreline was distorted beyond all logic by the brilliance of David de Gea.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, sitting in the Sky Sports studio, made his apologies to Peter Schmeichel and Edwin van der Sar before hailing the best performance he had seen from a Manchester United goalkeeper at Old Trafford. Four times Liverpool bore down on De Gea, one on one, and four times they were thwarted. That speaks volumes for De Gea's ever-increasing assurance and Liverpool's impotence in front of goal. The post-match statistics told a story. Liverpool had nine shots on target, eight of them from close range and failed to score. Failing to take your chances is bad enough at any time, let alone when your defence has all the durability of a wet-paper bag -- as was proven when United scored with their first two menacing attacks, through Wayne Rooney and Juan Mata -- before adding a third, through Robin van Persie, with 19 minutes remaining. You could call it a tale of two goalkeepers: De Gea at one end, Brad Jones, summoned to replace the jittery Simon Mignolet, at the other. As wonderfully as the young Spaniard performed, though -- and it is no coincidence that so many one-on-ones go straight at him when he positions and spreads himself so well -- it is difficult to imagine such profligacy from Van Persie and Rooney or indeed from, dare one say, Luis Suarez and Daniel Sturridge.

Through a combination of De Gea's heroics between the posts and an increasingly clinical touch in front of goal, United have now won six consecutive Barclays Premier League matches. It is a flattering record, as is evidenced by De Gea's growing collection of man-of-the-match awards, but even if it is hard to imagine them making up an eight-point deficit on Chelsea, their pursuit of the more prosaic goal of Champions League qualification looks more assured by the week. Liverpool, ten points adrift of them, no longer look like rivals.

As with the Raheem Sterling-Rickie Lambert equation, to suggest that Jones's selection backfired would be to say that Mignolet would have been a better bet. What Liverpool have are two goalkeepers: one a good shot-stopper whose lack of assurance (even last season) has sucked confidence from the defence and vice-versa, and a 32-yearold journeyman. Chelsea have Thibaut Courtois and Petr Cech; Manchester City have Joe Hart and Willy Caballero. There are many criticisms to make of Liverpool's infamous "transfer committee" this season and their negligence over the goalkeeping position is right up there.

The defining moment of the game came in the 12th minute. Adam Lallana put Sterling through on goal, only for De Gea to stand tall and deny the England forward. Twenty-five seconds later the ball was in the Liverpool net as Antonio Valencia set up Rooney for a chance that he placed past an unconvincing Jones. If the goalkeeper was questionable for United's first goal, though, others were far more so -- not just Joe Allen, who had the ball nudged through his legs by Valencia, but Alberto Moreno and Lallana, who were loitering nearby without intent, Dejan Lovren, who failed to close the gap, and Philippe Coutinho, who was tracking Rooney's run but unaccountably switched off.

Coutinho was one of the few impressive performers in a creative sense, finding pockets of space. It was a strange, disjointed game, with both line-ups full of square pegs (Rooney in central midfield, Valencia and Ashley Young as wing backs, Glen Johnson as a right-sided central defender, Jordan Henderson at wing back, Sterling as a lone striker) but the constants were that United took their chances and Liverpool did not.

Nobody could blame Jones for United's second goal. This time there was some sympathy for Liverpool, as Young's cross was flicked on by Van Persie into the path of Juan Mata, who had been in an offside position before stooping to head the ball home, but it probably says a lot about the visiting defence that they looked to the linesman in forlorn hope, as if they had not been on top of the situation, rather than the secure knowledge you would see from, for example, Chelsea's defence in the same situation.

The second half was the De Gea show. Sterling went through on goal for a third time, this time after a blind pass from Jonny Evans, but the goalkeeper forced him wide, stood up, spread himself and again made the save. Once more, criticism of Sterling's lack of conviction, particularly on his left foot, must come with an acknowledgement that De Gea did everything right.

Mario Balotelli, a half-time substitute for Lallana, actually looked interested, but he too was driven to distraction by De Gea. The first and third saves from Balotelli were routine, but the second was superb, a perfect reaction as he thrust out a hand to push the shot against the crossbar.

Shortly afterwards came United's third goal. They had been happy to control possession in the second half and slow down the pace where possible, but after 71 minutes they broke with real purpose and, after Lovren made a terrible hash of a clearance, Mata switched the ball to Van Persie, who scored with ease.

It was not quite a performance to strike fear into Chelsea and Manchester City, but United are showing what can happen when you have a top-class goalkeeper and a clinical forward or two. Liverpool have neither. Moreover, the confidence and spirit of last season has deserted them. Worrying times at Anfield.

# the guardian

More heroics from De Gea leave the Red Lion licking their wounds

The indignities for Liverpool started with the "24 Years and Counting" banner that was unfurled before kick-off and, by the time another grievous setback was complete, it was not easy to imagine how long it might be before this proud old club is a realistic contender again for another league title. The team who bewitched us last season are no more. The deterioration is sharp and football is such an impatient business Brendan Rodgers will know his status as manager of the year does not spare him scrutiny.

Nine months ago Liverpool came here and, as Sir Alex Ferguson recalled in his autobiography, "battered us", a 3-0 thumping that seemed to epitomise the David Moyes era at Manchester United and the brilliant work that Rodgers was undertaking at the other end of the East Lincs Road. What is happening now makes it feel like all the momentum has been lost. No team can defend this badly and expect to get away with it and the disappointment of losing to the old enemy will hardly be soothed by the knowledge this is not even a terribly good United side. Dog and Duck 3, Red Lion 0? Not quite, but you knew what Gary Neville meant.

The difference is that Louis van Gaal's team have re-established themselves on an upward curve and, though the quality of football still fell short, they have won six successive matches to establish a 10-point advantage over Liverpool in the skirmish for next season's Champions League places. Chelsea are another eight points clear and, bearing in mind the story of last season's title race, it is startling to see the way the team from Anfield have lost their way. There is a 21-point swing from the last time they visited Old Trafford.

Their lack of confidence could be seen in the performances of Joe Allen and Dejan Lovren, to name but two, or the sudden loss of self-belief that afflicted Raheem Sterling whenever he had a chance to round off some penetrative approach work by taking aim. Sterling, to give him his due, came up against a formidable goalkeeper. This was another wonderful performance from David de Gea, not just because of his uncommon hand-to-eye co-ordination but the way his best moments came in key periods of the game.

Consider, for instance, what might have happened if Sterling, set free by Adam Lallana, had been able to get the ball past De Gea with the game's first chance, when Liverpool had started reasonably well. The importance of that save has to be put into the context of what happened next. Within a few seconds, United had worked the ball to Antonio Valencia on the right. So often over the last couple of years Valencia has been reluctant to take on his man and resorted to drilling in low, aimless crosses. This time we saw the Valencia of 2011, slipping the ball through Allen's legs, taking out two other opponents in the process and then having the presence of mind to pick out Rooney for the opening goal.

De Gea's other highlights included two outstanding saves in the early parts of the second half, first to deny Sterling again and then turning a shot from the substitute Mario Balotelli against the crossbar. A goal at that time would have given Liverpool encouragement to think a feat of escapology was on. Instead, United broke on the counterattack and Lovren hashed an attempt to clear Rooney's cross. Juan Mata picked up the loose ball, played a disguised pass to Robin van Persie on the right and the third goal went in.

Liverpool were entitled to be aggrieved there was no offside flag when United made it 2-0, five minutes before half-time, when the only possible explanation was that the linesman did not notice Van Persie applying the faintest of touches from Ashley Young's cross before Mata's stooping header. A bad call, however, does not excuse the wonky defensive line, the absence of a credible challenge, or the way Alberto Moreno lost Mata. Rodgers had experimented with a three-man central defence but lost Glen Johnson to a first-half injury and his back line failed again. The best teams defend all over the pitch and Philippe Coutinho's half-hearted attempt to track Rooney for the first goal is a good example of why Rodgers said Liverpool need to "recapture the team ethos".

For United, Valencia was excellent, particularly in the first half. Mata played with great intelligence and Van Persie is clearly over that rough spell when his place was seriously under threat. There are, however, some obvious shortcomings, not helped by the seemingly ceaseless injury issues affecting their defenders. James Wilson struggled to make an impact on the day Van Gaal started the 19-year-old ahead of Radamel Falcao and Liverpool, despite their own failings, got behind the home defence so frequently it put a strange complexion on the final score. The paradox was that De Gea was man of the match by some distance, his brilliance made all the more pronounced because of the story at the other end.

Rodgers had chosen this occasion to drop Simon Mignolet but his replacement, Brad Jones, completely misread the trajectory of Rooney's shot for the first goal. It was inexplicable and the hard evidence, perhaps, why Rodgers had persisted for so long with Mignolet. Yet Liverpool's problems, languishing in mid-table, are not just consigned to goalkeeping issues.

Man of the match David de Gea (Manchester United)

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# The Mail

RUTHLESS UNITED IN DIFFERENT LEAGUE ... Van Gaal's men expose old rivals

MAN UTD 3 Rooney 12 Mata 40 Van Persie 71  
LIVERPOOL 0

TWENTY five seconds. That was the time that elapsed between Raheem Sterling's miss for Liverpool at one end and Wayne Rooney's opening goal for Manchester United at the other. It seemed to confirm the old line about the tiny margins between success and failure in sport, but don't let that fool you. If the game turned on that slim passage of play, by the end there was a chasm between these clubs. At the end, Sterling lay flat in the centre circle and pulled the neck of his shirt over his head. He no doubt blamed himself for what went horribly wrong here yesterday, but there were several other factors, not least the excellence of Manchester United goalkeeper David de Gea.

United's superior finishing was an element, too, and a linesman's mistake that aided their second goal. Bottom line, though, United were the better team. Liverpool may have got into scoring positions more frequently, and knocked it about well at times, but such classy flourishes are redundant without the cutting edge. United have that, Liverpool do not. It is the difference between title contention and mid-table torpor; the difference between three and nil.

Both teams are still works in progress, but on this evidence United are now significantly ahead. Neither have particularly outstanding defences but United's is growing the more time spent with coach Louis van Gaal and, despite injuries, six wins on the trot have been achieved at a cost of just three goals. Equally, Van Gaal has frontloaded his team in trademark Dutch style and is gaining momentum. There is little defensive quality in the Premier League right now, meaning a team with a strong attack will flourish -- as United's recent record indicates. And while Liverpool are floundering, having been shorn of Luis Suarez and Daniel Sturridge this season, United have an almost endless supply of stellar talent: Wayne Rooney, Robin van Persie and Juan Mata in the starting line-up, Radamel Falcao and Adnan Januzaj on the bench, Angel di Maria on the treatment table. Liverpool had more chances, but United were two goals clear by halftime and coasted home, thanks to De Gea's brilliance. It said it all.

There can barely have been a more brutal example of the need to make scoring opportunities count. In real time just 25 seconds separated the moment when Liverpool should have taken the lead, and the moment when Manchester United did. Penalty shootouts aside, it is hard to imagine a miss that has ever been placed in sharper relief. Liverpool had started impressively, had already come close through Martin Skrtel and seen Marouane Fellaini go into the book when Sterling's opportunity came. Adam Lallana slipped the ball in and his fellow England man was left with only De Gea to beat. A year ago, he would have been hotly fancied to score. Yet Sterling has endured an indifferent season, despite the haggling over a much-improved new contract, and his finish was tame and directed straight at the goalkeeper. The player nearest to him when he shot was Rooney. Keep that in mind.

Danger over, United swept upfield through Antonio Valencia. He nutmegged Joe Allen on the way and no Liverpool player seemed greatly compelled to stop his progress. Rooney, meanwhile, was making ground box to box like a lunatic as the great players do. Valencia cut the ball back and Rooney, playing in the Paul Scholes role, ran on to it like, well, Paul Scholes. There is no finer compliment around these parts. He finished like him, too. Low, powerful, precise, somehow wrong-footing Brad Jones -- replacing the off-form Simon Mignolet in goal -- from distance. Old Trafford was ecstatic, Sterling stood near the halfway line, awkward and embarrassed. He shuffled on the spot, feeling the responsibility, knowing eyes were on him. He was right, too. Liverpool never recovered from that reversal of fortune. It may be raised as mitigation that Sterling is a forward, not a striker, an attacking midfield player, not a straight-out match-winner. It is not much of an excuse. Recent speculation suggests there are people around Sterling with grand ambitions for their man -- Real Madrid ambitions, Gareth Bale ambitions. But Real Madrid players score those. Indeed, a Real Madrid player given the chances that fell to Sterling yesterday might expect to be going home with the match ball as well as three points. It was far from his only aberration.

In the 23rd minute, Alberto Moreno put Sterling in and he turned Phil Jones perfectly, only to be met with the obstacle of De Gea again. Arguably the most improved player in the Premier League -- there is a strong case for De Gea being the competition's best goalkeeper this season -- he stood tall and saved again. It was a more powerful shot this time, but not smartly aimed. Worse was to come. In the 52nd minute, with Liverpool now trailing by two, Jonny Evans played a back pass that seemed designed to afford the visitors a chance to get back in it. This fell to Sterling in the sort of space city developers drool over, and he first took it to De Gea's right. It looked as if he might have succeeded in rounding him, but the duel ended predictably: a poor shot, at De Gea, the opportunity lost. The ball went up the other end and Rooney almost scored again. It was a rare miss by the home side. As at Southampton on Monday, Manchester United were clinical -- even if crucially supported by the officials.

Their second came in the 40th minute -- a classic poacher's goal, but requiring a helping of good fortune. Ashley Young crossed from the left, Van Persie flicked the ball on and Mata stole in at the far post to stoop and head the ball into an unguarded net. One can only presume the linesman did not think Van Persie got a touch -- because Mata was a yard offside. Liverpool's defenders looked aghast but

protest was useless. Having failed to make their own luck, they certainly weren't going to catch a break here. This was, in no small part, due to De Gea. Mario Balotelli was introduced at half-time but, like Sterling, he could find no way through. After 67 minutes, Sterling turned provider -- he seemed happier in that role -- cutting the ball back for the Italian in the penalty area. He hit a mighty shot but De Gea was mightier, diverting it with both hands on to the bar. Jordan Henderson fed Balotelli after 83 minutes, but De Gea saved it.

He went through one-on-one a minute later and De Gea was there again. Rio Ferdinand said he sees the goalkeeper fast approaching the status of Peter Schmeichel and Edwin van der Sar. It is too soon for that just yet, perhaps, but maybe one day. Certainly, if looking for value in the English market this summer, Real Madrid might be better off pursuing him ahead of Sterling.

It only remained for United to end the game as a contest. There were 71 minutes gone when Rooney broke and crossed, only for Dejan Lovren to make a horrible mess of the clearance under little pressure. He played it straight to Mata, who put in Van Persie on the right overlap. Liverpool were so torn that Jones did not even dive as the ball flew past him. Liverpool and Sterling will think hard about those 25 seconds; but by the end identifying the difference between the teams did not require the precision of a stopwatch.

# The Daily Telegraph

United lack beauty but fighting spirit is back

Thrashing Liverpool is still the highest form of pleasure here. However big the cross-town rivalry with Manchester City and the battles with Chelsea, true happiness is sending the Scouse enemy back down the East Lancs Road with derision in his ears. Beauty, fluency and end-to-end domination elude this Manchester United side but the wins keep rolling in: six in a row now in the Premier League, where Louis van Gaal's arrival coincided with the club's worst start to a league campaign since 1986. After 10 matches United were 10th in the table and Van Gaal described his mood as "lousy". Since then they have risen without trace but are an increasingly good bet to stay in the Champions League qualifying places. How? Why? David de Gea's brilliant goalkeeping is one reason, together with Robin van Persie's emergence from dormancy, Wayne Rooney's dependable goalscoring and the restoration of tenacity to a team that turned soft last season. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, who knew how to beat a keeper, described De Gea's performance as the best he had seen between the Old Trafford posts.

Peter Schmeichel and Edwin van der Sar might want to contest that but Solskjaer was right to eulogise. In the first half De Gea tormented Raheem Sterling one-on-one, standing up to Liverpool's makeshift centre-forward in a style reminiscent of Manuel Neuer. After the interval he moved on to Mario Balotelli. Impregnability was assured with a glorious airborne save from the increasingly non-super Mario. Hit it low and De Gea blocks with his feet. Hit it high and he takes to his trampoline. The return of the old fighting spirit was apparent in the narrow defeat at City, the win at Arsenal and this avenging of the 3-0 loss to Liverpool in March. How much gloss can be painted on top of the matt of this fantastically expensive United squad is not a pressing issue. Functional will do for now.

The Old Trafford chroniclers are keeping busy. Starting line-ups change with dizzying regularity; the defence is never the same and even Rooney, the captain, is moved around the side to suit Van Gaal's "philosophy". As injuries distort the picture, Michael Carrick is now a regular centre-back.

Not any old centre-back, but the central one, directing operations.

To see Rooney start in central midfield was to wonder whether young James Wilson was ready to display world-beating qualities alongside Van Persie. He is not. Van Gaal's method, he said, is to measure the "weaknesses of the opponent" alongside United's own capabilities. "I needed more speed up [front], and Wilson has speed," Van Gaal said. But it was Rooney who landed the first blow, after Antonio Valencia had nutmegged Joe Allen to supply him with the cross. "I have a staff who are always looking for ways to give pain to the opponent. You need luck but you can force the luck, and we are forcing the luck now," Van Gaal said.

"We couldn't say that at the start of the season. We have to see match by match. Of course we are winning six matches in a row, which is fantastic. But we have to improve our play style. Only after the matches against QPR and Hull City have I said: 'OK we're dominating the game for 90 minutes.'"

United's victory at Southampton last Monday night suggested a sharp regression to the bumbling form that cost Moyes his job and left Van Gaal looking baffled. Though they left the south coast 2-1 to the good, the paucity of the display was masked by Van Persie's finishing skill. United were lumpy and negligent in possession. Here they had six shots on target to Liverpool's nine, were handed a goal from an offside position (Juan Mata) and relied on a Dejan Lovren error for their third. They were the beneficiaries of Liverpool's disarray, which has developed its own cruel momentum. The 21-point turnaround between the two clubs since March is the reverse of the superiority established by Brendan Rodgers's team when Luis Suarez was still in town.

United, remarkably, are now only eight points off the lead. Nobody could call their play orchestral, but it has become relentless again. There may not be the old quality to this United squad but the depth is undeniable. Ander Herrera and Radamel Falcao are tidy second-half subs. And United were operating here without Marcos Rojo, Daley Blind and Angel Di Maria. The good news is that those chosen are all busily trying to nail down a regular place, regardless of injury lists.

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United needed this. They needed players to stop lurching across the deck in the storm expecting someone else to rescue them. Valencia and Ashley Young, in the wing-back positions, are among those who have upped their games. Not that Van Gaal is using the transfer market to scare them. The air here is still vibrating with his anger after we in the media carried stories of Kevin Strootman, Mats Hummels and Diego Godin featuring on yet another shopping list. "I think it is disgusting always writing about numbers," Van Gaal said. "It's disrespectful to my players." There was bound to be friction between Van Gaal the demagogue and United the international brand. These encouraging wins take the heat out of any culture clash. Five days after Liverpool were knocked out of the Champions League, United knocked them into crisis mode. With a 3-0 win in the most loaded of derby games, Van Gaal's men will cope without bouquets.

**THE INDEPENDENT**

De Gea's defiance piles yet more pain on Liverpool

For Brendan Rodgers it was a truly Moyesian afternoon of mishap piled on humiliation, with an offside goal added to the equation just to heighten the sense of doom that this is a season going nowhere and a club in free-fall.

Last season, Rodgers came here and won by the same scoreline, one of those breezy, attacking performances from Liverpool that were commonplace after the turn of the year and which sent David Moyes deeper into despair. Now, nine months on, it is Liverpool for whom the pain seems endless, even on days like these when they created chances and yet opportunity eluded them at every turn. This was not a vintage Manchester United performance by any measure, but the Louis van Gaal revolution rolls on with a sixth straight victory and a dogged pursuit of Chelsea and Manchester City. If the quality was at times low, the proverbial Sunday league pub team game predicted by Gary Neville, then it was United who remembered at the crucial moments who they were and the standards required. In their times of difficulty they had the peerless David De Gea to rescue them. Liverpool had a defence that might just have been introduced to one another on the bus to the game: incoherent, disorganised and forced into another unfamiliar formation.

Rodgers' defenders may have been absolved of their errors were it not for the fact that their attack foundered every time at the hands of De Gea, the game's outstanding player. He made three crucial saves from Raheem Sterling within the first hour and then three more from the substitute Mario Balotelli in the second half, including one with the game at 2-0 that felt decisive.

In attack, United took the chances presented to them and rode their luck at times: Juan Mata's goal, the second of the three, was clearly offside. Afterwards, Rodgers claimed that his team had created more chances than they had when they won the corresponding fixture last season and this time had come up against a goalkeeper at the top of his game. But there is more to Liverpool's demise than pure misfortune. Van Gaal said that it had been his team's preparation for the specific challenges of playing Liverpool that had got them through. "It is not for nothing we have scored the way we did," he said. "You need luck but you can force the luck. We are forcing the luck now. That was not always the case at the start of the season." There were goals from Wayne Rooney and Robin van Persie too, and an accomplished performance at centre-back from Michael Carrick - and in the end it was enough. United's failing last season under Moyes was that mediocre performances produced nothing but disastrous results. For Rodgers now the problem is the same. After 16 games last season in the league, Moyes' United had 25 points. Liverpool currently have 21 at the same stage this season and while there were small signs of progress, the bigger picture for Rodgers is grim. He dropped his struggling goalkeeper Simon Mignolet and selected Brad Jones, who will continue in goal for the foreseeable future - including the Capital One Cup tie away at Bournemouth on Wednesday - according to Rodgers. He picked a three-man defence but it was no better in that configuration and, to make matters worse, he lost Glen Johnson to a first-half injury.

The opening 45 minutes had been chaos at times, a match that looked like a compilation of out-takes between two teams trying to stage a serious football match. The ball was passed aimlessly, or into touch, or to an opponent more times than seemed feasible. There were offenders on either side but Marouane Fellaini stood out for the home team. Liverpool looked the more assured if anything. Liverpool's first good chance fell to Sterling, played in behind Phil Jones by Adam Lallana, and his shot was saved by De Gea. Within 25 seconds of that, Liverpool were a goal behind, Antonio Valencia getting away down the right into space, slipping the ball through the legs of Joe Allen and breaking to the touchline. His cut-back to Rooney, deployed in midfield, was dispatched perfectly. Van Gaal had selected the teenager James Wilson in attack and in defence, an injury to Marcos Rojo in training meant that Jones was rushed back into the team. On 23 minutes, Sterling left Phil Jones looking like a man who had forgotten where he had parked his car, turning sharply towards goal and shooting at De Gea's near post. Again the goalkeeper saved.

Mata scurried around trying to get into the game to no avail until, five minutes before half-time he gambled on a late run to the back post and was rewarded with a cross from Ashley Young that skimmed Van Persie's head. Mata, unmarked and well offside, stooped down to head the ball in and with a confirmatory glance at the linesman embarked on his celebration.

It had been a half in which none of the big moments had fallen for Rodgers in spite of a performance that had deserved better. He brought on Balotelli for

Lallana and his team created more chances, but found De Gea in superb form. The United goalkeeper saved from Sterling for the third time on 51 minutes, after a mistake by Jonny Evans had allowed the Englishman a run on goal. De Gea disrupted Sterling's concentration and then got himself in front of the shot. The goalkeeper's best moment was still yet to come, though. That was a save from a shot from Balotelli from seven yards that somehow De Gea pushed onto the bar. Earlier, Philippe Coutinho, Liverpool's best player, had skipped past Rooney, unwilling to risk a second booking, and slid the ball through to Sterling who was well-tackled by Phil Jones. Sterling had jumped back up to his feet and found Balotelli. De Gea's save felt like a turning point, and so it turned out. Four minutes later, Liverpool were undone on the counter-attack by United, who were aided by the calamitous defending of Dejan Lovren. Breaking out from defence, Mata slipped the ball out wide to Rooney whose cross was feebly cleared by the Liverpool defender. Given a second chance, Mata picked out Van Persie to his right and the third goal was dispatched.

**DAILY Mirror**

UNITED RELISH THEIR PUB CRAWL THE to win BY

THE planet-sized ego of Louis Van Gaal is beginning to loom large over the Premier League. During a dismal start to his Manchester United reign, the Dutchman was in shrinkingviolet mode. But after a sixth straight win was notched up against United's bitterest rivals, Van Gaal was in no mood for shyness, refusing to rule his side out of the title race. The Old Trafford manager was, though, leaving nobody in any doubt that if United can mount an unlikely challenge to Chelsea and Manchester City, it will be largely down to his own tactical genius and the forensic work of his staff. Wayne Rooney excelled in a deep-lying midfield role, scoring the opener and pulling the strings with some visionary passing. But, Van Gaal assured us, the captain of England and United was only employed in the engine room because his staff had insisted that Liverpool would be vulnerable against the raw pace of teenage striker James Wilson.

Next week, Rooney could pop up wherever Van Gaal wants him to. Anywhere except in goal, conceded the Dutchman, although he was reluctant to praise David De Gea too fulsomely, in case Real Madrid were listening.

The Spain star was outstanding in ensuring that United chalked up such a flattering scoreline - secured by Rooney, an offside effort from Juan Mata and a late strike from Robin Van Persie, rubbing salt into their wounded foes.

United have not been playing well and yet they are 10 points clear of Liverpool and looking nailed-on for a return to the Champions League. They are back on their perch, in terms of this local squabble, at least.

It was not quite the "pub match" that Gary Neville had joked about earlier in the week, but there was slapstick defending and slapdash passing from both sides.

The so-called 'English Clasico' was nothing of the sort. The supporters swapped boasts about their respective trophy counts - 20 titles against five European Cups - while the players swapped comedic errors.

Yet none of the jubilant United fans leaving Old Trafford yesterday were in the least bit bothered.

Van Gaal insisted United were now making their own luck. That he and his staff will always find away to win, even if the pesky old players were not doing justice to his latest masterplan.

Liverpool won 3-0 here in March, having created fewer chances than they did yesterday. Yet they are a bullet-ridden bunch and Brendan Rodgers is clinging on for dear life.

United had made a shabby old start - Raheem Sterling testing De Gea early on - but the hosts were ahead within 13 minutes when Antonio Valencia nutmegged the hapless Joe Allen and cut back for Rooney to drive into the bottom corner.

De Gea made one smart stop at the near post to deny Sterling, before United added a second with a slice of outrageous fortune.

Ashley Young centred from the left, Van Persie flicked on with his quiff when Mata was way offside, but the Spaniard's close header counted, presumably because the linesman had not spotted the Holland star's assist.

When Jordan Henderson picked out Sterling, only for the little fella to head too close to De Gea, it was clear that Liverpool needed a more authentic forward, so Kop boss Rodgers sent on Mario Balotelli at half-time. As if his side's performance needed to get any more eccentric.

The Anfield outfit ought to have clawed their way back into it when Henderson headed over and then Sterling failed to take advantage of a one-on-one with De Gea (right), presented to him by a dozy Jonny Evans back-pass.

De Gea's finest moment arrived when he pushed a Balotelli effort on to the crossbar from a Sterling cut-back.

Yet as soon as young Wilson was withdrawn and Rooney thrust forward, it was 3-0.

Marouane Fellaini - half-asleep in the first period, half-decent in the second - won the ball and started a break. Rooney's centre was poor, but not as poor as Dejan Lovren's attempted clearance, straight to Mata, who fed Van Persie, the striker scoring with ease as Brad Jones attempted to recover from a slip.

Van Persie might have had a couple more but for two late saves from Jones, who carried little blame for the defeat, after replacing the axed Simon Mignolet.

The Belgium star's confidence is said to be shot. Which is never a problem likely to affect Van Gaal.

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	Independent	Mail	BBC		

LIVERPOOL

ECHO

Reds season lurches into another crisis after Old Trafford humiliation

Liverpool's season lurched into another crisis as they were humiliated 3-0 by Manchester United at Old Trafford.

Needing a positive result, and performance, to ignite a faltering campaign, Brendan Rodgers' side were left licking their wounds again, with their weaknesses at both ends of the field horribly exposed by a far from vintage United.

Liverpool had their chances, but were left chasing the game after Wayne Rooney's 12th-minute opener.

Juan Mata, from an offside position, added a second before half time, and after the visitors had wasted a string of chances, Robin Van Persie hammered the final nail into their coffin in the second half. Rodgers spent the majority of the game listening to the home fans' chants of 'You're getting sacked in the morning'.

As is increasingly the case of late, Rodgers' team selection had raised eyebrows - most notably for the inclusion of Brad Jones, who made his first Premier League start since March 2013. Simon Mignolet paid the price for his sub-par performances this season, missing his first league game since joining from Sunderland.

The Reds also lined up without a recognised striker with Raheem Sterling operating furthest forward, supported by Adam Lallana and Philippe Coutinho.

Mario Balotelli was fit enough only for the substitutes' bench.

It was a lineup which showcased Rodgers' ongoing search for the right formula at Anfield, and spoke of a lack of faith in certain players. Lucas Leiva and Rickie Lambert, like Mignolet, were dropped from the side which had failed to overcome Basel in the Champions League on Tuesday night.

At least those three were on the bench; Jose Enrique was not even named in the 18-man squad.

The visitors did, however, start the game positively, with Martin Skrtel seeing an early chance scrambled away.

Sterling then had a clearer sight of goal, latching on to a lovely reverse pass from Lallana, but hitting De Gea with his shot.

It proved costly, as United went straight down the other end to take the lead.

It was a goal made by Antonio Valencia, who got past Joe Allen far too easily down the right, and cut the ball back for Rooney, who had run off the back of Coutinho, to sweep a first-time shot past Jones from the edge of the box.

Sterling continued to look Liverpool's best hope. The youngster created another chance for himself as he turned away from Phil Jones in the area, but was again thwarted by De Gea.

Moreno, who had a nightmare, saw his first touch let him down as he looked to get on the end of a trademark Gerrard pass. Had he got it right, the Spaniard would have had a clear sight of De Gea's goal.

Again, the wasted opportunity would quickly haunt Liverpool, as United doubled their advantage in the 40th minute.

There was a degree of controversy about the goal, with Mata clearly in an offside position as he stooped to convert at the far post after Van Persie had flicked on an Ashley Young cross from the left. Replays showed that Van Persie definitely got a touch to the ball as it came in.

It was a goal which looked to have knocked the stuffing out of Liverpool, whose half ended with Moreno shanking a 30-yarder into the Stretford End, and with Skrtel sending a square pass straight out of play to the amusement of the home fans.

Rodgers' response was to introduce Balotelli for Lallana at half time, and his side could have had an immediate route back into the game as Sterling delivered a cross from the left, which Jordan Henderson headed wastefully off target.

Sterling then squandered an even better chance, seizing on Jonny Evans' loose back pass, but failing to beat De Gea in a one-versus-one. The 20-year-old simply had to score.

This time, at least, the miss wasn't punished further at the other end, with Jones keeping out Rooney's low left-footed effort, after good work from Van Persie.

Van Persie himself could have added a third after 63 minutes, but steered Valencia's driven cross a yard wide of Jones' left-hand upright.

Still Liverpool pushed, but found De Gea in outstanding form. The Spaniard produced a sensational reaction save to push Balotelli's fierce strike against the crossbar, after Sterling had cut the ball back. Balotelli then failed to connect with an overhead kick from close range as the visitors pressed.

Again, though, their efforts were undermined by shoddy defensive work, which allowed United to make the game safe 19 minutes from time.

Mata was allowed to break from deep and release Rooney, who looked to cross for Van Persie. Dejan Lovren intercepted, but his clearance was awful, and fell back to Mata, who teed up Van Persie to sweep inside Jones' unguarded near post.

There was still time for De Gea to repel two more Balotelli efforts, first saving low to his right then denying the Italian as he raced on to Lazar Markovic's slide rule pass.

Van Persie almost had the final word, but was thwarted by Jones. The damage, though, had long been done. The worry for Liverpool is that it is starting to look irreparable.

## Manchester Evening News

The drinks were on the house in the Dog and Duck last night, but it was the Spanish Rioja that was probably flowing more than the beer behind the bar.

The glasses of red were being raised and drained as a toast to David de Gea's superb Old Trafford performance as United added to Liverpool's hangover.

I doubt any goalkeeper around the playing fields of Manchester and Salford early yesterday morning matched the sensational display that was the foundation for the Reds' sixth win in a row. If this is the quality of the Dog and Duck versus the Red Lion – as suggested last week by Gary Neville – then there will be a stampede to get to the hot spots of local pub league football.

Sky TV will be setting up their cameras at Hough End and Littleton Road today in readiness and Sunday League football will be on your sports subscription package by the end of the month. Neville's condescending comparison of this current fixture last week was a joke that backfired somewhat on the pundit and former Reds captain. True, it wasn't the best advert for Premier League football at times, but it was entertaining nonetheless and passionate in the extreme.

For United it was the story of Louis Van Gaal's last few months – a great result but for too long a questionable display.

Some of those Sunday League footballers might have been wondering what all the fuss and money is about as they witnessed atrocious passing from both sides.

If you'd not been keeping up on recent results then you'd never have guessed it was United who came into his fierce rivalry on the back of five league wins and that Liverpool had lost their last two matches and were dealing with the hangover of a Champions League exit.

Brendan Rodgers' side were dangerous and striding through United's ranks.

When Raheem Sterling stole in behind United's defence in the 12th minute it looked for all the world that form book was going to be turned upside down.

But De Gea - fresh from receiving another Player of the Month award before kick-off – saved from the England player.

Before the sighs of relief had left Reds fans' mouths, they were bellowing in celebration. Just 25 seconds after the let off, Wayne Rooney added to his tally against the Evertonian's bitter enemies.

It was smash-and-grab stuff with Antonio Valencia featuring a throwback to yesteryear as the wing-back became a traditional flankman and nutmegged Joe Allen near the touchline. It brought flashbacks of Steve Coppell as he drilled in his cross for Rooney to blast in the opener.

The advantage failed to ignite United and De Gea was in action again to stop Sterling in the first half. The Spaniard was being called on far more than his opposite number Brad Jones. But when you are building up some kind of momentum, beggars can't be choosers and the next time the Liverpool keeper needed to work up any sweat was to pick the ball out of the net after United's second.

More traditional wing work from Ashley Young saw a dangerous cross headed on by Robin van Persie and Juan Mata stole in to stoop and head home. The midfielder was clearly offside but, again, in austere times you'll take anything.

Up in the VIP seats Southampton boss Ronald Koeman must have had the upmost sympathy with Rodgers. Two shots on goal and two United goals – exactly the story last Monday against his Saints side at St Mary's.

You have to baulk at the meagre amount of chances created by United, but you cannot complain about how clinical the finishing is. Can you imagine the kind of scorelines they could run up if they created more?

United still looked fragile despite having the two-goal cushion as Liverpool desperately tried to get a foothold back into the match in the second half.

Once again the pivotal moments involved Old Trafford's man of the season De Gea.

The watching Sir Alex Ferguson must have been swelling with pride that the rookie he gambled on back in 2011 is now the key cornerstone of Van Gaal's side.

Jonny Evans gave away an horrendous loose ball to Sterling in the 50th minute and the two first-half protagonists went head-to-head again.

But Liverpool's England man lost out again as the keeper thwarted his potential game-changing chance by flipping his shot onto the bar.

De Gea was at it again in the 67th minute when he pulled off a brilliant save to deny Liverpool substitute and former City striker Mario Balotelli.

Once again United swiftly punished the visitors with another rare chance which Van Persie finished off to make it 3-0.

Now it was down to an individual De Gea versus Balotelli contest to ensure it was a clean sheet.

Spain against Italy was no contest. The Madrid-born No.1 won it hands down.

It was no wonder at the final whistle his name rang out around the stands and the Reds goalscorers went to him to congratulate him on another outstanding effort.

And Neville was so impressed he named De Gea man of the match.

It was bemusing that in a 3-0 win the keeper was the stand out individual, but who cares when you are beating Liverpool?

It was a poor choice by United's post match playlist compiler to play the Strangers' 'No More Heroes' hit as the stadium emptied when you have de Gea in the side and playing like this.

Date: 14 December 2014 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: League	Times	Telegraph	MEN		14 December 2014
	Guardian	Mirror	Echo		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

BBC

Clinical Manchester United increased the pressure on Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers as they capitalised on some poor defending to run out comfortable victors at Old Trafford.

Rodgers - who dropped struggling goalkeeper Simon Mignolet for Brad Jones - can point to a succession of brilliant saves from United's David De Gea and a controversial second goal from Juan Mata as significant factors in defeat.

This, however, will do little to ease the growing concerns for Rodgers and Liverpool, with the memory of their thrilling 3-0 win here in March - in a sequence that almost took them to their first title in 24 years - seeming an age away.

United captain Wayne Rooney gave them an early lead and Liverpool had every right to feel aggrieved when Mata headed in from a clearly offside position to take the game away from them just before half-time.

Even before United took the lead, De Gea made an important save from Raheem Sterling, denying the England youngster on four occasions as well as producing three vital contributions to stop Liverpool substitute Mario Balotelli getting his first Premier League goal for the club.

Robin van Persie's third for United at the end of a lightning counter-attack only added to Liverpool's pain and gave the scoreline a lopsided look given the amount of work done by De Gea.

United's sixth successive league win continued United's resurgence under manager Louis van Gaal and put Liverpool's decline since they came so close to winning the Premier League into even sharper relief.

Liverpool now trail third-placed United by 10 points.

Liverpool's owners, Fenway Sports Group, intend to give Rodgers until the end of the season at least to turn matters around given the credit he still has after last season, but after a miserable Champions League campaign was confirmed by their exit at the group stage following the midweek draw with Basel, these are crucial days for the northern Irishman.

He now faces a huge seven days with a Capital One Cup quarter-final at Championship leaders Bournemouth on Wednesday before Arsenal visit Anfield next weekend.

The reshuffled team sent out at Old Trafford by Rodgers gave Liverpool and their manager cause for optimism in an energetic early spell but the momentum shifted crucially in the 13th minute as De Gea saved from Sterling at one end and Rooney scored at the other.

In the space of 25 seconds, Liverpool should have taken the lead but then found themselves behind as Antonio Valencia nutmegged Joe Allen and pulled the ball back for Rooney, who scored with Jones diving in the wrong direction.

De Gea thwarted Sterling - utilised as a lone striker - once more before United doubled their lead in controversial fashion five minutes before half-time.

Mata was clearly offside when he headed in after Van Persie got a slight touch to Ashley Young's cross.

There was daylight between Mata and the last Liverpool defender, so it can only be assumed linesman Mike Mullarkey did not believe Van Persie got a touch.

It was a demoralising blow for Liverpool who, having had to replace Glen Johnson with Kolo Toure in the first half after he suffered a groin injury, replaced Adam Lallana with Balotelli at the restart.

Whereas United had taken the chances that had come their way, Liverpool had wasted every opportunity, as Sterling did once more early in the second half.

Michael Carrick, who had been immaculate, inexplicably allowed Jonny Evans' pass to roll straight to Sterling, who hesitated, even when he seemed to have rounded De Gea, allowing the goalkeeper to get back and save.

De Gea's development into a world-class goalkeeper has been confirmed by a series of stellar performances this season and he showed his quality and reflexes again to turn Balotelli's close-range shot on to the bar.

The difference between the sides was illustrated once more as Van Persie wrapped up United's win.

Dejan Lovren scooped Rooney's pass hopelessly into the path of Mata, who found Van Persie to score, with Jones once again on the wrong foot.



Date: 14 December 2014

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

B

B

C

Full time Match ends, Manchester United 3, Liverpool 0.

90:00+3:25Full time Second Half ends, Manchester United 3, Liverpool 0.

90:00+2:56 Falcao (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90:00+2:56 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

90:00+2:14 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Patrick McNair.

90:00+0:01 Antonio Valencia (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90:00+0:01 Foul by Mario Balotelli (Liverpool.

89:02 Attempt blocked. Falcao (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

89:00 Attempt blocked. Falcao (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

88:34Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Manchester United. Patrick McNair replaces Phil Jones.

87:47 Ander Herrera (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

87:47 Foul by Kolo Touré (Liverpool.

86:04 Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Bradley Jones.

86:02 Attempt saved. Robin van Persie (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the top centre of the goal.

84:19 Attempt saved. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Lazar Markovic with a through ball.

83:39Booking Steven Gerrard (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.

83:27 Attempt missed. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.

81:48 Attempt saved. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

80:24 Attempt saved. Robin van Persie (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Ander Herrera.

77:28 Offside, Manchester United. Falcao tries a through ball, but Robin van Persie is caught offside.

77:19Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Manchester United. Falcao replaces Wayne Rooney.

73:36 Ander Herrera (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

73:36 Foul by Kolo Touré (Liverpool.

73:09Booking Mario Balotelli (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

73:05 Foul by Mario Balotelli (Liverpool.

73:05 Phil Jones (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

70:52Goal scored Goal!Goal! Manchester United 3, Liverpool 0. Robin van Persie (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box to the centre of the goal. Assisted by Juan Mata.

70:27Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Manchester United. Ander Herrera replaces James Wilson.

67:58Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Lazar Markovic replaces Alberto Moreno.

67:37 Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside.

66:55 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Robin van Persie.

66:53 Attempt blocked. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from very close range is blocked. Assisted by Kolo Touré.

66:52 Attempt missed. Kolo Touré (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a headed pass following a corner.

66:27 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

66:21 Attempt saved. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.

64:55 Foul by Juan Mata (Manchester United.

64:55 Dejan Lovren (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

63:34 Michael Carrick (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

63:34 Foul by Mario Balotelli (Liverpool.

63:09 Attempt missed. Robin van Persie (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Antonio Valencia.

62:46 Hand ball by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool.

59:08 Attempt blocked. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Alberto Moreno.

59:02 Attempt blocked. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Gerrard.

56:44 Attempt blocked. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

55:55 Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United.

55:55 Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

55:43 Attempt blocked. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Dejan Lovren.

54:40 Attempt missed. James Wilson (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Juan Mata.

52:18 Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United.

52:18 Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

51:19 Robin van Persie (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

51:19 Foul by Mario Balotelli (Liverpool.

51:01 Attempt saved. Wayne Rooney (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Robin van Persie.

50:08 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

48:50 Delay over. They are ready to continue.

48:26 Delay in match Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United because of an injury.

47:57 Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick on the right wing.

47:57 Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool.

47:30 Wayne Rooney (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

47:30 Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.

46:33 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Raheem Sterling with a cross.

45:42 Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United.

45:42 Mario Balotelli (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

45:00 Second Half begins Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0.

45:00Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Mario Balotelli replaces Adam Lallana.

45:00+2:16Half time First Half ends, Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0.

45:00+0:29 Attempt missed. Alberto Moreno (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the left following a corner.

44:55 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jonny Evans.

43:50 Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United.

43:50 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

42:55Booking Wayne Rooney (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

42:51 Foul by Wayne Rooney (Manchester United.

42:51 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

42:40 Foul by Wayne Rooney (Manchester United.

42:40 Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

41:53 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is saved in the top right corner. Assisted by Jordan Henderson with a cross.

39:46Goal scored Goal!Goal! Manchester United 2, Liverpool 0. Juan Mata (Manchester United header from the right side of the six yard box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Robin van Persie.

39:44 Attempt missed. Robin van Persie (Manchester United header from the centre of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Ashley Young with a cross.

36:57 James Wilson (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

36:57 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

36:05Booking Jonny Evans (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

35:45 Foul by Jonny Evans (Manchester United.

35:45 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

33:47 Attempt blocked. Joe Allen (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

33:18 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antonio Valencia.

28:56Booking Joe Allen (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

28:49 Antonio Valencia (Manchester United wins a free kick on the right wing.

28:49 Foul by Joe Allen (Liverpool.

27:43 Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Jordan Henderson.

25:15Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Kolo Touré replaces Glen Johnson because of an injury.

22:50 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by David de Gea.

22:49 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool left footed shot from a difficult angle on the left is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Alberto Moreno.

20:57Booking Phil Jones (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

20:51 Foul by Phil Jones (Manchester United.

20:51 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

19:24 Wayne Rooney (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

19:24 Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.

17:33 Attempt saved. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.

17:00 Foul by Michael Carrick (Manchester United.

17:00 Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

15:45 Offside, Liverpool. Bradley Jones tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside.

15:04 Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United.

15:04 Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

11:56Goal scored Goal!Goal! Manchester United 1, Liverpool 0. Wayne Rooney (Manchester United right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Antonio Valencia.

11:33 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Adam Lallana with a through ball.

10:51 Juan Mata (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

10:51 Foul by Joe Allen (Liverpool.

4:10Booking Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

4:06 Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

4:06 Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United.

3:53 Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

3:53 Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United.

1:19 Attempt blocked. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a cross.

0:46 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Phil Jones.

0:00 First Half begins.

0:00 Lineups are announced and players are warming up.