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## THE TIMES

Norwich City 0 Liverpool 0

Since Liverpool thrashed Norwich City 6-2 three years ago there has been little between the two sides in quality and even less in the number of goals scored. Yesterday's FA Cup fourth round tie at Carrow Road was no different. It was the fourth goalless finish between them in six games since that Anfield annihilation. Norwich have modelled their game on that of Liverpool and now resemble the Merseysiders to such a degree that it would have been difficult to tell the copy from the real thing yesterday.

Kenny Dalglish, the Liverpool manager, described Norwich as one of the hardest sides to face. "They're well organized and very difficult to break down. I'll be happy if we make it just as difficult for them in the replay."

Goalless it may have been but it did not lack for skill, endeavour or scoring chances. Either side could have won but perhaps it was only proper that another 90 minutes, at least, will be needed at Anfield on Wednesday to find an opponent for Southampton in the next round.

It may not be entirely coincidental that it was after that heavy reverse at Liverpool that Norwich bought Gunn from Aberdeen for Pounds 150,000. In those six games since he has conceded just two goals, a record almost certainly without equal. Whelan, the Anfield midfield player, rated him as one of the best four goalkeepers in the country. There was nothing in his performance yesterday to dissuade him from that view.

Gunn needed to have his wits about him from the sixth minute onwards when a cute, lobbed volley by Nicol had him back-peddalling in a hurry to tip the ball over the crossbar. Barnes tried a similar thing in the 89th minute but Gunn, stretching to his full imposing limit, pulled it down to earth and just over the by-line for a corner.

Fears that Norwich's confidence might have taken another knock when their excellent performance against Manchester United last weekend was followed by a jolting 4-1 defeat to Swindon Town in a Zenith Data Cup match in midweek proved unfounded. The television limelight again brought out the best in them. Indeed they had the better of the first half's more serious chances with Gordon and Rosario combining with telling effect.

It was a credit to the honest approach of both sides that a match with so much at stake should be contested with a minimal number of fouls. Just 15 free kicks were awarded for such offences throughout the game.

The second half saw the initiative switch quickly from one side to the other.

During Norwich's purple patch Gordon went on a diagonal run which seemed to take him too wide but his cross shot was almost diverted in by Whelan, only for Grobbelaar to come to the rescue.

Twice in nine minutes in the closing stages Beardsley's manic commitment almost paid off. Each time Linighan suffered at the hands of it, dispossessed on the first occasion and then turned inside out on the second. But each time Gunn was on hand to maintain his reputation.

NORWICH CITY: B Gunn; I Culverhouse, M Bowen, I Butterworth, A Linighan, A Townsend, D Gordon, R Fleck, R Rosario, I Crook, D Phillips.

LIVERPOOL: B Grobbelaar; G Hysen, B Venison, S Nicol, R Whelan, A Hansen, P Beardsley, S Staunton, I Rush, J Barnes, S McMahon.

Referee: K Hackett.

## the guardian

Pacific patterns fail to break the mould

FOR older television viewers the fourth-round FA Cup tie between Norwich City and Liverpool at Carrow Road yesterday must have recalled the Interlude, those pacific films of windmills and potters' wheels that the BBC used to slot in to give everyone a break.

Yesterday's match was like the potter's wheel. The game whirled around the pitch and assumed a variety of shapes, but all along you felt that by the end of the 90 minutes the issue would be no further advanced.

So it proved. After their fourth scoreless game in six meetings the teams will meet again at Anfield on Wednesday, where Norwich won in the League last season, in an attempt to decide who entertains Southampton in the fifth round.

Southampton have already beaten Liverpool 4-1 at The Dell this season and held Norwich to 4-4 at Carrow Road.

Yesterday's tie promised several goals in the second half, but having scored only once against each other in three seasons the teams seemed reluctant to offend protocol.

Liverpool, the FA Cup holders, will have taken more satisfaction from the outcome, not so much because their 8-0 demolition of Swansea in the third round followed a similar result at Vetch Field but because they could have lost yesterday had Norwich showed more conviction near goal.

Liverpool's form remains fitful. They are still likely to break out in a rash of goals from time to time, as both Crystal Palace and Swansea know to their cost, but yesterday's uneven performance was more typical of their season.

Beardsley, chasing, harrying and relentless in his pursuit of anything resembling a chance, looked bright and resourceful, and Rush prowled in dangerous places, his finger on the trigger. But Barnes was often subdued by the diligent defensive play of Culverhouse, and when Norwich raised the pace of the game in the second half McMahon and Whelan sometimes struggled to keep at least a partial grip of the midfield.

Until half-time Norwich were in danger of becoming beguiled by the soporific rhythms Liverpool bring to this sort of encounter. During the first half their one real moment of optimism came in the 34th minute when Rosario met a corner from Gordon and saw his header clip the crossbar. In the second half, however, they were more successful in breaking up the opposition's precise passing patterns. Fleck's sharpness began to worry Hysen, and Gordon started to find space on the flanks.

Fleck and Gordon sent shots wide or had them blocked or scrambled away, and, when Rosario sent Townsend clear in the inside-left position with the defence caught square, Carrow Road roared in anticipation of a goal. Townsend, however, shot when he could have carried the ball on into the penalty area, and Grobbelaar saved.

A cross-shot from Gordon, which sailed across a gaping goalmouth with two minutes remaining, sent the Norwich supporters home convinced that they had witnessed a moral victory. In truth Liverpool had as many scoring opportunities.

A speculative lob from Nicol after five minutes, which had Gunn in some difficulty before he tipped the ball over the bar, was one of their best pieces of inspiration. Beardsley's early through-ball to Rush 10 minutes into the second half looked like being the decisive moment of the afternoon before Linighan forced the striker to square the ball back to Beardsley, who shot wide.

In the last minute Barnes spotted Gunn off his line and all but caught him with a neat chip. The goalkeeper reached back to make the save, but for a fraction of a second it looked as if Liverpool were about to steal into the fifth round.

Norwich City: Gunn; Culverhouse, Bowen, Butterworth, Linighan, Townsend, Gordon, Fleck, Rosario, Crook, Phillips.

Liverpool: Grobbelaar; Hysen, Venison, Nicol, Whelan, Hansen, Beardsley, Staunton, Rush, Barnes, McMahon.

Referee: K Hackett (Sheffield).