

Date: 3 March 1990
 Opposition: Millwall
 Competition: League

Times	Guardian	Sunday Times

3 March 1990

THE TIMES

Gillespie steps in to end deadlock and sink lively Millwall

Full Text :

COPYRIGHT 1990 The Times

Byline: Peter Ball

Liverpool 1 Millwall 0

With only one win in 21 League games, on paper Millwall's plight is beginning to look terminal. In the flesh at Anfield on Saturday they showed enough signs of rude health to suggest that burying them back in the second division is premature.

Bob Pearson, the new manager, has seen his side lose all three games under his control, although he is at least retaining a sense of humour. Pearson has taken to introducing himself as "I'm Bob who?", and he could take some encouragement from the commitment, if not the result.

His new, unashamedly defensive, formation with three centre halves frustrated Liverpool until eight minutes from time. Going that close was to leave Millwall feeling bitterly disappointed, especially as the blow which finished them came from an unexpected quarter.

Gary Gillespie had arrived at the ground expecting to travel to Accrington Stanley with the A team, but had instead been drafted in to play his first game since November. It was the sort of script that demanded a big finale and in accordance with the best traditions Gillespie emerged as the unlikely hero.

Yet only a minute earlier Cascarino, his immediate opponent, had towered over him to send a header crashing against the bar. "I thought that was in," Cascarino reflected ruefully. "I hit the bar here last year too; I'm going to ask them to raise it a bit next season."

But if that was the moment Millwall's luck ran out, they had earlier enjoyed almost a season's worth in holding Liverpool at bay.

Beardsley missed a penalty after only two minutes and if Cascarino was later to curse his fortune, he could hardly complain when he escaped the likely consequences of having a sloppy back pass intercepted by Rush before half-time. Beardsley's miss sent him into a tentative mood and Rush, in spite of looking as lively as he did in the days before he went to Juventus, was well held by the defensive formation.

But the thing about this Liverpool side is that they come at you from all angles. On this occasion Barnes led the way, giving poor Salman such a torrid afternoon that he conceded the penalty and got himself booked within half an hour in his attempts to stem the tide.

When turning Salman inside out failed to produce a goal, Barnes moved inside to torment Thompson instead. Even so, with Branagan saving well from Whelan and Rush, and his defenders performing countless heroics, Millwall still held out until Dalglish decided to play his next card and send on Houghton.

Nicol switched to left back and it was his move forwards which finally led to the goal. His shot produced the corner from which Gillespie struck to put his side back on top of the first division.

LIVERPOOL: B Grobbelaar; G Gillespie, B Venison, S Nicol, R Whelan, A Hansen, P Beardsley, D Burrows (sub: R Houghton), I Rush, J Barnes, S McMahon.

MILLWALL: K Branagan; A McLeary, I Dawes, W Reid, D Thompson, S Wood, D Salman, L Briley, E Sheringham, A Cascarino, P Goddard.

Referee: G Tyson.

the guardian

Only Gillespie and kissogram hit spot

IT WAS Kenny Dalglish's birthday at the weekend: his 39th. What do you give the man who has almost everything? A roly-poly kissogram apparently, and three points towards the League championship, although it took Liverpool so long to get the wraps off 82 minutes before Gary Gillespie headed in the only goal it must have reinforced Dalglish's view that what he really needs is a new striker.

A new striker? Liverpool? The club that could afford to discard John Aldridge, who is currently potting more than the Gardeners' World team?

Dean Saunders of Derby is the name percolating the Anfield air as deliciously as fresh-ground coffee. An even tastier bit of gossip is that Peter Beardsley would make way for him.

Beardsley was the first to highlight Liverpool's deficiency up front when he galloped at a second-minute penalty kick and saw the ball lift off like an Aintree jumper at Becher's to finish high in the Kop. There were at least six wasted chances to follow, McMahon, Rush, Nicol and Whelan among those guilty of missing the target.

Yet there is an inevitability about Liverpool's attacks at Anfield. They drone on like waves of Second World War bombers, ultimately producing the crump and flash of explosion.

Millwall had rarely got past Gillespie, who was back from injury after three months and until a few hours before the match expected to be playing for the A team against Accrington Stanley. He and Hansen simply purred through, changing the pace and direction of the game with a panache that brought applause.

Millwall need something to reverse a decline that has brought them one win in 21 games. Bob Pearson, who has been in charge for three weeks, said his team had played a sweeper for the first time. All 11 seemed to be doing the job most of the time.

They came close enough to see the whites of Grobbelaar's eyes only four or five times. But from a rare free-kick in the Liverpool half, Salman provided Cascarino with a header, and he was unlucky to hit the bar.

That gave Liverpool the nasty jolt they may have needed. From Beardsley's corner kick Gillespie headed in the winner.

SCORER: Liverpool: Gillespie (82min).

Liverpool: Grobbelaar; Gillespie, Venison, Nicol, Whelan, Hansen, Beardsley, Burrows (Houghton, 61), Rush, Barnes, McMahon.

Millwall: Branagan; McLeary, Dawes, Reid, Thompson, Wood, Salman, Briley, Sheringham, Cascarino, Goddard.

Referee: G Tyson (Sunderland).

Date: 3 March 1990
Opposition: Millwall
Competition: League

Times	Guardian	Sunday Times

3 March 1990



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Few surprises as Liverpool go top; Football Focus

Full Text :

COPYRIGHT 1990 Sunday Times

Byline: Mihir Bose

WE ALL love a sporting upset but too much of it can devalue the surprise. So thank goodness **Liverpool** still put the case for sporting certainty. They give the impression they have been champions since the last time England beat the West Indies (well almost). Their win over Millwall was their 17th game without defeat and puts them top.

With Arsenal's defeat it means that, as last season, the odd team (last time it was Norwich) appears to be dropping out. Bob Pearson, the Millwall manager, tried to invoke the spirit of England in Jamaica before the match, although he was realistic enough to say that as he was not a "doughnut" he didn't expect to win.

However, as Villa will have noted, **Liverpool** did give the impression that there was a hole in the centre of their attack. Peter Beardsley missed a penalty in the second minute; Rush looked like he had still not worked Italy out of his system and then in the 82nd minute Tony Cascarino hit the bar. But the very next minute Gary Gillespie, playing for the first time in three months, scored and the pools forecasters who had marked it as a home banker relaxed.

It means Millwall have not won since Pearson took over and they have not won away since the first match of the season. That was at the Dell which was also the last time Southampton lost at home. This latter record looked in little danger when Rodney Wallace put them 2-0 ahead in the 28th minute against Chelsea. But if there is one thing we can be sure of it is that Chelsea will spring a surprise when you least expect it. In the day's best match, Chelsea were 2-1 behind until the 81st minute when Tony Dorigo scored. Two minutes later the substitute Gordon Durie struck to give Chelsea their sixth away win of the season.

Such inconsistency of form is a feature of the season. Tottenham are quite good drawing or winning away from home but at home they are becoming a soft touch. Crystal Palace had never beaten them in the League, and they are one of the League's worst travellers, but they quite dominated Spurs.

Alan Pardew found a looping header to beat Thorstvedt. By then Gascoigne, who before the match had once again told Bobby Robson he was "ready", limped off with an ankle injury but at least Spurs set a record. They played John and David Polston, the first brothers to play for the club since 1912. One somehow does not think this will impress the fans.

What Spurs fans would like to see is some of the spirit of Wimbledon although not the style. Wimbledon are climbing back into respectability with surprising victories: last week it was Villa, now they allowed Everton to take the lead before Fashanu and Wise took over, scoring twice in the last 12 minutes to win. When it comes to tweaking the noses of more fancied teams, Wimbledon are a sporting certainty.