

Date: 9 February 1991

Opposition: Everton

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Times	Guardian	Sunday Times
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THE TIMES

Everton learn from Anfield defeat

Liverpool 3 Everton 1

WHEN Kenny Dalglish chooses, his conversation can be illuminating.

After a match containing moments of artistry despite a predictably frenetic pace, the Liverpool manager delivered an assessment of his side's performance which was not only accurate but refreshingly honest.

"The result was better than the performance but the performance doesn't matter when you get the result," he said in response to the suggestion that the margin of victory in the 144th Merseyside League derby was flattering.

Presumably, Dalglish was seeking to re-emphasise the point, which he has made repeatedly in recent weeks, that all teams require good fortune if they are to prosper.

"We have played games where we have been the better side but have not got a result," he said. "You can argue about who was the better side today but it won't change the result."

In winning only their second League game since the turn of the year, Liverpool profited greatly from Everton's inability to add a cutting edge to many moves of promise.

Whether their refusal to yield, particularly in the final 20 minutes when the pressure on their goal was sustained, was a product of good luck or good judgment is a moot point for, as Dalglish correctly stressed, it became an irrelevance at the final whistle.

Liverpool's victory, which returns them to the top of the first division, was perhaps more impressive than at first it might seem. McMahon and Rush, the latter missing the first Merseyside derby of his career, were absent because of injury. With Gillespie and Houghton also onlookers, Liverpool looked a shade lightweight, particularly in midfield.

Had Molby not employed to the full his gift for picking out forwards with handsome passes, Everton might have controlled the game, such was the honest endeavour of Sheedy and Milligan.

Not all the components within the visitors' engine-room were free from faults. Nevin and Beagrie, orthodox wingers charged with supporting Sharp, a solitary figure in attack, were too often over-elaborate. Beagrie is infuriating. Rarely has so much instinctive skill been squandered in search of the perfect run and cross.

Despite fractured service, Sharp continually made life uncomfortable for the Liverpool defence. He twice found the target with well-judged headers, only to be denied by goalline clearances.

Although looking ill at ease in an opening phase which emphasised Everton's marginal superiority, Liverpool moved in front after 16 minutes with a goal which owed much to the good fortune whose absence their manager lamented.

Watson's headed clearance when under pressure from two Liverpool forwards was poorly directed and fell invitingly for Molby, who drove in powerfully with his left foot. The shot, which Southall appeared to have covered, clipped the heel of Speedie and rolled just inside a post.

Liverpool's latest signing was later to disown a goal which would have given him the unique distinction of scoring three times in his first Merseyside derby.

Southall and Grobbelaar produced astonishing reflex saves to deny Barnes and Sharp respectively before Everton deservedly drew level on the stroke of half-time, albeit with a dubious and fiercely disputed goal.

As Nevin pursued a Watson header, he may have used his hand to control an awkwardly bouncing ball before converting from six yards.

Speedie, despite a subdued performance, was to banish controversy early in the second half, shortly after Liverpool had lost Whelan with a fractured right shin.

After 48 minutes, Speedie rose unchallenged to head Molby's free kick and, within four minutes, before any semblance of discipline could be restored to the Everton defence, he lurched forward to flick home Burrows's powerful drive from outside the penalty area.

Even in defeat, Everton will have learned much from this game. As Howard Kendall, their manager, conceded, next Sunday's FA Cup fifth-round tie at the same venue could be even more closely contested.

"We know where we went wrong and, hopefully, it won't happen again, for a couple of weeks, at least," he said.

LIVERPOOL: B Grobbelaar; G Hysen, D Burrows, S Nicol, R Whelan (sub: J Carter), G Ablett, D Speedie (sub: P Beardsley), S Staunton, B Venison, J Barnes, J Molby.

EVERTON: N Southall; N McDonald, J Ebbrell, K Ratcliffe, D Watson, M Milligan, P Nevin, S McCall, G Sharp, K Sheedy, P Beagrie (sub: A Cottee).

Referee: L Shapter.

the guardian

Speedie silences the Dalglish doubters

A LIVERPOOL supporter, arriving breathlessly a couple of minutes late on Saturday, inquired urgently if there was any score. 'You're joking,' came the reply. 'Not with this bloody team.'

Ian Rush, invariably the last Liverpool player to emerge for the pre-match warm-up, was still being searched for when the Kop realised they had already counted up to 13. So, no Rush and no McMahon. But plenty of palpitations, the more so when it was realised there was still no place for the hapless Beardsley. 'Dalglish should be goosed,' another disgruntled fan suggested.

There is a law, let us call it Heseltine's Law, that every man has a scheme that will not work. When Everton equalised just before half-time, courtesy of Nevin's possibly hand-made goal, there seemed a high probability the Liverpool manager's leanings towards the defensive might, like a child's roly-poly bouncer, lurch back and biff him in the face.

As it was, the nearest Dalglish came to being biffed was in the 82nd minute when he caught a loose ball near the dug-out and held it while Beardsley hurriedly struggled to rip off his tracksuit and replace Speedie. Everton's McDonald ran up, snatched the ball away and gave Dalglish a not altogether friendly little shove in the process. There are those, not all of them Evertonians, who will savour this moment for a lifetime.

When Whelan, his shin cracked, winced off minutes after half-time, the likelihood of Everton thoroughly upsetting Anfield grew appreciably. At this point Speedie entered like a Siberian storm and Everton, like British Rail, were in a mess.

Liverpool went back to the top of the First Division and Dalglish was absolved. The first goal, the sweetest of headers from Molby's curling free-kick, was pure Speedie, pure timing. Like West Germany's Uwe Seeler of old, Speedie, small and bald, has the priceless ability frequently to outleap those who have a head and shoulders start.

His second goal, the one that did for Everton, highlighted his predatory instinct. The shot by Burrows was going wide when Speedie stuck out his foot; though if both Ebbrell and Ratcliffe had left the goal-line immediately after Carter's corner the Liverpool striker would have been palpably offside. It was poor defending. Kendall was well aware of his side's defensive mistakes, something that will be worked on carefully and meticulously this week before the Mersey show returns to Anfield next Sunday for the fifth round of the FA Cup.

Evertonians will not be without hope, for Liverpool's vulnerability at set pieces was again glaringly apparent. If Nicol had not managed to scramble away Sharp's unchallenged header from Nevin's corner midway through the second half, Everton might well have sent a late jolt through Liverpool's system.

But Kendall's team too often lacked conviction in the final third of the pitch, and the Everton manager knows well enough that most of the players Colin Harvey bought while he was away are simply not good enough.

Milligan, a lost sheep since his move from Oldham, had perhaps his best game for Everton, but neither he nor McCall could match Molby's midfield prowess. The increasingly bulky Dane, who scored Liverpool's first goal via Speedie's heel, may not be the marauding great white shark of the past more Molby Dick, in fact but his eye for a wounding pass remains as sharp as ever and his passing a joy. Yet presumably, if McMahon had been fit, he would not have played.

Whelan's injury is an obvious blow to both Liverpool and the Republic. However, Staunton looked far more comfortable and effective when he switched from left side to central midfield, an encouragement for Dalglish and Charlton.

Before next Sunday Kendall needs to find a way of getting greater and more constant support to Sharp. Nevin and Beagrie, the latter shunted off early in the second half for Cottee, brought to mind that weary remark of a would-be rail commuter at the weekend who told a passer-by: 'I don't know where you're going but you won't get there.'

Kendall has never favoured out-and-out wingers Sheedy and Trevor Steven are quite different animals but for the time being he must try to make the best of Harvey's aberrations. Carter's arrival for Whelan ahead of Beardsley, and another obvious snub did little to enhance the reputation of the wingers' union. Like Beagrie and Nevin, Carter is not a player designed for midfield retrievals.

With Rush, 23 goals in 26 Merseyside derbies, and McMahon fit for selection next weekend, the odds clearly favour Liverpool reaching the FA Cup sixth round at Everton's expense.

If the cold weather continues, of course, the weekend sport may again be, as the newsmen say, 'effectively wiped out'. Players and supporters of these two clubs will barely notice: on derby days the rest of football might just as well close down, for nothing else matters.

SCORERS: Liverpool: Molby (16min), Speedie (49, 52). Everton: Nevin (45).

Liverpool: Grobbelaar; Hysen, Burrows, Nicol, Whelan (Carter, 48), Ablett, Speedie (Beardsley, 82), Staunton, Venison, Barnes, Molby.

Everton: Southall; McDonald, Ebbrell, Ratcliffe, Watson, Milligan, Nevin, McCall, Sharp, Sheedy, Beagrie (Cottee, 57).

Referee: L Shapter (Torquay).

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Instant hero after Speedie impact

HE may have only played a dozen games during his short spell at Liverpool but six-goal David Speedie managed to follow up a debut strike against Manchester United at Old Trafford with a brace in his Anfield bow against Everton.

A striker who performs those sort of feats becomes an instant Kop hero and while Speedie is still remembered fondly by Liverpool supporters, fate decreed that his Anfield career would be over within a matter of months.

Born north of the border in Glenrothes on February 20 1960 but raised in Yorkshire, Speedie was a professional footballer who experienced hard graft before he got his big break in the game.

After working as a coalminer, Speedie played for Barnsley, Darlington, Chelsea and Coventry City before arriving at Anfield.

Despite a sound reputation, Speedie could have been forgiven for thinking that a move to one of the game's true giants had passed him by as he approached his 31st birthday in 1991 but Liverpool manager Kenny Dalglish, a former Scotland international team-mate, made a surprise swoop to bring him to the reigning league champions.

Speedie reveals that the transfer did not come as a shock to him, as there had been several earlier attempts to take him to Anfield.

He said: "I'd known Kenny for years through the Scotland squad and it's not as if we were strangers.

"He'd tried to sign me on three previous occasions but Coventry had refused to let me go. But by this stage they'd sacked John Sillett, the manager I worshipped, and I didn't want to stay.

"I enjoyed my football wherever I was but the fact that it was Liverpool coming in for me was great."

Although there were a few raised eyebrows among some observers about the wisdom of Dalglish recruiting the veteran striker, Speedie silenced the critics on his debut at Old Trafford as he made an instant impact, scoring in a 1-1 draw against Manchester United.

His Anfield bow came just six days later, against neighbours Everton, and Speedie continued where he'd left off against Liverpool's other great rivals.

He said: "It was a baptism of fire for me with my first two games coming against Manchester United and Everton but I'd scored at Old Trafford so that stood my in good stead for the derby.

"I'd never been a player that lacked confidence but I remember the Everton game was played at a frenetic pace. I got two goals that day but looking back I should have claimed a hat-trick. Jan Molby was credited with the other goal but it had taken a deflection off me on the way into the goal. These days if the ball hits you, you get the credit."

Speedie added: "My first goal came from a free-kick wide on the left from Molby. I'd already seen in training the kind of stuff that he could do, he had great accuracy with his passing, so I looked away, gave Jan the signal and ran into the centre where he picked me out.

"For the second, the ball was cleared and it fell to David Burrows. There were two men on the post but they stayed, Bugsy hit it and I deflected it into the net. The noise was incredible. I'd scored against the enemy and I was well happy."

Despite Speedie's prolific start to his time at Anfield, his Liverpool career was over almost as soon as it got going as he became a casualty of a new regime.

Just eight days later, the two great Mersey rivals clashed again at Anfield in an FA Cup fifth round encounter.

Without the cup-tied Speedie's golden touch, Liverpool were held to a goalless draw and Speedie then had to sit in the stands as a frustrated spectator as the two sides took part in their most enthralling clash of modern times – a 4-4 humdinger after extra time in a Goodison replay.

Following the game, Dalglish stunned the football world by resigning as Liverpool manager – just 17 days after Speedie had made his debut.

A Dave Watson goal ensured that Everton eventually took the spoils 1-0 in a second Goodison replay but Speedie soon had bigger worries on his mind as he headed on a collision course with new Liverpool manager Graeme Souness.

He said: "My old mate Souey took over and we never really got on. His opinion of me was not the same as Kenny's and the likes of Molby and myself ended up training with the kids at times.

"I had the choice of being left to rot in the reserves or moving on. I was not in control of my own destiny but what can you do?

"Graeme went on to win the FA Cup the following year but overall I felt that he made mistakes by letting some of the senior players like myself and Peter Beardsley go."

Speedie added: "I'd scored six goals in nine starts and three substitute appearances for Liverpool and I'd love to have stayed but football is a game of different opinions and you have to accept that. It's all water under the bridge now."

It was Don Mackay who saved Speedie from his Anfield dream come nightmare by bringing him to Blackburn Rovers but he was soon reunited with Dalglish, who took over at Ewood Park soon after and the following season they led the club

back into the top flight to become founder members of the Premier League.

Speedie went on to play for Southampton and Leicester City, as well as having loan spells at Birmingham, West Brom and West Ham before winding down his career with several non-league clubs.

He is now back in Yorkshire where he helps to run a company called Lightyear Recruitment as well as travelling the country for sports consultancy.

PRESS ASSOCIATION

Speedie just too quick for the Toffees

At first glance Howard Kendall and Kenny Dalglish would appear to have little in common other than managing Merseyside clubs – but both have a tendency to be fickle with forwards. Neither seems able to decide on a settled line-up, but at least Dalglish has a wide variety to select from.

With Ian Rush out of contention with injury it seemed either Peter Beardsley or Ronnie Rosenthal would return to the starting line-up.

But then again, nothing is certain with Dalglish. He left Beardsley on the bench and Rosenthal in the stands and instead opted for new-boy David Speedie to lead the attack with John Barnes. Dalglish was, of course, right again. Speedie banged in two goals in three minutes and made it three in two games since his sensational move from Coventry. Once again Dalglish has illustrated that it is not just spending money that counts, but spending it wisely.

Beardsley though must be on his way. Leeds are bidding and, as he is now third at best in the queue for a place in the first team, it must be curtains for his Anfield career. He and Rush were not the only absentees from the starting 11.

Warrant

Steve McMahon, Ray Houghton and Gary Gillespie were all missing. Liverpool coped. Ronnie Whelan went off with a fractured shin in his return game after nine matches out with an ankle injury. Liverpool coped. They coped despite a spirited Everton display which did not warrant a fifth successive derby defeat, never mind by a scoreline which wrongly indicates they were comfortably beaten.

The first Liverpool goal had more than a slice of luck, Jan Molby's shot being deflected in a way which left Neville Southall helpless. The deflection was via Speedie and after first claiming a hat-trick he later agreed Molby should claim it as the deflection had been inadvertent. The fiery Scot is clearly quickly adapting to the Anfield way of doing things.

Everton's reaction to this unjust reverse was to step up a gear and the game began to match the conditions which, perversely on this day of postponements, were perfect.

Bruce Grobbelaar had to make a fine save to deny Graeme Sharp and then watched in admiration as Southall made the save of the season. Barnes sent in a cracking volley and the Welsh international, who earlier this season was sulking at the foot of a post, made a quite magnificent leap to tip it away. Such was the quality of the save that both Barnes and Speedie congratulated the Everton keeper.

Everton built on that confidence booster by snatching a deserved equaliser just before the break, Pat Nevin stabbing the ball home after appearing to handle as he controlled Dave Watson's header.

Flagged

But Liverpool and Speedie in particular wanted all three points and the former Coventry star's finishing skills allowed them to get them. Speedie first capitalised to head home from Molby's free kick and then instinctively turned in David Burrows' shot, very much in the Rush style. Everton never flagged but despite Sharp's effort, which Steve Nicol had to clear after it had beaten Grobbelaar, and Stuart McCall's close shot, the Merseyside honours were once again Liverpool's.

All that remained was for the Kop to give Speedie a huge ovation as he went off to be replaced by Beardsley.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Speedie fires Liverpool to the top

Liverpool 3 Everton 1.

LIVERPOOL 3(4-4-2): Grobbelaar; Venison, Hysen, Ablett, Burrows; Nicol, Whelan (sub: Carter 49min), Molby, Staunton; Speedie (sub: Beardsley 82min), Barnes.

EVERTON 1(4-5-1): Southall; McDonald, Ratcliffe, Watson, Ebbrell; Nevin, McCall, Milligan, Sheedy, Beagrie (sub: Cottee 68min); Sharp.

Goals: Molby (16min) 1-0; Nevin (45min) 1-1; Speedie (50min) 2-1;

Speedie (53min) 3-1.

Weather: cold and bright. Ground: soft. Referee: L C Shapter (Torquay).

TWO MORE goals to Speedie, making three in a week. A 3-1 defeat for an Everton team which equalised almost on the interval, and deserved somewhat better.

Liverpool, much reshuffled, killed them off with two early goals in the second half, but Everton, to their credit, were pegging away until the end. They still do not score as often as they should, but if they can get Ebbrell back into the midfield next Sunday, perhaps they will fare better. Nobody, these days, really knows quite what Kenny Dalglish is going to do, until he does it. Yesterday, in a League derby, eight days before both teams take the field again here, for an FA Cup-tie, he was limited by a series of injuries. No Rush, no Houghton, no McMahon, no Gillespie.

Liverpool had a very strong team indeed in the press box. You might have thought, in such circumstances, that Dalglish would have deployed Rosenthal, the Israeli striker who has scored and made so many goals for Liverpool, this season and last. How mistaken you would have been. As his front pair, Dalglish used Barnes, fresh from his disappointing display on the left wing for England, and Speedie, just on 31, the unexpected new signing from Coventry. Molby was in the midfield, as was Staunton, whose conversion from full-back has been largely a successful one. Everton, I need hardly tell you, deployed their customary five-man midfield, ready and no doubt eager to reinforce Sharp, the solitary striker. Ebbrell, who was doing so well in midfield until Howard Kendall decided he was really a left-back, was in defence again, with Milligan restored to the midfield. On the right flank of the Liverpool midfield we saw the versatile Nicol, who is probably as happy there as anywhere else.

After 16 minutes, this much rearranged Liverpool team got a goal. Curiously enough, weak headers by the two Everton international centre-backs brought it about. That, plus a massive deflection. The first poor header was by Ratcliffe, which went straight to Nicol. When he crossed, Watson headed out in turn, but the ball went straight to the hefty Molby. His powerful left foot struck. Perhaps Southall would have had it, perhaps not. In the event, the deflection off one of his own men put him quite on the wrong foot, and the ball ended, to the delight of the Kop, in the left-hand corner of his goal.

To their great credit, Everton were not a bit demoralised by what might have been a demoralising goal. There is plenty of talent, abundant skill, in their team, and with such attackers as Nevin, Sheedy and Beagrie on parade, there was no lack of searching crosses.

One of the best of these arrived eight minutes from half-time, when Sheedy himself began a clever movement carried on by Nevin and McCall. Sheedy's centre was strongly met by the dangerous head of Sharp. Grobbelaar reached the ball at full stretch, it rebounded from the bar and Ablett, who had already done much competent tidying up, rose to head it out of danger.

Liverpool retaliated with a superb strike, a cross from Staunton from the left met on the volley by the left foot of Barnes, Southall flying through the air to tip the ball for a corner.

With Barnes, such sudden surprises are always possible.

By and large, Liverpool were stuttering so much that you wondered when Beardsley might be called from the bench. When Everton equalised, it was no great shock, though rather ironic that they too should benefit from a header by a centre-back which failed to clear the ball.

In this case, the centre-back was Hysen, jumping to a free kick. McCall headed back, Watson, who had come up for the kick, flicked on in turn, and Nevin, that eternal imp of mischief, popped up in the goalmouth to equalise. By no means an undeserved goal.

Barely five minutes into the second half, Dalglish must have felt a warm glow of self-justification. For the second time in a week, his new acquisition, Speedie, had scored an important goal. This, almost immediately after Whelan had hobbled off the field to be substituted by another newcomer in Carter. Immediately, Molby took a fine free kick from the left, and there was the formidable head of Speedie to guide the ball into the goal.

Fifty-three minutes played and Speedie struck again, though he will be the first to admit that the credit belonged chiefly to Burrows. The young left-back struck an extraordinary, swerving shot which might have gone in at the far post; but Speedie made quite sure. It was all a little hard on Everton. Everton brought on Cottee for Beagrie, and the goal they so badly needed so nearly came. A corner from the left swung to the near post by Nevin, a header there by Sharp which was on its way to the far corner when Nicol scraped it off the line. Again, Everton would come tantalisingly close. This time, it was a mid-air shot by McCall from the left of the penalty box which flew low and only just wide of the far post for a corner. Certainly, as local derbies go, this was immeasurably more entertaining and exciting than the dreary affair one had watched in London the previous weekend, when Arsenal lost their unbeaten record to Chelsea. Nor should

Everton repine. They do tend to miss their chances where Liverpool take them, but next week's Cup-tie cannot be seen as a foregone conclusion.

To tremendous applause from the crowd, Speedie, his two goals scored, came off near the end to give way to Beardsley. What an extraordinary depth of attacking talent Liverpool do possess.

Behind the front line, Molby, all afternoon, was using the ball with great intelligence, that left foot sending pass after well-conceived pass to his forwards. Nevin, however, never gave up, now dancing down the wing, now jinking and dodging his way through the centre. At least he, too, like Speedie, his former Chelsea colleague, had the consolation of scoring.