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THE TIMES

Burrow's swift strike sets tone

Liverpool 3 Everton 1

RARELY, if ever in its 97-year history, has a Merseyside derby game been so swiftly decided.

If Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, did not blame his side's third consecutive away defeat on the isolated incidence of poor defending that allowed Burrows to score after 49 seconds, he was insistent that it set the tone for what was to follow. "After changing the team around a bit, we needed time in which to settle down but with the goal coming so early we were denied that time," he said. "It meant that we were chasing the game from the very first minute, something which is always difficult against Liverpool. It was a nightmare start." A nightmare that enveloped the afternoon for Everton, who laboured under the misapprehension that physical endeavour is a viable alternative to thoughtful football.

Having enjoyed a brief, if enlightening, spell in the minutes that immediately followed Burrows's precise strike, Everton disappeared into their shells to accept the inevitable in a manner which Kendall will have found unpalatable.

Although Watson and Keown performed heroically at the heart of a defence that was vulnerable down either flank, and McDonald did his best to inject some passion into a desperately unproductive midfield, Everton could not resist a Liverpool side that displayed uncommon certainty despite the absence of several key players.

Simply by passing accurately and moving intelligently into space, Liverpool were able to create chances. Their second goal, volleyed in by Saunders after 14 minutes, was, if anything, overdue.

After Houghton had followed Saunders's example by beating Southall inside his near post in the 62nd minute, Everton were faced by the prospect of humiliation until Warzycha's introduction.

Newell's solo goal 12 minutes from the end was consolation in its hollowest form but it did, at least, bring satisfaction for its architect, Beardsley. Otherwise, he was a disconsolate figure on his swift return to his former club.

LIVERPOOL: B Grobbelaar; G Ablett, D Burrows, S Nicol, R Whelan (sub: M Marsh), N Tanner, D Saunders, R Houghton, S McManaman, M Walters (sub: R Rosenthal), S McMahan.

EVERTON: N Southall; A Harper, J Ebbrell, N McDonald, D Watson, M Keown (sub: K Ratcliffe), M Ward, P Beardsley, M Newell, A Cottee (sub: R Warzycha), K Sheedy.

Referee: R Lewis.

the guardian

Burrows rockets off the Anfield production line

IT WAS like a dagger through the heart. Spectators setting their watches at the kick-off hardly had time to push back the stopper before Burrows struck the fiercest of drives that took a deflection and left Southall as though petrified.

If he had not seen Liverpool's first goal coming, the Kop had. The moment the ball left the full-back's boot, their roar carried through the air like a cloud scudding down the Irish Sea.

For the next quarter of an hour it never relented, and neither did Liverpool. They were back into the stride that made them indefatigable before last season's upheavals. And this was without Barnes, Rush and Wright.

Therein lies the threat to the rest of the First Division. For it was the account young players like McManaman, Tanner, Marsh and particularly Burrows, who is still only 22, gave of themselves in this fiercely contested match that bodes ill for others.

Burrows's 48-second goal hung like an albatross round Everton's necks as they tried desperately to overcome the handicap. But Liverpool know a team on a lee shore when they see one and, with Everton failing to close down the elusive Saunders even when the striker drew attention to himself by calling for the ball, it was inevitable that the next goal should be his.

It came after quarter of an hour when Walters's superb cross from the far left found him free of Ebbrell on the right and in position to drive the ball beneath Southall's attempt to smother it.

In the first half Everton saw more of the ball, but it was what Liverpool did with their more limited possession that counted. Cottee's chances went straight to Grobbelaar; Liverpool's went into the net.

At half-time the Everton defender Keown, who has back trouble, needed a pain-killing injection. So did the Everton supporters, for whom matters were to get worse, in spite of Liverpool losing Whelan again with his troublesome knee. Burrows threaded a long ball ahead to the impish Houghton, whose goal was a just reward for his industry.

Everton's more heavy-handed labours eventually brought a consolation goal from Newell. It came from a perfect lob from Beardsley, whose eagerly anticipated return to Anfield had otherwise proved a great disappointment to all, and not least, one suspects, to himself.

Howard Kendall at last deployed him just behind the front two, his best position at Liverpool, but against them it proved ineffectual. For the most part the game passed him by, and more than once he had the ball nicked from his toes by former team-mates, drawing unfavourable comparison with Saunders, the striker Kendall had really wanted.

Late in the match Kendall brought off Cottee, introducing Warzycha on the wing and pushing Beardsley forward. Then Ratcliffe, stalwart reduced to substitute, replaced Keown. Would he now make more changes? The Everton manager's answer implied that so far the present side had not performed badly enough often enough for that.

He described the first goal as 'a nightmare start', but with only one win in five games this could also describe Everton's early season.

'Now we must show this is not a one-off,' said Liverpool's gratified manager Graeme Souness, whose only worry is Whelan's appointment with a knee specialist today. Clearly the Kop can look forward to further treats.

SCORERS: Liverpool: Burrows (1min), Saunders (15), Houghton (62). Everton: Newell (78).

Liverpool: Grobbelaar; Ablett, Burrows, Nicol, Whelan (Marsh, h-t), Tanner, Saunders, Houghton, McManaman, Walters (Rosenthal, 81), McMahan.

Everton: Southall; Harper, Ebbrell, McDonald, Watson, Keown (Ratcliffe, 69), Ward, Beardsley, Newell, Cottee (Warzycha, 59), Sheedy.

Referee: R Lewis (Great Bookham).

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Everton overrun by Liverpool's one-way traffic

LIVERPOOL 3(4-4-2): Grobbelaar; Nicol, Tanner, Ablett, Burrows; Houghton, McMahon, Whelan (sub: Marsh 46min), Walters (sub: Rosenthal 77min); McManaman, Saunders.

EVERTON 1(1-4-3-2): Southall; Harper; McDonald, Watson, Keown (sub: Ratcliffe 70min), Ebbrell; Beardsley, Sheedy, Ward; Cottee (sub: Warzycha 58min), Newell. Goals: Burrows (1min) 1-0; Saunders (13min) 2-0; Houghton (60min) 3-0; Newell (76min) 3-1.

Weather: sunny, warm. Ground: firm.

Referee: R Lewis (Great Bookham).

THIS WAS a Merseyside derby in which Everton never recovered from the trauma of Burrows' first-minute goal. Defensive failings, some doubtful tactical deployments, and Liverpool's greater aggression, were the other factors which led to their total undoing.

Few Merseyside derbies can have begun quite so dramatically: a goal by Liverpool, from the explosive left foot of their left-back, Burrows. At Luton last weekend he hit the angle of post and bar with a ferocious long shot. This time, he would go one better.

Behind the goal was Nicol, playing at right-back, who sent over a wicked, outswinging cross which the Everton defence could only scrape out of their penalty box. Burrows, running in from the left, caught it full pelt, and the ball screamed past Southall into the right corner of the net.

Howard Kendall, the Everton manager, claimed the ball struck Watson on its way. The referee disagreed.

It does not do, in games of such high tension and passion, to relax even after so spectacular and early a goal. Three minutes later a careless ball by Houghton intended for Grobbelaar went instead straight to little Cottee, but his point-blank shot travelled straight, in its turn, into the arms of the doubtless relieved goalkeeper.

It was a swift return for Beardsley to the stadium he left only a few weeks ago, crossing Stanley Park to Goodison. Yesterday he was used behind the front pair, one of whom on this occasion was the lofty Newell. Beaten at Hillsborough last Wednesday, Everton were plainly reluctant to trust their attack any longer to a couple of little men. In defence, meanwhile, they took the path of caution, using Harper to sweep behind a back four.

But Liverpool had the bit between their teeth, and on the quarter-hour, with the complicity of Everton's defence, they scored a second goal. Walters put in a long centre from the left; it should have been Ebbrell's ball, but the left-back got underneath it and turned in despair to see it drop to Saunders. The Welsh international drove it between his fellow Welshman, Southall, and the near post. A low shot, it is true, but Southall has been known to save those and still more difficult ones.

Overrun in midfield, Everton changed their formation during the first half, moving McDonald up and using Harper now as an orthodox right-back. But it was notable that for the first time Walters, ominously for Everton, was at last looking the player Graeme Souness thought he had acquired from Rangers.

He almost made another goal, again with the complicity of the unhappy Ebbrell, with a left-wing run and cross. Ebbrell's positioning was shaky, the ball was allowed to reach Saunders, but this time his shot went just wide.

Prior to this, Cottee again came close to a goal for Everton when he nipped on to a header from Newell and his shot at the near post rebounded from the body of Grobbelaar.

Early in the second half Everton brought on Warzycha, one of their many wingers, and pushed Beardsley up front, but to little avail. Instead Liverpool, who had clipped the post through an earlier free kick by Walters, got their third goal.

Again Burrows was crucially involved. The through-pass with which he released Houghton would have done credit to any midfield general. Houghton's shot, sad to relate, flew between Southall and the post; again.

McManaman, with one of his lovely feathery solos, brought Southall to a save, but finally it was Everton who scored, Beardsley, still clearly a favourite of the Kop, ingeniously sending Newell through to beat Grobbelaar in his own time.

There was time for Rosenthal to come on late and almost to score, Southall tipping over his drive. It had largely been one-way traffic.

BRITISH SOCCER WEEK

Mighty reds!

Liverpool slipped into top gear with a crushing victory in the 145th Merseyside League derby.

This could be the final year of the football league competition and Liverpool wasted no time in showing their neighbours they are determined to win it. Defender David Burrows cracked Liverpool ahead inside 60 seconds and Dean Saunders effectively ended the contest with a 15th minute second goal.

There was no Mark Wright, no John Barnes, no Ian Rush and Ronnie Whelan failed to appear for the second-half. Yet Liverpool still comfortably recorded a fifth successive league derby victory over demoralised Everton.

They were not allowed to reproduce the form which Gunned down Arsenal and were ruthlessly punished for slack defending.

Mark Walters had a free run to the byline for a 15th minute cross missed by John Ebbrell and squeezed it in at the far post by Saunders, who rejected Everton in favour of joining Liverpool from Derby in the summer.

Walters almost increased the Liverpool lead when his curling free-kick rebounded from a post, but the Everton defence were static as Burrows threaded through a pass for Ray Houghton to claim the third goal after 62 minutes.

Hard working Mike Newell was rewarded for his persistence with a 78th minute consolation from a magnificent pass from Peter Beardsley who otherwise had a quiet return to Anfield.

Everton boss Howard Kendall admitted his team suffered nightmares in the 3-1 defeat. Kendall watched his side comprehensively beaten after Burrows had snatched one of the fastest goals in Mersey derby history, timed at just 42 seconds. Said Kendall: "It was a nightmare start for us. We were always having to battle back after that early goal. We had a few chances but everything went straight at their keeper Bruce Grobbelaar. I was very disappointed with the way we conceded the second goal and the third was the worst of all in terms of defending."

Kendall revealed that defender Martin Keown had to be substituted in the second half after having a pain-killing injection in his back during the break.

Happy Liverpool manager Graeme Souness commented: "I'm delighted. The first goal made all the difference but I felt there was always something to watch during the whole 90 minutes. Now we must show this is not a one-off."

Souness' delight was marred by the news that Whelan would have to visit a specialist after a recurrence of the knee trouble which has plagued him.