

Date: 31 January 2012
 Opposition: Wolverhampton Wanderers
 Competition: League

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31 January 2012

THE TIMES

Carroll grows in stature to make his mark

Wolverhampton Wndrs 0

Liverpool 3

Twelve months to the night since the [pounds sterling]35 million transfer that has threatened to dwarf even his immense frame, Andy Carroll broke his barren spell as **Liverpool** concluded a highly satisfactory week by following cup heroics with solid league points.

The sometime England striker scored his first Barclays Premier League goal since October, and only his fifth in the league in 12 frustrating months, just before Luis Suarez returns to the fray after his eight-game suspension.

Having beaten Manchester City seven days ago to reach the Carling Cup final and the last 16 of the FA Cup after defeating Manchester United on Saturday, this resounding victory lifted them into fifth place.

Carroll converted a cross from Charlie Adam seven minutes into the second half to set **Liverpool** on the way to what turned into a second-half rout.

Wolverhampton Wanderers, without a win in 11 games, remain rooted in the relegation zone with Steve Morgan, their chairman and a **Liverpool** supporter, looking frustrated in the extreme as he took an early departure from the Molineux directors' box.

The absence of Steven Gerrard raised hopes as well as eyebrows among the Wolves' fans but, as Kenny Dalglish had said on Monday, the **Liverpool** captain had been pushed "into overload" having started the past six games after his return from an ankle infection.

Liverpool could have been ahead inside three minutes, Dirk Kuyt almost walking the ball into the Wolves net, after Carroll had flicked on a Craig Bellamy cross only to run out of room. The home crowd sang Wayne Hennessey's name as the Wolves goalkeeper made his way off at half-time and if it had not been for his safe hands, **Liverpool** would surely have been ahead.

Hennessey saved with his feet when Daniel Agger looked set to reprise the headed goal that he scored against United on Saturday, and dived full length to clutch a 25-yard free kick by Bellamy.

When he was beaten, Bellamy, outpacing Kevin Foley as he raced on to an astute through pass from Jordan Henderson, toe-poked the ball just wide. In the absence of Karl Henry, starting a three-match suspension after his dismissal against Aston Villa last Saturday, **Liverpool** were able to maraud through the heart of midfield. Indeed, when Adam picked up a throw-out from Jose-Manuel Reina outside his penalty area, he was granted the freedom to run all the way to the edge of the Wolves' box before failing to catch his shot properly.

But with Emmanuel Frimpong, on loan from Arsenal, impressively assured on the ball and Michael Kightly penetrative from the right wing, Wolves threatened sporadically. When those two combined for Kightly to arch a diagonal low cross into the area, David Edwards looked set to score but he could not find the power to convert.

Liverpool looked to have made it theirs early in the second half and it was Carroll who gave them the lead. The goal was sourced from a Wolves attack and it was Adam who was granted space and time to weave his magic, his wonderful cross arced round the Wolves defence for Carroll to get in ahead of Eggert Jonsson and score only his third league goal of the season.

Just after the hour mark, it was game over. Bellamy received the ball from Jay Spearing wide and deep on the left. There appeared to be no danger but, as the Wolves defence backed off, the Wales striker kept running forward and shot low towards the far post from the edge of the area only for Hennessey to fumble the ball and deepen Wolves' gloom.

Kuyt, last season's top scorer, wrapped up the victory with his first league goal of this campaign. Again **Liverpool** scored by countering from a Wolves attack.

Released by a brilliant crossfield pass from Jose Enrique, Kuyt passed inside to Adam who dribbled through before laying off the ball for the Holland forward to fire between Hennessey's legs.

Wolves fans jeered ironically when Sylvan Ebanks-Blake did fire a shot against a post four minutes from time. Mick McCarthy's side need a result and soon. Wolverhampton Wanderers (4-2-3-1): W Hennessey - K Foley, R Johnson, C Berra, S Ward - E Frimpong (N Milijas, 84min), E Jonsson (sub: S Ebanks-Blake, 61) - M Kightly (sub: S Hunt, 61), D Edwards, M Jarvis - S Fletcher. Substitutes not used: D De Vries, G Elokobi, R Stearman, K Doyle. Booked: Edwards.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1): J M Reina - G Johnson, M Skrtel, D Agger (sub: J Carragher, 81), J Enrique - J Spearing, C Adam (sub: J Shelvey, 81) - D Kuyt (F Aurelio, 90), J Henderson, C Bellamy - A Carroll. Substitutes not used: A Doni, S Coates, M Kelly, S Downing. Booked: Agger, Adam, Bellamy.

Referee: A Taylor.

the guardian

Andy Carroll scores for Liverpool to add to Wolves' relegation woes

This was not the first occasion in this campaign when the boos have rung out from [Wolverhampton Wanderers](#) fans at Molineux but the intensity of the dissatisfaction seems greater now. With Steven Gerrard rested, this was not **Liverpool's** strongest lineup yet they coasted to a win. They were 3-0 ahead by the 78th minute when Dirk Kuyt took the last goal with an excellent drive from an angle on the right.

Credit is due the visitors, who are Carling Cup finalists, conquerors of Manchester United in the FA Cup and a club with some prospect of a return to the Champions League. They stand fifth and are just four points behind Chelsea. There is an authority to Kenny Dalglish's team.

Encouraging signs are abundant and Luis Suárez will be available now his eight-match ban is completed. Wolves have little to hearten them and, with the transfer window shut, some will argue that the only other change that can be made is the removal of the manager, Mick McCarthy.

A shot against the post by the Wolves substitute Sylvan Ebanks-Blake got the audience's attention but Liverpool had notched all their goals by then. The hosts, despite being 19th, are yet to be cut adrift. That brings some comfort but a resurgence will have to be conjured up shortly.

Liverpool, by contrast, may have to check expectations and Dalglish is just the person for that assignment. Following this match, he was quick to point to Liverpool's recent defeat by Bolton Wanderers. He had just one reservation about the commanding display by Craig Bellamy here, wishing the forward were "23 instead of 32".

The manager lauded the attacker, saying: "He's preparing himself and knows what to do for the best within the framework of the team. When he gets the ball you know something is going to happen. He's been fantastic for us."

The home support will have seen only the inadequacies of Wolves. "Watching that second half was unacceptable," said McCarthy. "The lads are hurting as well. We've been beaten by a considerably better side who've just beaten Manchester City and Manchester United. After the last game there were rumours I wasn't going to be here. I can't imagine there being any less this time."

The manager seemed to fault himself for playing an attacking formation which was close to 4-4-2. It left the side fragile without introducing real verve. Wolves have notched a mere 25 goals in 23 [Premier League](#) games.

Bellamy, a substitute in the FA Cup win over United, relished this start. The remainder of the side were initially in the same mood, with Kuyt firing off target from a knockdown in the third minute by the improving and confident Andy Carroll.

The pressure continued, with the Wolves goalkeeper, Wayne Hennessey, alert when blocking Daniel Agger's header with a foot in the 25th minute. Molineux has been no stronghold of late and the side have not won anywhere since overcoming Sunderland at home on 4 December.

The ominous tone was no illusion. With 53 minutes gone Eggert Jonsson lost possession and Liverpool pounced. Carroll put his side ahead, converting Adam's low ball from the left. The second goal came eight minutes later, with Bellamy firing an angled shot from the left into the far corner. Liverpool's enjoyment of this fixture seldom faltered.

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31 January 2012

The Mail

Carroll celebrates anniversary with opener in Reds victory
Andy Carroll has waited three long months to find the net in the Barclays Premier League. What a shame for him that the fixtures hadn't sent Liverpool to Molineux before now.

They won at a canter on pretty much the perfect evening for boss Kenny Dalglish. But for Carroll, the length of that barren spell, the imminent return of Luis Suarez and the anniversary of his move from Newcastle must have been weighing heavily. So what a time for him to pitch up in these parts again. It is, after all, an area he must regard with a degree of fondness.

It was eight miles away at The Hawthorns where Carroll last registered a successful strike. That was back in October. And thanks to one of many examples of compliant defending from the hosts, the 23-year-old darkened an already black mood in the Black Country.

Wolverhampton: Hennessey, Foley, Berra, Johnson, Ward, Kightly (Hunt 62), Frimpong (Milijias 84), Jonsson (Ebanks-Blake 62), Jarvis, Edwards, Fletcher. Subs not used: De Vries, Elokobi, Stearman, Doyle.

Booked: Edwards.

Liverpool: Reina, Johnson, Agger (Carragher 81), Skrtel, Jose Enrique, Henderson, Spearing, Adam (Shelvey 81), Bellamy, Kuyt (Aurelio 90), Carroll.

Subs not used: Doni, Coates, Downing, Kelly.

Booked: Adam, Bellamy, Agger.

Goals: Carroll 52, Bellamy 61, Kuyt 78.

Attendance: 27,447

Referee: Anthony Taylor (Cheshire).

Liverpool had been struggling to find a way past goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey. A series of first-half chances had been and gone. But Craig Bellamy's quick throw-in to Charlie Adam eight minutes into the second half ended with the Scot firing a cross to the far post.

Wolves' debutant Eggert Jonsson was not alert to the danger and Carroll stole in front of his man to poke into the net and celebrate his first goal in 12 games. Further strikes from Bellamy and Dirk Kuyt followed.

It was the ideal fixture for Carroll to play after two high-intensity cup clashes. Dalglish, brought up on the power of the collective, is not naturally given to praising the individual. But he couldn't help himself.

'I'm delighted with everyone who played,' said the Liverpool manager, who rested his captain Steven Gerrard. 'It was great for Andy to score a goal. Craig scored a fantastic goal, as did Dirk. There's no "I" in team. But we're delighted for him.' Wolves had already given one example of poor defending. But eight minutes after Carroll's strike they served up an even worse one.

Bellamy, in acres of space on the left, weighed up his options and decided that route one was best. So he set off and no-one wearing an old gold shirt bothered to close him down.

Before the home rearguard recognised the danger, the Wales forward sidefooted into the bottom corner.

Hennessey could have done better, but it was difficult to be too harsh on Wolves' keeper whose efforts had served to keep the score down.

Twelve minutes from time, Adam waltzed through the heart of the Wolves defence and slipped a pass to Kuyt who finished from an acute angle. It was almost too much for Wolves owner Steve Morgan, a lifelong Red, to stomach. Since acquiring the club from Sir Jack Hayward for £10 five years ago, the Merseysider has done everything to take Wolves to his heart — bar acquiring a Black Country twang.

The hosts were in the game at the interval — just. That fact was acknowledged by the South Bank who chanted Hennessey's name. But those three examples of poor defending ended with Liverpool cantering to victory.

Wolves have still managed only two victories in 21 matches. Rumours swept around cyberspace following a close-run derby defeat by Aston Villa 10 days ago that McCarthy's time might be up.

Chants of 'What a load of rubbish' rang down from the stands at the final whistle, and it was difficult for the home manager to take anything positive from this match.

'In the first half, I didn't see that second half coming, that's for sure,' McCarthy said. 'Until they scored, I thought we were well in it. But I fully understand the fans' response after watching that second half. It was as unacceptable to me as it was for everyone else.

'But it's not as if those lads have gone out there and not tried. We have been beaten by a considerably better side who have just beaten Manchester City and Manchester United. And if you give them goals, it's hard work.

'I understand people's reaction. We have to do better. We have no mugs in the place. None of us want to be seen to be playing like that.'

All of a sudden, the storm clouds seem to be lifting around Anfield. They have a place in the Carling Cup final, an FA Cup victory over United and a home tie in the fifth round. This win left them four points behind fourth-placed Chelsea.

And Suarez can return following a healthy — though unwanted — rest. Dalglish said: 'Luis is back and Steven has had a rest, too. That will be another couple of nights I won't get much sleep trying to pick a team for Tottenham on Monday. 'But let's not get ahead of ourselves. If you had asked me what I thought after Bolton, I might have said something different.'

The Daily Telegraph

Carroll celebrates his anniversary as McCarthy feels heat
Wolverhampton 0

Att: 27,447

Liverpool 3

Carroll 52, Bellamy 61, Kuyt 78

Exactly a year to the day since his arrival at Anfield, Andy Carroll gave Liverpool a much-needed reminder of exactly why they signed him.

Having seen off both Manchester clubs in the cups, this has been a dreamy seven days for Kenny Dalglish's team, who recorded their first league win in 2012 and, in the process, gave their Champions League aspirations a badly-needed boost.

It was Carroll's goal, however, that provided the major talking point as he capped a perfect night for his side by scoring only his third league goal of the campaign.

The last also came in the Black Country at West Bromwich Albion in October. Last night's strike was only his seventh since his January deadline-day [pounds sterling]35million move from Newcastle United.

It was, however, a miserable night for Wolves, who were jeered by their supporters and have now gone 11 matches without a win in all competitions.

They remain rooted in the bottom three, leaving manager Mick McCarthy under increasing pressure.

Rested after starting the previous six games, Steven Gerrard was the most notable omission from a Liverpoolside which showed five changes from Saturday's FA Cup triumph.

Dirk Kuyt, their match-winner that day, could and should have picked up where he left off against Manchester United when he spurned a presentable opportunity within four minutes. Craig Bellamy's inviting left-wing cross was flicked on by Carroll towards the Dutchman, lurking inside the six-yard box and with a clear sight of goal at the back post. His first touch was laboured, however, and despite eventually firing into the net, it did not stand as the ball had already squirted out of play.

Having already threatened once with a header, Wolves midfielder Dave Edwards wasted a good chance when he could only hook Kevin Foley's cross straight at Pepe Reina.

Bellamy has been Liverpool's most reliable marksman in the league of late and once again he looked their most likely goal threat.

First he latched onto Jordan Henderson's wonderful threaded pass yet only to stab wide.

A long-range strike soon afterwards fully extended Wayne Hennessey, but the goalkeeper pulled off an even better save in the 24th minute when he kept out Daniel Agger's header with his feet following Bellamy's corner.

The former Manchester City player was at the heart of everything Liverpool created. Even when they furiously protested for a penalty in vain when Emmanuel Frimpong nudged Charlie Adam inside the box, it was Bellamy who had set up the chance.

Wolves sprung into action shortly before the break, though, as they offered a timely reminder of their capabilities. Michael Kightly and Steven Fletcher played a neat one-two before the winger unleashed a stinging low shot which veered just wide. The significance of the near-miss became evident within seven minutes of the interval. Jose Enrique's exquisite volleyed pass from one box towards the other set Liverpool on the counter yet Christophe Berra, to his credit, managed to keep up with Bellamy in the pace race and clear for a throw-in. Danger averted? Not by any means. Bellamy found Adam and his pinpoint delivery was converted by Carroll at the back post, steering a shot low into the left corner.

The shortcomings of his marker Eggert Jonsson, making his first Premier League start, were painfully apparent.

Nine minutes later it was two. Jay Spearing, the midfielder back from injury, fed Bellamy and, in the absence of enforcer Karl Henry, Wolves allowed Bellamy the freedom to stride towards the edge of the area and pick his spot inside the right corner. Hennessey got a hand to it, yet he could not prevent it trickling agonisingly beyond him.

Liverpool were rampant. Kuyt wrapped up the points when he took advantage of more slack defending in the 78th minute, playing a one-two with Adam before slotting home.

Wolves knew their luck was out when substitute Sylvan Ebanks' thunderbolt cannoned off the post, yet even if it had gone it would have provided scant consolation.

Wolves (4-4-1-1): Hennessey; Foley, Johnson, Berra, Ward; Kightly (Hunt 62), Jonsson (Ebanks-Blake 62), Frimpong (Milijias 84), Jarvis; Edwards; Fletcher. Subs: De Vries, Elokobi, Stearman, Doyle. Booked: Edwards.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1): Reina, Johnson, Skrtel, Agger (Carragher 81), Enrique; Spearing, Adam (Shelvey 81); Kuyt (Aurelio 90), Henderson, Bellamy; Carroll. Subs: Doni, Coates, Kelly, Downing. Booked: Adam, Bellamy, Agger.

Referee: A Taylor (Cheshire).

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THE INDEPENDENT

Carroll marks transfer anniversary in style

After 12 months of personal under-achievement, a revitalised Andy Carroll set **Liverpool** on their way to their first Premier League victory of 2012 against a Wolves team who folded once behind. Craig Bellamy and Dirk Kuyt added to Carroll's fifth goal of the campaign, and seventh since he arrived at Anfield, steering the Carling Cup finalists into fifth spot and leaving the relegation-threatened hosts without a win in 11 games.

Exactly a year earlier, **Liverpool** had stunned their supporters - and Newcastle's - by splashing [pounds sterling]35m on deadline day to make Carroll the most expensive British footballer ever. His first touch, an embarrassing piece of control, was an inauspicious way to mark the anniversary, although within minutes he deftly headed Bellamy's cross into the path of Kuyt.

The same combination had accounted for Manchester United in the FA Cup, but this time the Dutchman's touch let him down and he overran the ball while attempting to round Wayne Hennessey. Even without Steven Gerrard, who was rested after his exertions since returning, **Liverpool** dominated the early possession. Wolves' lack of confidence was evident in their tentative build-up and hurried clearances, but they did fashion a scoring opportunity in the 12th minute: David Edwards met a low cross by Michael Kightly with a connection firm enough to bring a diving save from Pepe Reina.

Kenny Dalglish had initially sought to have the fixture put back until tonight, his Wolves counterpart Mick McCarthy meeting the request with a brusque "no chance". If the **Liverpool** manager was concerned that his players would be fatigued after two cup confrontations with the Manchester clubs in swift succession during the previous week, there were no obvious signs as they continued to look the more likely scorers. From a corner by Bellamy, Daniel Agger powered in a close-range header, which Hennessey saved with an outstretched foot.

Kightly, back on the right of McCarthy's midfield after a long struggle with injury, saw a lot of the ball, Wolves apparently believing he might have the beating of Jose Enrique. After forcing a corner off the former Newcastle defender, his delivery saw Steven Fletcher rise above his markers to send a header narrowly over the bar.

In an open game, **Liverpool** had a plausible penalty appeal rejected after Charlie Adam tumbled under Emmanuel Frimpong's challenge; Adam theatrically held his hands to his head in a display of disbelief. However, when the visitors did find the target, from Bellamy's 25-yard free-kick, Hennessey made a flying save.

Hennessey's heroics were central to Wolves' hopes of taking something from the match. Following another flick-on by Carroll early in the second half, the Wales keeper rushed out of his area to make a sliding tackle on Kuyt, but he was helpless as **Liverpool** stole ahead in the 52nd minute. The threat seemed negligible when Bellamy took a throw-in on **Liverpool**'s left. Adam was able to take two touches and consider his options before crossing into Wolves' six-yard box; Carroll stole ahead of Roger Johnson to sidefoot an overdue goal.

Nine minutes later **Liverpool** doubled their lead, and again Wolves' defending was woeful, with even Hennessey culpable. Bellamy seized on the ball just inside the home half and ran, unopposed, before reaching the area. His low shot was not the most ferocious, but for once his compatriot's handling was poor and the ball trickled in for Bellamy's ninth goal of the season.

With 12 minutes remaining **Liverpool** put the outcome beyond any lingering doubt. A move that started with Reina culminated in a pass from Adam, which gave Kuyt the chance to beat Hennessey with an angled shot.

MATCH FACTS

Substitutes: Wolves Hunt 5 (Kightly 62), Ebanks-Blake 5 (Jonsson, 62), Milijas (Frimpong, 84). **Liverpool** Carragher (Agger, 81), Shelvey (Adam, 81), Aurelio (Kuyt, 90).

Booked: Wolves Edwards. **Liverpool** Adam, Bellamy, Agger.

Man of the match Bellamy. Match rating 7/10.

Possession: Wolves 42% **Liverpool** 58%.

Attempts on target: Wolves 1 **Liverpool** 14.

Referee A Taylor (Cheshire). Attendance 27,447.

DAILY MIRROR

THAT'S ANDY.. REDS CASH IN; Carroll puts torrid year behind him as Liverpool pile pressure on Wolves

WOLVES 0

WOLVES: Hennessey 6, Foley 5, Johnson 5, Berra 4, Ward 5, Kightly 6 (Hunt 62, 6), Jonsson 5 (Ebanks-Blake 62, 6), Frimpong 6 (Milijas 84), Edwards 6, Jarvis 5, Fletcher 6.

REFEREE: Anthony Taylor

LIVERPOOL 3

LIVERPOOL: Reina 7, Johnson 6, Skrtel 6, Agger 7 (Carragher 81), Enrique 7, Spearing 7, Adam 7 (Shelvey 81), Henderson 7, Kuyt 7 (Aurelio 89), Bellamy 9, Carroll 7. Goals: Carroll 52, Bellamy 61, Kuyt 78 ATT: 27,447

ANDY CARROLL gave Liverpool a rare return on their pounds 35million investment on the anniversary of his move to Anfield.

Carroll managed to score only his fifth Premier League goal since his big-money transfer from Newcastle on deadline day last January and it was his first since October 29.

Hardly value for money if you call it pounds 7m per goal, but he made a nuisance of himself and left sorry Wolves even deeper entrenched in the relegation zone. Carroll still looks a world away from being the saviour he was signed to be and was totally overshadowed by man-of-the-match Craig Bellamy. The Welsh firebrand was a free transfer last summer, yet you would never have guessed which striker was the expensive one last night.

Bellamy ran Wolves ragged, capped his brilliant display with a goal and left Carroll firmly in his shadow. But it showed good timing by Carroll to get on the scoresheet after a proposed swap with Carlos Tevez fell through.

Even with Tevez on strike you can understand why Manchester City did not fancy a deal because of Carroll's wretched run, yet last night will have taken some of the pressure off his shoulders.

Liverpool look a team transformed after their cup victories over both Manchester clubs and were even able to rest their inspirational captain Steven Gerrard.

That says much about Wolves, who were swept aside in the second half - which will inevitably put their boss Mick McCarthy's future back in the spotlight.

It got ugly after Dirk Kuyt's late goal compounded the agony and humiliatingly the home fans turned boos to sarcastic chants of "shoot" every time a Wolves player got the ball after substitute Sylvan Ebanks-Blake hit the post from long range. It was painful for McCarthy, who will do well to survive such discontent.

Liverpool were always in charge and Bellamy ran the show. Bellamy has history with Wolves after being the victim of a Kevin Muscat horror tackle at Wolves in the past.

He does not need much firing up and went close early on before turning provider as his corner found Daniel Agger and the Danish defender's closerange header was saved brilliantly by keeper Wayne Hennessey with his legs.

But Bellamy showed his ugly side as he was booked in the 25th minute for a reckless foul on Steven Fletcher.

Wolves rarely threatened but went desperately close just before the break when Fletcher's lay-off found Michael Kightly and the winger's low 20-yard shot flew just wide of the post.

But Wolves succumbed to Liverpool's heavy pressure seven minutes after the restart as Carroll punished some slack defending.

Adam's cross from the left exposed Wolves, Eggert Jonsson lost Carroll at the back post and the giant Geordie swept home from close range.

Liverpool deserved to be ahead and their second goal after 61 minutes was a fair reflection of their dominance and rich reward for Bellamy's performance.

It run Bellamy collected the ball from deep, was allowed to run into the penalty area then hit a low right-foot shot which Hennessey got a hand to and should have saved but let it trickle into the far corner.

It was the Welshman's sixth goal in seven Premier League games.

Unsurprisingly, the mood turned ugly among the Wolves faithful and it was not helped when Liverpool scored a third in the 78th minute with a stinging counter attack finished ruthlessly by Kuyt.

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31 January 2012



Andy Carroll on song for Liverpool in Wolves mauling FORGET the glitz and glamour of recent Cup clashes, this was the true litmus test of Liverpool FC's revival. Kenny Dalglish's side have consistently raised their game for the big occasions this season. Wins over Chelsea, Arsenal, Manchester City and Manchester United are testament to that. However, when it has come to a scrap against the Premier League's lesser lights the Reds have regularly been found wanting. Not last night. On a bitterly cold evening in the Black Country, Liverpool proved they have the stomach for a fight.

Momentum generated by a memorable Cup double was maintained in impressive fashion as Dalglish's men reignited their push for Champions League qualification. Suddenly, that wretched defeat at Bolton seems like a distant memory. The desire and application Dalglish had demanded to see during that inquest in the depths of the Reebok was there for all to see at Molineux. This was a very different type of challenge to facing City or United but it was one the Reds passed with flying colours. Dalglish didn't add to his squad on transfer deadline day because he steadfastly believes he already possesses the talent needed to achieve Liverpool's targets between now and May. An emphatic victory suggests the manager's confidence isn't misplaced. Having opted to give skipper Steven Gerrard the night off after his heroics of recent weeks, Dalglish saw others step up to the plate.

Andy Carroll marked the first anniversary of his arrival at Anfield in style by notching his first Premier League goal since October. The Reds' £35million man built on his efforts against Manchester United with another eye-catching display. Suddenly, that famous No 9 shirt looks at home on his broad shoulders. Craig Bellamy maintained his hot streak by grabbing his ninth of the season and Dirk Kuyt ended his eight-month wait to bring up a half century of league goals for the club. With that trio shining bright and Luis Suarez available to return against Tottenham next Monday night having completing his eight-match ban, hope springs eternal in the race for the top four.

It was a night that showcased Liverpool's strength in depth. With this being the eighth game of a gruelling January, Dalglish unsurprisingly shuffled his pack. The return of Glen Johnson, Jay Spearing, Charlie Adam, Kuyt and Bellamy provided fresh legs and helped the visitors dominate throughout. Bellamy gave right-back Kevin Foley a torrid time and his pinpoint delivery from the left should have led to a breakthrough inside three minutes.

Carroll turned the cross into Kuyt's path but Saturday's FA Cup hero couldn't take advantage. The ball got stuck beneath his feet and after Wayne Hennessey blocked his initial effort, the Dutchman failed to tuck away the rebound. Wolves central midfield duo of Emmanuel Frimpong and new signing Hearts Eggert Jonsson hadn't started a game alongside each other and it showed. They were emphatically outshone by Spearing who impressed on his comeback after four games out with a hamstring injury.

The Academy graduate showed why Dalglish had no need to sign a holding midfielder while Lucas Leiva continues his rehabilitation from knee surgery. With Spearing and the much improved Adam sitting deep and kick-starting the attacks, Jordan Henderson had a licence to get forward and caused the hosts plenty of problems. There was a brief scare when David Edwards turned Michael Kightly's cross goalwards but Pepe Reina saved comfortably. Bellamy was a constant menace and a defence splitting pass from Henderson sent him scampering through. His pace left Roger Johnson trailing but he failed to hit the target. Wolves, who were without a win in 10 games in all competitions, looked vulnerable every time the Reds ventured forward but not the first time this season the Reds found themselves up against an inspired keeper. Midway through the half Daniel Agger appeared destined to head home Bellamy's inviting corner. However, Hennessey stuck out a leg and somehow kept it out. Adam dragged a shot wide after a brisk counter-attack and the Scot was left cursing referee Anthony Taylor soon after. As the midfielder prepared to latch on to Bellamy's pull-back he was unceremoniously bundled to the ground by Frimpong but appeals for a penalty were waved away.

Bellamy's curling 25-yard free-kick was destined for the top corner before Hennessey intervened and the Welshman was thwarted by the shot-stopper once again soon after. At the other end former Reds season ticket holder Steven Fletcher nodded on to the roof of the net and Kightly fired just wide but there were few scares for Reina. The biggest threat facing the Spaniard last night the frostbite. Just before the interval Adam picked out Carroll at the back post but his volley was blocked by Stephen Ward. In the second half Liverpool stepped up a gear and Mick McCarthy's side were blown away.

The pressure was constant and in the 52nd minute the goal the Reds deserved finally arrived. Adam latched on to Bellamy's throw and swung an inviting ball across the face of goal. Carroll charged to meet it and got there before Jonsson to steer a shot into the corner. It was a quality finish and a sign of Carroll's growing confidence. As the home fans turned on them, Wolves wilted and nine minutes later the points were wrapped up. Bellamy cut inside off the left flank and as the hosts retreated he just kept on going.

With no challenge forthcoming, he needed no second invitation and dispatched a clinical right footer from the edge of the box which slipped through Hennessey's grasp. Liverpool showed no mercy and briefly a rout looked to be on the cards. Adam volleyed over, Agger nodded wide from Skrtel's header and Kuyt's deflected strike was tipped over by Hennessey. The Reds grabbed a third 12 minutes from time. Jose Enrique kick-started a stunning counter-attack with a sweeping crossfield pass to Kuyt. The Dutchman found Adam who laid it back into his path and Kuyt ruthlessly drilled home from a tight angle. It was his first league strike for the Reds since last May.

Jamie Carragher came off the bench to move third in the club's all-time league appearance list, overtaking Emylyn Hughes' 474. Only Ian Callaghan (640) and Billy Liddell (492) have played more. Sylvan Ebanks-Blake struck the woodwork late on but there was no consolation for a hopelessly outclassed Wolves side. 'What a load of rubbish' chanted the home fans. From the away end there were no complaints.

Wolves: Hennessey, Foley, Berra, Johnson, Ward, Kightly (Hunt 62), Frimpong (Milijas 84), Jonsson (Ebanks-Blake 62), Jarvis, Edwards, Fletcher. Not used: De Vries, Elokobi, Stearman, Doyle.

Liverpool: Reina, Johnson, Skrtel, Agger (Carragher 80), Enrique, Spearing, Adam (Shelvey 80), Kuyt (Aurelio 89), Henderson, Bellamy, Carroll. Not used: Doni, Coates, Downing, Kelly.

Referee: Anthony Taylor (Cheshire)

Attendance: 27, 447 Bookings: Adam, Bellamy, Agger, Edwards.

Goals: Carroll 52, Bellamy 59, Kuyt 78.



Andy Carroll marked his first anniversary as a Liverpool player by netting the opening goal as Kenny Dalglish's side cruised to victory over relegation-threatened Wolves at Molineux. Carroll converted his first Barclays Premier League goal since October 29 early in the second half and then Craig Bellamy and Dirk Kuyt added to Wolves' misery. Only a fine display by Wolves keeper Wayne Hennessey prevented the Reds from at least doubling their final tally and the home fans chanted "what a load of rubbish" at the final whistle.

Victory completed a memorable seven days for Liverpool after their Carling Cup and FA Cup triumphs over the two Manchester clubs. But Wolves have now gone nine league games without a win and collected just four points in that spell to increase the pressure on manager Mick McCarthy. Liverpool were the first to threaten and almost went ahead after two minutes.

Carroll got a touch onto a cross from Bellamy and flicked it on to Kuyt inside the six yard box. But his control let him down and his eventual shot hit the outside of a post. Wolves threatened for the first time when Michael Kightly played in Dave Edwards but he failed to make a full contact on his shot on the turn and Jose Reina was able to save. Charlie Adam became the first player to be yellow carded after 13 minutes for chopping down Matt Jarvis in full flight.

Hennessey was relieved when Bellamy poked the ball past the post after getting in behind the Wolves defence. Bellamy looked full of purpose and forced Hennessey to save low to his right with a low, dipping drive.

Hennessey made a fine save to keep out a Daniel Agger header with his right foot from an inswinging Bellamy corner. Then Adam screwed a shot wide after being allowed to advance unmarked to the edge of the Wolves box.

Bellamy was yellow carded after 27 minutes for slicing down Steven Fletcher on the touchline when in full flight. Wolves were creating chances of their own and Fletcher was only just too high with a header from a Kightly corner.

Hennessey again distinguished himself with a fine save away to his right to deal with Bellamy's curling 25 yard free-kick. Bellamy was a constant threat and was again denied by Hennessey with a low save at his near post.

Wolves retaliated and Kightly was inches wide with a low 20-yard effort after linking up well with Fletcher. Hennessey showed great awareness in racing 20 yards out of his goal to clear from the feet of Kuyt after he had been found in space by Carroll. But after 52 minutes Carroll put the Reds in front with his fifth goal of the campaign - and third in the Premier League.

Bellamy's throw found Adam in space and he had time to send over a cross from the left flank. Carroll timed his run perfectly to turn it past Hennessey. Liverpool were now in total command and nine minutes later Bellamy doubled their lead with his ninth goal of the campaign.

He was allowed to run unopposed towards the Wolves box before shooting but Hennessey would have been disappointed not to get a firmer hand on his shot which ended up in the corner of the net. Wolves were in disarray and Agger headed wide from close range after Martin Skrtel had headed the ball into the danger area. Agger was yellow carded for a challenge on Fletcher and Edwards was booked for a foul on Glen Johnson.

Liverpool were in complete command and Hennessey tipped over a deflected drive from Kuyt. But after 78 minutes it came as no surprise when Kuyt made it 3-0 from a narrow angle with Adam the creator.

Carroll looked full of confidence after his goal and headed just wide from a Bellamy corner. At least Wolves finished brightly and substitute Sylvan Ebanks-Blake crashed a 35-yard drive against the post.