

Date: 21 March 2012
 Opposition: Queens Park Rangers
 Competition: League

Guardian	Mirror	Echo
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21 March 2012

THE  **TIMES**

the guardian

Mackie sets seal on Rangers' show of fighting spirit
 This was the sort of feat that fuels successful relegation fights. Queen Park Rangers were deservedly two goals down with time ticking away yet stormed back to plunder their first win in two months. It was a display of unquenchable spirit above all else and propelled Mark Hughes's team out of the bottom three. Liverpool, by contrast, surrendered any lingering hopes of finishing in the Champions League places with a curiously meek collapse. Jose Enrique's inexplicable tumble that allowed Jamie Mackie in for the stoppage-time winning goal summed up the visitors' haplessness in the last quarter of a contest that they had mostly dominated.

This was the first labour of QPR's Herculean 10-task run-in, with clashes against the top four among those looming after the duel with Kenny Dalglish's team. Hughes was able to field his strongest line-up as he sought to arrest a six-match winless streak, with his new signing Samba Diakite returning to the team after serving the suspension he incurred for getting sent off in his debut against Fulham last month. That was just one of a litany of blunders that helped account for QPR's lowly position in the table.

It initially look like more errors would undo Rangers here, as in the second minute Joey Barton wasted a promising attacking free-kick for the home side and enabled Jay Spearing to launch an immediate counter-offensive. A slip by Nedum Onuaha helped clear Luis Suarez's path to goal but Liverpool fans were again left to lament the striker's shabby finishing skills as he shot straight at Paddy Kenny, who got up quickly to smother the rebound.

Liverpool did not begin like a side who believed a top-four finish was beyond them and continued to apply fierce pressure. Martin Skrtel went close with a header from a corner in the seventh minute and two minutes later another corner led to Anton Ferdinand having to scoop a Dirk Kuyt shot off the line. QPR were like rabbits' in the visitors' headlights.

Not until the 15th minute did they muster a shot, and that was a token long-range effort by Djibril Cisse that rolled wide. To their credit, however, QPR gradually got to grips with the triumvirate of Steven Gerrard, Charlie Adam and Spearing in central midfield. The visitors found it increasingly hard to open the hosts up and QPR began to exert pressure of their own. They almost took the lead in freakish fashion on the half-hour, when Enrique perpetrated his starting mistake of the evening and nearly walloped an Armand Traore cross into his own goal. It whizzed just wide, as did a thunderous 25-yard drive from Cisse two minutes later.

Liverpool had to rejig their defence when Martin Kelly departed injured, Jamie Carragher switching to right-back to accommodate the substitute Sebastian Coates in the centre. Liverpool's response to Rangers' relative resurgence was strangely passive. They finished the first period entrenched in their own box. Dalglish sought to reintroduce some dynamism to his midfield by replacing Adam with Jordan Henderson at half-time and he also pushed Kuyt closer to Suarez up front. Liverpool were soon in the ascendancy again and QPR had to defend frantically. They did so successfully until the 54th minute, when Coates showed that there was at least one Uruguayan on the pitch who could finish emphatically: after Bobby Zamora cleared a Stewart Downing shot off the line, the ball rebounded to the centre-half who returned it into the net with an acrobatic volley from 16 yards.

"That was a once-in-the-lifetime strike from a 6ft 4in centre-back," marvelled Hughes. While that technique was immaculate, some of QPR biggest names were offering little. Adel Taarabt did not unfurl his tricks until late on and Joey Barton's display was so inconsequential that he was jeered off when being replaced by Mackie on 62 minutes.

Downing would have doubled Liverpool's lead in the 71st minute if not for a fine save by Kenny but one minute later the goalkeeper's best efforts were not enough. Suarez conjured space on the left of the box and his cross-shot bounced off the post and out to Downing, who fired a shot that Kenny beat into the path of Kuyt, who poked the ball in from five yards.

Then began a QPR fightback that both Hughes and Dalglish admitted they did not see coming. Shaun Derry landed the first blow with a fine header from a Taarabt corner in the 77th minute before Cisse met a splendid Taye Taiwo delivery from the left with an equally fine header to draw the teams level in the 84th.

Now Liverpool were reeling and they could not even hold out for a point, Enrique's slip presenting Mackie with the chance to fire into the net from 10 yards and ignite wild celebrations among home fans who suddenly believe they may be watching Premier League matches again next season.

QPR 4-4-2

Kenny; Young, Ferdinand, Onouha, Traore (Taiwo, 46); Barton (Mackie, 62), Diakite, Derry, Taarabt; Zamora, Cisse (Buzsaky, 88).

Subs not used Cerny, Gabbidon, Bothroyd, Wright-Phillips.

Liverpool 4-4-2

Reina; Kelly (Coates, 34), Skrtel, Carragher, Jose Enrique; Downing, Spearing, Adam (Henderson, 46), Gerrard; Kuyt, Suarez (Carroll, 82).

Subs not used Doni, Aurelio, Shelvey, Flanagan

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21 March 2012

The Mail

QPR licensed to kill Reds' hopes

QPR 3 Liverpool Liverpool 2 JAMES BOND was at Loftus Road last night to see Kenny Dalglish enter his own Quantum of Solace as Liverpool conspired to throw away a two-goal lead with 13 minutes to play.

Sebastian Coates scored a magnificent acrobatic volley to give Liverpool the lead against Queens Park Rangers and it was all in front of Mr 007 -- actor Daniel Craig. Dirk Kuyt added a second but QPR had a view to kill the Reds' European hopes as Shaun Derry pulled one back, Djibril Cisse headed home and Mackie stole the win for the home side in injury-time. Three points was a must for both teams last night, but for differing reasons. QPR had gone two months without a Premier League victory, leaving them staring relegation in the face.

On Monday, Mark Hughes insisted he remains confident his side can avoid the drop, despite their dreadful run of two points from a possible 18.

But their end-of-season run-in suggests otherwise. Rangers still have to face Arsenal, Manchester United, Tottenham, Chelsea and Manchester City -- hardly a sequence that will instil confidence among QPR fans.

The pressures on Kenny Dalglish's shoulders are different -- but just as heavy. Defeat at Loftus Road for Liverpool would have all but ended any lingering hopes of Champions League qualification.

Managing director Ian Ayre yesterday insisted not qualifying for Europe's premier club competition would not have implications on the club's summer transfer plans. But while Dalglish will not directly admit it, another season spent outside Europe's elite would be deemed a failure on Merseyside. And the Reds boss made two changes from the side that secured an FA Cup semi-final slot with victory over Stoke on Sunday as Andy Carroll and Maxi Rodriguez were replaced by Charlie Adam and Dirk Kuyt. Hughes handed a recall to fit-again Adel Taarabt in place of Shaun Wright-Phillips while Cisse faced his former club, lining up alongside Bobby Zamora up front. Stricken Fabrice Muamba was given a rapturous round of applause ahead of kick-off, which must have brought back haunting memories for referee Howard Webb, who was officiating for the first time since the Bolton player suffered a cardiac arrest at White Hart Lane last Saturday.

Rangers started nervously but Liverpool were much brighter.

Samba Diakite was twice guilty of giving the ball away needlessly deep inside his own half in the opening three minutes but Liverpool failed to make Rangers pay for their sloppy start. And Hughes' side had goalkeeper Paddy Kenny to thank for not going a goal down inside four minutes.

Adam played a hopeful long ball into the direction of Luis Suarez and Nedum Onuoha looked to have the situation under control.

But the defender made a complete hash of what should have been a routine clearance, leaving the Uruguayan with a clear run at Kenny. Yet the QPR stopper saved the shot, and his team-mate's blushes.

That should have been the wake up call the west London side needed but their slow start continued as Liverpool dominated the early exchanges. Martin Skrtel saw his effort from 10 yards blocked as Rang-ers failed to deal with Stewart Downing's corner before Anton Ferdinand somehow stopped Kuyt's close-range effort off the line after another set-piece. Cisse offered up QPR's first shot of the game in the 15th minute, a tame effort from 20 yards that trickled wide of Pepe Reina's far post before Martin Skrtel wasted another Liverpool chance when he headed Adam's corner well over the bar. Rangers were nearly gifted a 30th minute lead in farcical circumstances as Jose Enrique, under no pressure at all, inexplicably miscued his clearance from Armand Traore's cross just over his own cross bar. Dalglish was forced into a change in the 34th minute as defender Martin Kelly was replaced by centre-back Sebastian Coates, in a switch that saw Jamie Carragher shifted out to right-back.

Both sides were forced into changes at half-time as Adam and Armand Traore were replaced by Jordan Henderson and Taye Taiwo respectively, as the duo felt the effects of a crunching tackle in the dying moments of the first period.

Maybe inevitably, it was a Uruguayan who scored early in the second half. But it wasn't Suarez. Downing saw his effort cleared off the line by Bobby Zamora as QPR struggled to deal with Gerrard's corner -- the rebound fell to Coates who blasted home a scissor kick from 12 yards for his first Liverpool goal.

Hughes replied by replacing Joey Barton with Jamie Mackie -- and the QPR skipper left to a chorus of boos from his own supporters.

It seemed to make no difference as Liverpool doubled their lead in the 72nd minute when Suarez hit the post and Downing was denied by a magnificent save from Kenny, before Kuyt scored. Derry pulled one back five minutes later with a header from Taarabt's corner. Then in the 86th minute, Taiwo crossed from the left and Cisse headed home. And to cap a great night for the home side a defensive header was missed by Jose Enrique and Mackie slotted coolly passed Reina.

MATCH FACTS QPR (4-4-2): Kenny 7; Young 6, Ferdinand 7, Onuoha 6, Traore 5 (Taiwo 46min, 6); Barton 5 (Mackie 62, 5), Derry 7, Diakite 6, Taarabt 6; Cisse 7 (Buzsaky 89), Zamora 6. Subs not used: Cerny, Gabbidon, Wright-Phillips, Bothroyd. Scorers: Derry 77, Cisse 86, Mackie 90.

LIVERPOOL (4-1-4-1): Reina 6; Kelly 6 (Coates 34, 8), Carragher 7, Skrtel 7, Enrique 6; Spearing 8; Downing 7, Gerrard 7, Adam 6 (Henderson 46, 6), Kuyt 7; Suarez 6 (Carroll 82). Subs not used: Doni, Aurelio, Flanagan, Shelvey.

Scorers: Coates 54, Kuyt 72. Man of the match: Jay Spearing. Referee: Howard Webb 7. Attendance: 18,033.

The Daily Telegraph

QPR dragged back from brink by Mackie winner

Queens Park Rangers 3

Derry 77, Cisse 86, Mackie 90

Liverpool 2

Coates 54, Kuyt 72 Att: 18,033

Only time will tell whether this was the night. But, as Rangers completed the most remarkable of comebacks, it felt like it was. From being consigned to Premier League relegation fodder with less than a quarter of an hour left, over-run and out-played by Liverpool, they somehow dragged themselves back from the brink and out of the bottom three.

Now they will, surely, believe. They will believe they can stay up, defy the odds, and turn over the critics. Manager Mark Hughes spoke of how this could be the "moment", the rallying point when he got his message across to a group of players who seemed subsumed in their own faltering ability to get out of a mess of their own creation.

But how could this result have possibly happened? When the substituted Joey Barton, Rangers' captain, was booed off after a wretched performance, it seemed to symbolise the folly of this project, given the inflated wages he is on and the minimum effect he has had. When Dirk Kuyt stabbed home Liverpool's second goal, it was like a dagger to the heart of the home supporters.

Liverpool should have been out of sight by then, never mind two goals to the good. And as Hughes bristled with pride at the end, his Liverpool counterpart, Kenny Dalglish, was as prickly as a hedgehog. He fielded four - possibly five - post-match questions before darting for the exit. "I don't think anybody saw that coming," he said of the result. "There is not much more we can say. I don't have any answers as to what happened."

No one did. No one who attended this encounter would have placed even the smallest bet on Rangers, as Kuyt wheeled away in celebration to add the second goal to a quite brilliant strike from substitute Sebastian Coates.

Liverpool were utterly dominant - if maddeningly wasteful - and Rangers appeared increasingly ragged.

That two of their goals were claimed by Shaun Derry and Jamie Mackie - players with huge hearts and indefatigable efforts - was so very apt.

Mackie had replaced Barton and might have convinced Hughes that, with nine matches, nine cup finals, to go, he deserves a place ahead of the midfielder.

Maybe Liverpool were also dreaming of cup finals. But that wasn't it. They have captured the Carling Cup, they are in the semi-finals of the FA Cup, but there was no lack of appetite - and bite - as they swarmed around opponents who appeared not only shell-shocked but spiralling out of the top-flight.

"Most of the game we were dominant, creative, thoughtful and professional," Dalglish said. That was all true, but the key word was "most". What is so engaging about sport, particularly football, is the knowledge that no matter how beaten a team is, something can happen. Too much of the Premier League runs on pure emotion but sometimes that simply cannot be denied. Sometimes it simply has to be embraced, just as the Rangers fans embraced each other in intoxicating disbelief at that final whistle.

From the first whistle, their team had been in trouble. Dalglish stated that Liverpool should have been "three, four" goals to the good by half-time - and that was no exaggeration.

Luis Suarez missed a one-on-one, a Kuyt shot was hacked off the line and the ball ping-ponged around the Rangers area. They simply could not clear and, sometimes, simply could not find a team-mate.

There was a skimming, low shot from the defiant Djibril Cisse but, frankly, they were in all kinds of difficulties and never appeared capable of holding on. Even so, it took an astonishing strike to open the scoring, with Stewart Downing's low shot from a corner cleared off the line. It looped up to Coates, whose scissorkick powered into the net. It was reminiscent of a strike by Hughes in his pomp. It was stunning - and stunned Rangers. Suarez then hit a post, with the rebound falling to Downing, who drew a superb block from Paddy Kenny only for Kuyt to pounce on the ball. Surely the game was over? Even when Derry, improbably, twisted to head in from a corner, it barely registered.

But then substitute Taye Taiwo scampered down the left and an unmarked Cisse also headed home.

Somehow Rangers had claimed a point. But then it was all three. Luke Young headed the ball towards the penalty area and, vitally, Jose Enrique slipped. It left Mackie through on goal and he had the composure to slide the ball beyond Pepe Reina. "It is right up there," Hughes said when asked where this night ranked for him as a manager. "We hope we might look back and say that this was the time it changed for us."

Queens Park Rangers (4-4-2): Kenny, Young, Onuoha, Ferdinand, Traore (Taiwo 46), Barton (Mackie 62), Derry, Diakite, Taarabt, Zamora, Cisse (Buzsaky 88) Subs: Cerny (gk), Gabbidon, Bothroyd, Wright-Phillips.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1): Reina, Kelly (Coates 34) Carragher, Skrtel, Enrique, Adam (Henderson 46), Kuyt, Gerrard, Downing, Suarez (Carroll 82). Subs: Doni (gk), Aurelio, Shelvey, Flanagan.

Referee: H Webb (S Yorks).

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THE INDEPENDENT

Mackie gives Rangers a victory to remember

QPR's footballers were celebrating more than the cut in the 50 per cent tax rate last night - they were also marking a stunning comeback which lifted them out of the relegation zone. A Liverpool win looked certain after Sebastian Coates and Dirk Kuyt put them two up with 18 minutes left. But Shaun Derry, Djibril Ciss[c] and Jamie Mackie secured QPR's first victory in two months.

Both teams went into the match needing a win. QPR's desperate position was evident, not least because this was the first of seven matches against top eight clubs in their run-in. Since Rangers' only previous league win under Mark Hughes, against Wigan, they had taken two points from 18. Hughes thus fielded his three main goal threats, Bobby Zamora, Ciss[c] and Adel Taarabt.

Liverpool are already in Europe for next season, courtesy of their Carling Cup win, but the American owners have made clear their ambition is to be in the Champions League. Kenny Dalglish said that was possible, but it could have required 10 - now nine - successive wins - a tall order despite a relatively benign fixture list.

Dalglish had received support before the match from the chief executive, Ian Ayre, who said the club's much-criticised approach to the Luis Suarez-Patrice Evra affair had not been down to the manager alone, but a "collective decision-making" process with himself, John W Henry, the principal owner, and chairman Tom Werner. Ayre added the club had got some things "wrong" but had "moved on". That was underlined by a wish to extend the contract of Suarez - who, said Ayre "is a great guy" - beyond 2016.

Ayre also said Andy Carroll was "an integral part" of the club who was "here for the long haul", which did not quite square with reports from Russia suggesting that the former Tottenham striker Roman Pavlyuchenko had rejected an approach from Anfield in January, preferring Lokomotiv Moscow.

Carroll was on the bench last night and without him Liverpool began impressively, full of movement and slick passing. They should have won the game within the first 15 minutes, during which Rangers were a shambles. However, Paddy Kenny denied Suarez after Nedum Onuoha's slip left him clear and Martin Skrtel and Dirk Kuyt had goal-bound efforts hacked clear during a string of corners.

QPR settled but Pepe Reina still reached half-time untroubled, bar a shot from Ciss[c] that whistled wide and a mis-cued clearance by Jose Enrique that went for a corner.

Suarez scored the only goal when the teams met at Anfield but it was a less-heralded Uruguayan who broke the deadlock nine minutes after the break. A Steven Gerrard corner reached Stuart Downing and though his shot was cleared off the line by Zamora, Coates twisted acrobatically in mid-air to volley in. The goal was reminiscent of Hughes' fabled strike for Wales, but the Rangers' manager's admiration will have been muted.

Hughes' response was popular - to cheers he withdrew Joey Barton, who was then booed off. Prior to kick-off Rodney Marsh, still revered here, had said he feared the Rs would be relegated and added that Barton, the captain, did not have "the best interests of the club" at heart and had been "a complete waste of time". His is clearly not an isolated view.

Mackie's arrival pepped up the crowd but Liverpool were now in control. Kenny made a magnificent save from Downing after 71 minutes and then, after Suarez had hit the post a minute later, again denied Downing - only for Kuyt to race past several statuesque defenders to tap in.

Rangers looked beaten, but four minutes later Derry rose, improbably, above Jamie Carragher to head in a corner. That set up a frantic finish in which Ciss[c] beat Skrtel to head in Teye Taiwo's cross and then Mackie seized on Enrique's error.

DAILY MIRROR

KENNY GETS A SMACKING

JAMIE MACKIE came off the bench to score a winner to lift QPR out of the bottom three.

But Liverpool's slim chances of qualifying for the Champions League are over after throwing away a two-goal lead in a match Kenny Dalglish's side dominated until a frantic finish.

A sensational Sebastian Coates volley had seemed to set the Carling Cup winners on the way to their fourth consecutive win.

Dirk Kuyt then marked his 200th Premier League appearance with the second although Liverpool could have scored half a dozen against hapless Hoops.

But after captain Joey Barton was replaced, QPR mounted a remarkable recovery and goals in the last 13 minutes from Shaun Derry and Djibril Cisse levelled the scores after 86 minutes.

And Mackie raced through injury time to score the winner to complete a remarkable and ridiculous turnaround.

Mark Hughes' team move above Bolton with nine matches to go after only their second win in 17 Premier League games.

They still have to play the top five before the end of this season but this could prove to be a miraculous turning point. Now the Great Escape is on. Liverpool lost their third successive League away match and their fourth in five. But how they didn't score in the opening 20 minutes where they forced 10 corners will forever remain a mystery.

If this had been a boxing match, it would have been stopped such was the pummelling they gave the home side.

The Reds' first chance came after only four minutes when Barton set the tone for a dreadful first half by gifting a free-kick straight to Charlie Adam.

The Scot's through ball to Suarez should have been cut out by Nedum Onuoha.

But the on-loan defender missed the ball and Paddy Kenny made a double save to deny the Uruguayan.

Midfielder Derry then had to make a last-ditch block on Stewart Downing. And from the seventh corner, Luke Young blocked a Kuyt shot on the line. Stevie Gerrard then surged to the byline only to see his low cross skid across the six-yard line uninterrupted.

It wasn't until half way through the half that QPR finally strung a few passes together.

Cisse looked like a man on a mission to score against his former club. And after 31 minutes he picked up the ball in the middle of the Liverpool half and surged forward before crashing a ball into Reina's side netting.

Liverpool seemed on their way to victory when summer signing Coates opening his Liverpool account in some style after 54 minutes. Gerrard's corner reached Downing on the far post and his cross-shot was half-cleared by Bobby Zamora on the line.

But the ball fell only to the defender on the penalty spot and the 21-year-old crashed his volley over a stunned Kenny.

Kenny made a fine save from Downing on 71 minutes but could not deny Kuyt a minute later.

But then Derry, the former captain, headed home a Taarabt corner after 77 minutes in a goal from two of the Championship-winning team.

Cisse finally scored against his former club with a header from a cross from substitute Teye Taiwo. And Mackie then sparked mad celebrations with the 91st-minute winner.

QPR: Kenny 7, Young 7, Onuoha 5, Ferdinand 6, Traore 6 (Taiwo, 46), Barton 4 (Mackie, 62), Derry 7, Diakite 5, Taarabt 5, Zamora 6, Cisse 6. LIVERPOOL: Reina 7, Kelly 7 (Coates 34, 7), Carragher 7, Skrtel 7, Enrique 7, Downing 7, Gerrard 7, Spearing 7, Adam 6 (Henderson 46), Kuyt 7, Suarez 8 (Carroll, 82).

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Reds slump to defeat after late comeback by QPR

EVEN for a season full of ups and downs, this was a desperate blow to take for Liverpool FC.

There have been two sides to this Liverpool team this season and both made an appearance at Loftus Road last night.

With 13 minutes left on the clock Kenny Dalglish's men were cruising.

This had been the Reds who clinched the Carling Cup and had secured their passage back to Wembley in the semi-finals of the FA Cup. The impressive Liverpool who demolished Everton and showed real character to overcome Stoke. Playing with a swagger, they led 2-0 and should have been out of sight such was their dominance against lowly Queens Park Rangers. This should have been a night about an unlikely hero after defender Sebastian Coates opened his Anfield account with a stunning acrobatic volley.

This should have been a tale about how his fellow countryman Luis Suarez mercilessly terrorised a team heading towards relegation. And how the Reds maintained momentum following back-to-back wins.

Yet from the jaws of victory they somehow managed to grab a galling defeat.

Out of nowhere the Reds' backbone deserted them. Suddenly, they morphed into the team who meekly surrendered at places like Tottenham, Bolton and Sunderland.

It wasn't just careless, it was embarrassing as first Shaun Derry pulled one back and then former Reds striker Djibril Cisse nodded them level. The defending was shambolic.

Then in stoppage time the nightmare was complete as Jose Enrique's horrific blunder gifted Jamie Mackie the chance to slot the winner past Pepe Reina.

It was the first time Liverpool had lost after being two goals ahead in a league game since Leeds beat them 4-3 in 2000.

Cup success can't mask the fact that the Reds' league form has been unacceptable. They have won just three out of 13 games since mid-December and are a massive 13 points off the fourth spot they targeted last August. Liverpool have repeatedly failed to kill teams off and this was another one for their collection.

Early on they had threatened to run riot. Their passing and movement carved QPR open almost at will but a finishing touch deserted them.

Dalglish's side should have led inside four minutes. Suarez ran clear and had time to pick his spot but fired too close to keeper Paddy Kenny.

Martin Skrtel then saw his goal-bound header from Stewart Downing's corner blocked by Joey Barton. Steven Gerrard pulled the strings with Dirk Kuyt and Downing getting forward in support of Suarez.

Downing burst through but dallied and allowed Shaun Derry to get back and make a last-ditch tackle.

QPR struggled to get out of their own half and the home fans' frustration continued to grow.

Remarkably, the Reds forced 10 corners in the opening 20 minutes but none were made to count.

One Gerrard delivery was met by Suarez but his header was blocked and Kuyt was denied from the rebound.

A combination of injuries and suspensions have severely limited the amount of time Gerrard and Suarez have played together.

But the growing understanding which ripped Everton shreds in the derby was once again evident.

The duo sliced through an overworked back four with a slick one-two but the captain's inviting cross just evaded Kuyt.

Unsurprisingly, the Reds couldn't maintain such a relentless pace and the intensity dropped off.

QPR grew in confidence with a familiar face posing their greatest threat. Cisse had warned his old club he would show them "no mercy" and the Frenchman looked like a man with a point to prove.

Shown the door by Rafa Benitez after just two seasons at Anfield in which he won the Champions League and the FA Cup, Cisse returned to the Premier League in January after making the switch from Lazio.

Cisse's glaring lack of tactical awareness infuriated Benitez but there's no question he's blessed with lightning pace and a blistering shot and he rippled the side netting from 25 yards.

The Reds' hopes of regaining some momentum wasn't helped by two injury blows before the break.

Liverpool regained control and nine minutes into the second half the deadlock was broken.

After Gerrard's corner was fired goalwards by Downing, Bobby Zamora was on hand to hack off the line. It looped up towards the penalty spot where Coates dispatched a volley which flew past Kenny and into the roof of the net.

Energised by the breakthrough, the Reds turned the screw. Suarez and Kuyt combined brilliantly to put Downing through only for Kenny to parry behind.

The chances kept coming and in the 72nd minute they doubled their tally. Suarez twisted and turned his way past a couple of defenders before firing against the post.

Kenny parried Downing's strike on the follow-up but Kuyt, who was making his 200th league appearance, was alert to tuck it away from close range.

A QPR side with only one win in 16 league games going back to November were on the ropes. Yet instead of delivering a killer blow, Liverpool capitulated. Derry halved the deficit when he climbed above Henderson to head home Adel Taarabt's corner.

Then with four minutes to go Teye Taiwo crossed from the left and Cisse stole in between Martin Skrtel and Enrique to head past Reina. Just as the 3,000 packed into the away end were pondering how the Reds had only been left with a point even that was wrestled away.

There appeared to be little danger when Skrtel's attempted clearance was nodded back by Luke Young. But Enrique made a hash of it and Mackie completed a dramatic comeback.

A delirious Mark Hughes could hardly believe his luck. A struggling side beaten at home by the likes of Bolton, Sunderland, Norwich, Wolves and Fulham had a major scalp. Liverpool just keep handing out gifts.

QPR: Kenny, Onuoha, Ferdinand, Diakite, Young, Taarabt, Barton (Mackie 62), Derry, Traore (Taiwo 46), Zamora, Cisse (Buzsaky 88). Not used: Cerny, Gabbidon, Bothroyd, Wright-Phillips.

LIVERPOOL: Reina, Kelly (Coates 34), Carragher, Skrtel, Enrique, Adam (Henderson 46), Spearing, Gerrard, Downing, Kuyt, Suarez (Carroll 82). Not used: Doni, Aurelio, Shelvey, Flanagan.

Referee: Howard Webb. Att: 18,033

Goals: Coates 54, Kuyt 72, Derry 76, Cisse 86, Mackie 90.

London Evening Standard

Joey Barton shrugs off boo-boys as QPR fightback to beat Liverpool

QPR captain Joey Barton admitted his performance in last night's win against Liverpool was the worst of his career - but hit out those that booed him at Loftus Road.

The 29-year-old was replaced after an ineffectual performance in the 62nd minute by Jamie Mackie, who spearheaded an incredible 3-2 comeback by the R's. Barton's departure was met by cheers from the home faithful, who booed the midfielder off the pitch.

"I was awful tonight," Barton said via his Twitter account. "Worst I've ever played in my career. But we WON.....and that's the most important thing. Onwards and upwards."

"Disappointed with fans booing, were [sic] meant to be in it together. They won't break me, guaranteed. I've been through much worse."

Barton later posted: "Form is temporary, class is permanent."

QPR manager Mark Hughes was asked about the reception Barton received in the post-match press conference, although he claimed not to have noticed it.

"I was not aware of that," the Welshman said. "Joey was not having the best of times."

"It was unfortunate that maybe a few felt the need to possibly boo him, but Joey is very strong as we all know."

"He won't let it affect him and he will play a big part in what we do from now until the end of the season. Tonight was not his night, but there will be other nights."

Hughes was keen to focus on the game itself, where Sebastian Coates' superb scissor-kick and a Dirk Kuyt effort put Liverpool 2-0 ahead.

Shaun Derry started the comeback with 13 minutes remaining, before former Liverpool striker Djibril Cisse headed the hosts level and Mackie netted a stoppage-time winner.

Kenny Dalglish was stunned by QPR's comeback and thought the hosts received the luck that eluded them last week when Clint Hill had a goal wrongly chalked off at relegation rivals Bolton.

"I don't think anyone saw it coming," Dalglish said.

"The way we started the game was fantastic, the passing and the movement - the only thing missing was in front of goal."

"They came in at 0-0 at half-time and it could have easily been 3-0 or 4-0."

"You didn't even see them getting a goal. Maybe the luck they never got at Bolton, they got it tonight with a last-minute winner."

"I don't have any answers. We dominated the game. We were really creative, thoughtful and professional but they have walked away with three points."