

Date: 28 January 2014

Opposition: Everton

Competition: League

Guardian	Mirror	BBC
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28 January 2014

THE  **TIMES**

the guardian

Sturridge at the double in Liverpool's crushing destruction of Martinez's flawed masterplan

A four-point gap in the race for Champions League qualification is one thing; a four goal victory in a Merseyside derby quite another. Everton have time to bridge the statistical divide with Liverpool in the race for a top-four finish but the psychological blow inflicted by Brendan Rodgers' team will reverberate for much longer. Liverpool's biggest derby win since 1982, their biggest at Anfield since 1972, sent belief in a return to the European elite soaring at Anfield.

"Are you Moyesy in disguise?" sang the Kop as Roberto Martinez, the Everton manager, oversaw an abject visiting performance in which every selection gamble and every shot sailed into a red brick wall. Liverpool were ruthless and humiliated Everton on the counterattack. Steven Gerrard delivered the first goal and the controlled midfield display he craved, Daniel Sturridge scored twice and Luis Suarez grabbed his 23rd goal of the season as Everton crumbled. Sturridge also missed a penalty and was involved in a brief touchline dispute with Rodgers following his substitution. Everton's embarrassment was a credit to Rodgers' tactical nous and the team spirit he has fostered. The game also demonstrated the gulf in quality between the two attacks. Everton had conceded seven league goals since the 3-3 Merseyside derby draw at Goodison Park in November and that tally could have doubled inside 90 minutes at Anfield. Their injury problems are likely to intensify with Romelu Lukaku taken off on a stretcher early on with suspected ankle ligament damage. Whereas Rodgers' selection calls - Sturridge cutting in from the left and Philippe Coutinho in central midfield - worked to devastating effect, Martinez's gamble on the fitness of Phil Jagielka, Ross Barkley, Antolin Alcaraz and Steven Pienaar misfired badly. Everton's defence was shredded at will during the first half and Liverpool assured themselves of victory inside 14 brutal minutes. It proved the wrong game for Martinez to pair Jagielka and Alcaraz together for the first time in central defence, while poor positional play from John Stones at right-back also added to Everton's problems.

Tim Howard was overworked from the start as Jordan Henderson, Suarez and Sturridge tried their luck from distance and Raheem Sterling was foiled at close range by the USA international. He could not hold out forever and nor could Everton react after a sluggish start, amplified by so many players short of match fitness. A frenzied pace was not the only similarity with November's derby. All three Liverpool goals in that match arrived from set-pieces, a fact Martinez reminded his team about before the Anfield return, but to no avail.

Rodgers' team took the lead from their first corner when Suarez - pelted with coins from the away section that he handed to referee Martin Atkinson - swept to the near post. Gerrard escaped Gareth Barry's attentions and, with a magnificent leap, steered a powerful header beyond Barkley on the goalline. It was a fitting way for one of the derby's most influential figures to mark a record 28th Premier League appearance in the fixture.

Barry's impact at the corner was not confined to slack marking and, attempting to regain ground on Gerrard, he careered into Lukaku and ended the Everton striker's night. If Martinez thought his problems could not get any worse, he was soon shown to be mistaken.

Coutinho vindicated Rodgers' decision with a piercing pass that sent Sturridge clear of the exposed Stones. He gave Howard no chance with a confident finish that was surpassed by an outstanding lob from Liverpool's next attack two minutes later. The source was painful for the Everton defence, a straightforward clearance from Kolo Toure that sailed over Jagielka and dropped at the feet of Sturridge. The striker had plenty to do but, from the edge of the area, lofted a glorious finish over the stranded keeper and into the net.

Liverpool's fourth was another ordeal for the clearly unfit Jagielka. The Everton captain attempted to cushion a clearance to his central defensive partner but instead found Suarez, the last person in the Premier League who requires an invitation towards goal. The Uruguay international sprinted from the halfway line with Jagielka on his shoulder but reluctant to risk a red card, and Suarez slotted low under Howard to deepen Everton's embarrassment. Jagielka could well be marking Suarez at the World Cup this summer and the only consolation for England is that he should be fit for that encounter.

Only Kevin Mirallas and Barkley continued to carry a threat for the visitors but Liverpool squandered an outstanding chance to make it five before the hour from the penalty spot. Sterling was the latest home player to waltz behind the Everton rearguard and went over as Howard raced from goal. Only the direction of Sterling's run spared the keeper a card and Everton escaped further ignominy when Sturridge took the spot-kick for a derby hat-trick only to blaze over the bar. Sturridge's decision to go for the hat-trick again later on with Suarez better placed brought a furious response from team-mates. His withdrawal followed - for tactical reasons insisted Rodgers - after a brief exchange of words with the striker. Not that anything could take the gloss from a stunning night for Liverpool.

Liverpool 4-1-4-1 Mignolet; Flanagan (Kelly, 74), Skrtel, Toure, Cissokho; Gerrard; Sterling, Coutinho (Alberto, 80), Henderson, Sturridge (Moses, 72); Suarez.

Subs not used Jones, Aspas, Ibe, Smith.

Referee M Atkinson

Everton 4-2-3-1 Howard; Stones, Jagielka, Alcaraz, Baines; McCarthy, Barry *; Mirallas *, Barkley (McGeady, 76), Pienaar * (Osman, h-t); Lukaku (Naismith, 25).

Subs not used Robles, Hibbert, Gueye, Garbutt.

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The Mail

STURRIDGE REVELS IN A RED ROUT

STEVEN GERRARD has made countless accurate predictions during his career but the one he offered before the 222nd Merseyside derby could not have been more wrong. 'Don't be surprised if this is a tight, cagey affair,' he suggested. Nothing could have been further from the truth. This will go down as the Demolition Derby, the night Liverpool tore Everton to shreds with a devastating brand of counter-attacking football and ran up their biggest victory against them since 1982. By the final whistle, Liverpool had smashed four unanswered goals past their shell-shocked neighbours and, most significantly, made an emphatic statement in their aim to reclaim a Champions League spot.

Gerrard will not mind in the slightest that he did not call this right. No victory matters more to Liverpool's captain than one against their oldest foes and he set the tone, opening the scoring with a towering header and dictating the tempo throughout. How he revelled in it, celebrating the two goals Daniel Sturridge dispatched before half-time and the one Luis Suarez swept in just after the break with the same gusto as those on the Kop. He has enjoyed many special nights but this will certainly be up there with the best. For Everton, though, the pain at this ground continues. This was as bad as they have played in the years since Kevin Campbell secured their last victory here in September 1999 and how they will recover remains to be seen. On the sidelines, Roberto Martinez looked devastated. His team selection backfired. Martinez's pre-match fitness bulletin had been so gloomy it left the impression Everton would be going to war with a patched-up side. The arrival of the team sheets, however, painted a different picture. In was captain Phil Jagielka, who had injured a hamstring at Stevenage, but more importantly so was Ross Barkley. The England midfielder has not kicked a ball for three weeks but Martinez was happy to gamble. No wonder. Barkley is blossoming into one of those rare talents who can illuminate high-pressured occasions and his performance in the 3-3 draw at Goodison Park in November, full of invention, desire and energy, tormented Liverpool. Fittingly, Barkley made the first significant contribution. Barely 60 seconds had passed when he darted between the lines, seized possession and, from 25 yards, cracked a left-footed drive that whistled just over Liverpool's bar. The troublesome toe had passed its first test. That set the tone. The opening 10 minutes of these games used to be wild and chaotic, with red and blue hurtling into each other; the ball was almost inconsequential as tackles were traded. Here, though, was a change in emphasis as shots were exchanged. Jordan Henderson countered Barkley's piledriver with a volley Tim Howard beat away; Suarez had a sighter from 20 yards and Steven Pienaar tried his luck. It had been a fairly even start but there came a point midway through the first half when Liverpool started building up a head of steam and once they found their range, in the space of 13 devastating minutes they took the contest away from Everton with three goals.

Gerrard, so often the major figure in these games since the turn of the century, started the onslaught. His towering header, from a Suarez corner, knocked the stuffing out of Everton and imbued the home side with confidence. Martinez had suggested his side would need to be 'pristine' from set pieces -- given they had conceded three to Liverpool in the first meeting -- but his warning went unheeded. James McCarthy did not jump high enough and Barry lost Gerrard's run. To exacerbate the situation for Everton, a collision between Barry and Romelu Lukaku resulted in the Belgium forward leaving the field on a stretcher, with a probable ankle ligament injury. Yet if that was bad, it was soon to get worse. Everton had mustered a response, with Kevin Mirallas, Barry and Jagielka all trying shots -- the England defender came closest when forcing a diving parry from Mignolet -- but a breathtaking counter-attack from the hosts changed the dynamic. Philippe Coutinho, nicknamed David Blaine by his teammates because of his magical ability, threaded a pass into the path of Sturridge and the striker nonchalantly beat Howard with a finish into the far corner. Given what is at stake in terms of Champions League qualification, the goal was raucously celebrated and the cacophony had barely subsided by the time Sturridge grabbed his second and Liverpool's third of the evening two minutes later. Chasing a long ball out of defence, Sturridge streaked clear and didn't hesitate when Howard came racing out of his goal, lobbing him from 20 yards. Cue bedlam. The stands were bouncing, a mass of red shirts engulfed Sturridge and, on the touchline, Brendan Rodgers punched the air. The trend continued after the break. Suarez, who had been pelted with coins as he took a corner, got in on the act, racing 50 yards after dispossessing Jagielka to score. Liverpool could even laugh after missing a penalty -- Sturridge blazing high after Raheem Sterling had fallen over Howard's challenge. For the red half of Merseyside, this was as sweet as it gets.

SUPER STAT Last season, it took Luis Suarez 33 matches to score 23 Premier League goals. This season, he has managed the same feat in 18 appearances. **LIVERPOOL EVERTON** 0 4 Gerrard 21 Sturridge 33, 35 Suarez 50 (4-3-3) **TEAM AVERAGE** 7.09 Mignolet 7 Flanagan ? Kelly 73 6 Skrtel 7 Toure 7 Cissokho 6 Henderson 6 Gerrard 8 Coutinho ? Alberto 79 Sterling 7 Sturridge ? Moses 72 6 Suarez 7 (4-2-3-1) **TEAM AVERAGE** 6.27 Howard 7 Stones 7 Alcaraz 5 Jagielka 6 Baines 6 Barry 7 McCarthy 6 Mirallas 7 Barkley ? McGeary 76 Pienaar ? Osman 46 6 Lukaku ? Naismith 25 6 Subs not used Robles, Hibbert, Gueye, Garbutt Manager Roberto Martinez 6 Booked Pienaar, Barry, Mirallas Referee Martin Atkinson 7 Subs not used Jones, Aspas, Ibe, Smith Manager Brendan Rodgers 8 Booked None Man of the match Steven Gerrard Anfield Attendance: 44,450

The Daily Telegraph

Liverpool ripped up the history books, recording their biggest victory in the Merseyside Derby since 1982, and their biggest at Anfield in this scrap for local supremacy since 1972, by cutting Everton to pieces with the pace and precision of their counter-attacks. The Kop loved it, chanting "Liverpool are magic, Everton are tragic", a retro reprise of Emlyn Hughes' grabbing of the microphone at the civic reception held at St George's Hall after the 1977 European Cup final.

Liverpool were certainly taking the mike here. Everton had no answer to the quality of their breaks. Liverpool's captain, Steven Gerrard, led by example, heading in the first and launching waves of attacks with his driven passes from in front of the back four. His was a disciplined display, shielding the defence as well as creating, a model of selflessness. His sixth goal of the season was Liverpool's 150th in all derbies at Anfield. He has now scored nine times against Everton (only Ian Rush, with 25, has scored more for Liverpool in derbies). It had to be Gerrard, who loves the derby intensity and significance, scoring the opener.

A slightly more selfish professional, Daniel Sturridge, struck twice, and missed a penalty which will stay missing for a while. The England forward became distracted in his pursuit of a third goal, over-elaborating at times, wasting chances. Luis Suárez looked distinctly unimpressed. Sturridge was eventually summoned to the bench by Brendan Rodgers, an act that annoyed the striker who was hoping to become only the eighth Liverpool player (including Ian Rush twice) to score a hat-trick in the derby. Sturridge later apologised for his slight fit of pique when being taken off. Suárez stayed on, putting in another outstanding 90 minutes, including Liverpool's fourth goal which started after a rather unequal foot race against Phil Jagielka from the halfway line. Embodied by the tireless Suárez, Liverpool's work-rate was of the highest order. If Gerrard and Sturridge vied for the man-of-the-match honours, Suárez's willingness to cover back as well as race forward, registering his 23rd goal of the season, was also worthy of praise. Philippe Coutinho left to a standing ovation, deservedly so because of the intelligence of his vision and distribution. These are increasingly exciting times for Liverpool, who are clearly responding strongly to Rodgers' enlightened, attack-minded management. Victory gives Liverpool their best goal difference (+29) after 23 games of a Premier League season, eclipsing their totals in 1994-95 and 1995-96. Victory also gives Liverpool what Rodgers called "bragging rights" in local arguments and "vital points" in the chase for Champions League football.

Everton never gave up, and Kevin Mirallas was always a threat, but this was painful for their fans to watch, their mood darkened further by an ankle injury suffered by Romelu Lukaku, who left the field on a stretcher and the ground with his ankle in a cast. Everton will assess possible ligament damage today. As if to accentuate Everton's misery, Lukaku sustained the injury colliding with Gareth Barry as Liverpool scored their first.

Any hope that Everton would be lifted by the quick return of Ross Barkley from a broken toe soon dissolved as Liverpool, so quick in mind and movement, dominated this 222nd Merseyside Derby, the 190th league meeting between the rivals. Badly missing Sylvain Distin and Seamus Coleman, Everton were too naive at the back. Liverpool were too fast, too determined, too alive to the visitors' vulnerability. Barring an early long-range strike from Barkley into the Kop, Liverpool settled far the swifter. Tim Howard's goal came under immediate pressure, the keeper denying Jordan Henderson and Suárez. James McCarthy and Barry tried to shield Everton's weakened back-four but were kept constantly busy by the movement of Suárez and Coutinho. Suárez was roaming all over, a fox hunting easy pickings, occasionally shifting wide to examine John Stones' capabilities and also switching with Sturridge in the centre. Trying to contain Suárez was like trying to pin mercury to a wall; he was too elusive.

With Gerrard delivering some low, pinpoint passes skidding across the glistening canvas to Suarez and company, Everton were under extreme pressure, struggling to get the ball. They did have a chance, a skewed shot from Steven Pienaar, but this was the Liverpool show, the Gerrard show, the Sturridge show, the Suarez show. Howard thwarted Suárez, then Sterling, before Liverpool broke through after 21 minutes. When the persistent Suárez won a corner in front of the Everton fans, the Uruguayan appeared to have a couple of missiles thrown at him. Suárez jogged over to the corner flag, ignored the Everton fans, focusing on the ball, running in and sending it towards the near-post where the unmarked Gerrard, darting from right to left, powered his header in. It looked a goal made at Melwood. As Liverpool celebrated, the Everton medical staff came on to attend to Lukaku, who was lying on the ground, having turned his ankle when bumping into Barry. Eventually lifted on to a stretcher, Lukaku was carried away, the striker holding his hands to his face. Steven Naismith ran on, attempting vainfully to replace Lukaku. Already trailing, the sight of Lukaku departing further drained some of the belief from Everton. Liverpool went for the jugular again after 32 minutes, this time scoring from a magnificent flowing move, a break full of touch and speed. Coutinho angled his pass from right to left towards Sturridge. Only when Coutinho had released the ball did Stones spot Sturridge's run. Too late. Sturridge controlled the speeding ball with his left foot, and then despatched it unerringly past Howard.

Everton's defence were shellshocked, utterly failing to respond when Liverpool came raiding again three minutes later. Kolo Touré hooked a clearance upfield, and only Sturridge realised its possibilities.

Noting Howard advancing out, Sturridge calmly lobbed the ball over him. It went

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high and then dropped almost arrogantly over the line. Everton tried to respond. Jagielka and Barry went close. Barkley had a shot blocked. The excellent Mirallas kept looking for little glimpses of space in Liverpool's defence but Touré and Martin Skrtel held firm. Liverpool added their fourth five minutes into the second half, Suárez racing away from Jagielka and slotting the ball past Howard. Four minutes later it should have been 5-0. When Howard brought down the flying Sterling, Gerrard generously offered Sturridge his hat-trick chance but he skied the penalty.

THE INDEPENDENT

Gerrard rolls back the years to punish Martinez gamble

For Liverpool it felt like an overture of all that was best about the glory days. The Kop sang "Liverpool are magic, Everton are tragic" - the lyric Emlyn Hughes belted out from the St George's Hall steps when they brought the European Cup home from Rome in 1977, and the scoreline belonged to that gilded era, too. Not since Ian Rush wreaked havoc at Goodison in November 1982 have Liverpool won a derby by such a margin. For Everton it was a chilling reality check; a scoreline that punctures the soaring self-belief which last autumn's win at Old Trafford sent through their ranks and one from which, for all that their manager Roberto Martinez radiates, you wonder whether they can recover to maintain a tilt at the Champions League. The concern runs deeper than the loss of Romelu Lukaku, their prime goalscoring threat, who was taken off with ligament damage. It touches on the thinness of the squad, the vast gulf in wealth between these two teams, and the question of whether they can match creation with enough attrition. Against all of which it should be said that they have still lost only three games all season and went into this match bereft through injuries. Any rush to judgement is unwise in this Premier League climate. But the songs will have rung out into the night because of a display which maintained Liverpool's belief that with this squad - hardly over-endowed at it is - it could be their year to make it back among the elite. Martinez provided a sense of how desperately significant a first win here in 15 years was when he took the kind of gambles on fitness that he promised he would not consider 24 hours before the game. He risked Ross Barkley, who had not trained for three weeks after a broken toe, and placed Phil Jagielka at the core of his defence despite a hamstring concern.

His players showed no caution, either. This was an Everton team who had not scored a first-half goal at Anfield for 14 long years and yet the game was only two minutes old when Barkley rasped a shot left-footed from space in front of the Liverpool area. But Liverpool fought Everton blow for blow. Jordan Henderson, neat and sharp, was quickly thumping in his own volley on the full, with slice, which Tim Howard parried away. And though both sides contributed to the new, breathless brand of Merseyside derby football on the slick wet surface, Liverpool exposed weakness in Everton which has simply not been seen before this season. Martinez's side had only lost twice before this night but here the defence was hewn apart. The rearguard just lacked the requisite personnel. Antolin Alcaraz, ponderous as he filled Sylvain Distin's shoes, created an opportunity beyond any Liverpool expectation and Jagielka cut a desperately uneasy figure, trying to hold the defensive line as 18-year-old right-back John Stones struggled to get back from his advanced positions.

Liverpool's rich attacking options repeatedly gave the lie to Martinez's pre-match assertions that his own innovation could compensate for Liverpool's greater wealth. Jagielka was the first to struggle, failing to hook away a ball floated up by Henderson which Luis Suarez pounced upon and ripped inches wide. Then Raheem Sterling managed a timid finish when Sturridge had sent him in on Howard, who blocked a right-foot shot with the same foot.

But there was an inevitability about Steven Gerrard bursting the dam. At times it looked like a return to the 1990s days he had talked of before the match as he threw himself - literally and metaphorically - into the task of blocking Barkley's path, and it was he who leapt into a Suarez corner to head past James McCarthy, helpless on the line.

Though Everton revealed the depths of their self-belief by rallying - the dangerous and enterprising Kevin Mirallas making diagonal runs in both directions across the area to supply Jagielka with a shot, then depositing one of his own inches wide - Liverpool's display was too intense and collegiate to let them pass.

Steven Pienaar could not find any purchase, slicing two efforts on his brief entries into the match, and Everton could not find any width. Leighton Baines, who could be forgiven for wondering what he had signed up for four more years of, was subdued and Stones could not meaningfully threaten Aly Cissokho as Seamus Coleman - another of the injured - might have done.

Instead, Liverpool tore Everton apart in a two-minute spell which exposed them with a brutality. Sterling stole possession on the right to instigate the first of the two blows in that period, finding Philippe Coutinho whose clipped ball behind Alcaraz sent Sturridge in to score comfortably left-footed. The third was even more elementary, Kolo Touré clipping a ball up and over Everton's defence to Sturridge, who levered it over the advancing Howard.

Martinez tried to make a change, removing Pienaar for Leon Osman, who immediately brought a sharp, awkward save out of Simon Mignolet, but Everton's knowledge of only one type of football continued to punish them.

Their night seemed to be encapsulated by the loss of Lukaku, who was taken off in the aftermath of Liverpool's first goal after Gareth Barry caught him in the

m*I[c]e. He was being assessed for ligament damage last night.

They elected to maintain their ambition rather than relent - and fell to a fourth goal on the counter-attack when Jagielka slipped, allowing Suarez to race past him and charge from the halfway line to slide the ball past Howard.

Sterling's run into the area secured Liverpool a penalty when Howard clipped him, though Sturridge's miss from the spot -sacrificing a hat-trick -prevented an embarrassment descending into annihilation.

They were still fighting for pride as the game entered its last 15 minutes - substitute Steven Naismith was a foot away from getting a touch on a low Barkley cross - but it was over. For Everton, a first step back in the Martinez era.

For Liverpool, a big step ahead.



FOURTH RIGHT; Derby romp shows that Rodgers men are true contenders for Europe

LIVERPOOL 4 EVERTON 0

A STATEMENT of intent, one that Spurs and Manchester United cannot ignore.

More importantly, a message of superiority that reverberated around the other side of Stanley Park.

And, furthermore, proof that Liverpool can put genuine opponents to the sword even when Luis Suarez is not the only star of the show.

Of course, Suarez scored, his 16th at Anfield this season, another deadly, unerring finish.

But that was only after the game had already been put to bed, with Steven Gerrard helping to ensure he would not suffer a home derby defeat since 1999 when he headed home the opener.

And with Daniel Sturridge scoring for the fourth successive game since his return from injury, adding a second within two minutes, taking his tally to 16 out of the new SAS's total of 39 between them, Brendan Rodgers had mastery over Roberto Martinez.

Everton were left beaten and bedraggled, grateful that Sturridge spurned the chance to make it five with the sort of penalty seen at Old Trafford last week.

It was supposed to be the game that showed how close the Merseyside rivals were. Instead, it merely demonstrated how far they are apart.

Not that you would have guessed that from the fevered opening, which saw Ross Barkley, back just 24 days after his broken toe, whistle a long-ranger just over the top.

But soon Liverpool began to make inroads. Tim Howard made harder work than he needed to in beating out Jordan Henderson's volley but his next save, to thwart Suarez after a long ball caused confusion, was the real deal.

This was Liverpool on the front foot, Everton shaken out of their stride, anxious whenever Suarez was in possession.

Raheem Sterling, turning on the afterburners to meet Sturridge's pass, hit the ball at Howard's right leg when he seemed to have done the hard work.

But soon, deservedly, Liverpool were in front after Suarez's shot looped off a defender for a corner.

The Uruguayan's delivery was excellent, as was Gerrard's determination to break clear of three would-be markers - who all let him go - and leap above Antolin Alcaraz to power in from six yards. Martinez must have been apoplectic at the defending, then crestfallen as Romelu Lukaku stayed down and forced to go off. Initially, Everton responded with fire to their misfortune.

Kevin Mirallas' unchecked run from the right saw Phil Jagielka demand a diving save from Simon Mignolet, Gareth Barry blazing the rebound across goal, before Mirallas was inches wide.

Then twice in as many minutes Everton combusted and Sturridge took a full and brutal toll.

The first saw Sterling rob Barry and feed Philippe Coutinho, whose delicious ball allowed Sturridge to scamper in on goal before steering home.

And before Everton knew what had hit them, the knock-out blow, again a combination of great finishing and terrible defending.

Kolo Toure's ball was only a clearance, but unaccountably Jagielka and John Stones were split horribly.

Sturridge was allowed to run through unchallenged and Howard's dash made the decision easy for the forward, lobbing over the keeper and into the vacant net.

Everton were left playing for pride. Within five minutes of the restart, that hope evaporated.

Jagielka passed straight to Suarez just inside the Liverpool half and he needed no second invitation, haring towards goal, keeping Jagielka and Alcaraz at bay before steering home his 23rd of the season.

Well, he had gone nearly three matches without a goal.

Four should have been five, Howard smashing Sterling up in the air after the winger pushed beyond him.

Gerrard and Suarez agreed to give Sturridge his hat-trick chance, only for the striker to smash it into the Kop.

Sturridge then wasted a threeagainst-two break and Suarez, this time, was less forgiving.

The England man was put in his place by Rodgers shortly afterwards when he complained at being substituted - the only discordant note of Liverpool's evening.

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Demolition Derby!

Kopites came expecting a battle, instead they were treated to a procession.

The 222nd instalment of this fixture will go down in the record books as the demolition derby. Liverpool didn't just beat Everton, they battered them into submission on an unforgettable night at Anfield.

"We're the pride of Merseyside," chanted a delirious Kop as normal order was restored. After three derby stalemates, Liverpool reasserted their superiority and in doing so landed a major psychological blow in the battle for Champions League qualification. This was the Reds' most emphatic victory over the Blues since the famous 5-0 rout at Goodison in November 1982 when Ian Rush scored four.

You have to go back another decade for the last time Everton suffered this kind of humiliation across Stanley Park. Daniel Sturridge, whose late header rescued a point when the sides met in November, was once again the scourge of the Blues.

The Reds' derby hero bagged a brilliant brace during a hopelessly one-sided first half. As Everton froze, Liverpool ran riot. Yet again Steven Gerrard, who opening the scoring with a thumping header, proved himself to be the man for the big occasion. The inspirational skipper led the way and others followed.

Luis Suarez added a fourth in the second half and the margin of victory would have been greater had Sturridge not skied his penalty.

This was a personal triumph for manager Brendan Rodgers who finally experienced the joy of a derby triumph at the fourth attempt.

Tactically, he got it spot on as Everton were comprehensively outplayed and outfought in all departments. Rodgers' lengthy injury list meant Liverpool's line up largely picked itself. The Reds boss decided not to gamble on the fitness of Joe Allen who has been hampered by a tight hamstring. That meant there were just three changes from Saturday's FA Cup victory at Bournemouth. Simon Mignolet and Raheem Sterling, who were rested for the trip to the South Coast, were recalled at the expense of Brad Jones and Victor Moses. Jon Flanagan was also handed a start at right-back with Martin Kelly dropping to the bench.

Liverpool found themselves facing a stronger Everton side than expected after Phil Jagielka, Antolin Alcaraz, Steven Pienaar and Ross Barkley were all passed fit, but the Reds swiftly stamped their authority on the contest.

This was the show of passion coupled with tactical discipline Rodgers had demanded. During a frenetic opening spell the home side worked tirelessly as they shut down space all over the pitch and refused to let Everton settle.

The outstanding Flanagan, who grew up just a mile from the ground, knows what this fixture means and he helped set the tone – attacking every ball like his life depended on it and successfully ruffling Pienaar's feathers. Jordan Henderson's volley from edge of the box was pushed away by Tim Howard before Sterling forced a mistake from the struggling Jagielka. The ball dropped kindly to Suarez whose low drive was clawed behind. The Kop roared their approval at Liverpool's combative approach. Having grabbed the game by the scruff of the neck, Rodgers' side simply refused to let go. Sturridge's intelligent through ball picked out the run of Sterling, who had burst between Alcaraz and Leighton Baines. The winger's pace took him clear but Howard raced out to make the block.

It mattered little as in the 21st minute the Reds' pressure was finally rewarded with the breakthrough. Gerrard gave Gareth Barry the slip and leapt above Alcaraz as he gleefully nodded home Suarez's corner. It was the captain's ninth goal against the Blues – a tally only bettered by Rush in Anfield history.

Everton's pain was doubled by the sight of Romelu Lukaku being forced off after Barry clattered into him. Substitute Steven Naismith proved to be a less than able deputy. Buoyed by the goal, Liverpool raised the bar still further. When Suarez tore across the turf to close down Howard who aimlessly hacked it out of play, Rodgers shook his fists in delight. Gerrard showed the same kind of burning desire when he strained every sinew to throw himself into the path of Barkley's strike. Briefly, the beleaguered Blues flickered into life. Mignolet made a smart stop to thwart Jagielka and then Kevin Mirallas dragged his effort just wide of the post. But it didn't last. Twelve minutes before the interval Liverpool doubled their tally. In recent months Philippe Coutinho has been a pale shadow of the genius who lit up Anfield following his arrival from Inter Milan a year ago.

However, the pint sized Brazilian picked the perfect night to rediscover his golden touch. Coutinho picked up possession close to halfway, worked his way into space and delivered a defence-splitting pass for Sturridge, who kept his composure to coolly convert his 15th goal of the season. The England striker only had to wait another two minutes for No 16. Once again his movement left Everton's centre-backs chasing shadows. Sturridge burst on to Kolo Toure's lofted pass and as Howard rushed out he dispatched a stunning lob over the stranded keeper.

The half-time whistle was greeted with thunderous applause as the home fans stood to pay homage to an attacking masterclass. Leon Osman replaced the ineffective Pienaar and the substitute tested Mignolet early in the second half but any lingering hopes of a fightback were ended in the 50th minute.

Jagielka presented Suarez with possession and the Uruguayan ruthlessly made him pay. Suarez ran half the length of the pitch and then fired left footed into the bottom corner for his 23rd league goal of the campaign.

It was all too much for some in the away end who headed for the exit doors. Before they had even crossed Stanley Park Liverpool should have been five up.

The Blues were carved open by a scintillating counter-attack which was only ended when Howard brought down Sterling in the box. Gerrard unselfishly handed the ball over to Sturridge – presenting him with the opportunity to become only the sixth Liverpool player to ever net a derby hat-trick at Anfield. However, it was a chance Sturridge failed to take as he blazed the resulting spot-kick over the bar. In his desperation to make amends, Sturridge managed to frustrate both his manager and strike partner. Sturridge should have teed up Suarez or Coutinho for a tap-in but instead went for goal from an impossible angle. He was taken off shortly after with Rodgers clearly unhappy with the striker's reaction to being substituted. The size of the £12million man's contribution up to that point ensured his dressing room apology to his teammates was instantly accepted. Liverpool cruised towards the finish line with the outstanding Martin Skrtel and Toure ensuring the Blues didn't grab a consolation to ease the heartache. This was a night for the red half of the city to cherish. The challenge facing Rodgers' side is to replicate that energy and intensity between now and May.

Date: 28 January 2014
 Opposition: Everton
 Competition: League

Guardian	Mirror	BBC
Independent	Mail	
Telegraph	Echo	

28 January 2014



Liverpool maintained their pursuit of a top-four place in magnificent style as Everton were thrashed in the Merseyside derby at Anfield.

Billed as the most crucial league meeting between the sides in 30 years, the contest was all over inside 35 minutes as Liverpool raced into a three-goal lead courtesy of Steven Gerrard's header and two goals in three minutes from striker Daniel Sturridge.

Everton's agony was increased as Romelu Lukaku was taken off on a stretcher with ankle ligament damage after Gareth Barry slipped and slid into the striker as he attempted to block Gerrard's opening goal.

Luis Suarez added a fourth for the hosts when he cashed in on Phil Jagielka's mistake and Sturridge wasted the opportunity to secure a derby hat-trick when he blazed a penalty over the top after Raheem Sterling was fouled by keeper Tim Howard.

This emphatic victory, Liverpool's biggest derby triumph since November 1982, allowed them to open up a four-point gap over their neighbours - but the biggest worry for visiting manager Roberto Martinez may be the psychological damage inflicted, as well as the worry over the stricken Lukaku.

It left the Toffees still searching for their first win at Anfield since September 1999 - and there was never any serious hope they might alter that miserable record on a night of Reds dominance.

For Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers, this win will be further evidence that his side can seal a top-four place and maybe achieve even greater things with Arsenal, Chelsea and Manchester City still to come to Anfield this season.

Martinez produced something of a surprise when he recalled Ross Barkley after a broken toe, while captain Jagielka recovered from a hamstring problem picked up in the FA Cup win at Stevenage.

And Barkley almost made the perfect comeback in the opening minute with an ambitious rising drive from 25 yards that was inches over with Reds keeper Simon Mignolet stretching.

After this moment of optimism it was all downhill for Everton, however, not only in the manner in which they were dismantled by Liverpool's attacks but with the crucial loss of Lukaku.

Howard had already saved from Jordan Henderson, Suarez and Sterling before Liverpool went ahead after 21 minutes in an incident that had short- and long-term consequences for Everton and Martinez.

Barry slipped as he tried to track Gerrard at Suarez's corner, allowing the Anfield captain to head in powerfully but also taking out Lukaku, who was carried off on a stretcher with ankle damage after lengthy treatment.

Everton were at last sparked into action as Jagielka's shot was saved by Mignolet and Kevin Mirallas was just off target - but the home side were a constant threat and swiftly added a second.

Youngster John Stones lost Sturridge and the England forward raced on to Philippe Coutinho's pass to loft a cool finish over Howard, a chance the in-form striker never looked like missing.

The visitors were in defensive disarray and Sturridge added another two minutes later, taking advantage of open spaces to accept Kolo Toure's pass and lob Howard brilliantly.

Martinez sent on Leon Osman for Pienaar at half-time and the veteran had a shot well saved by Mignolet before normal service was resumed.

The normally reliable Jagielka was having an unhappy evening and he was the culprit as Everton fell further behind five minutes after the break, conceding possession to Suarez and never having the pace required to catch the striker as he raced half the length of the field to beat Howard.

Liverpool should have inflicted further punishment on Everton when referee Martin Atkinson awarded a penalty after Howard pulled down Sterling. Sturridge took over penalty duties from Gerrard, presumably in search of his hat-trick, but lashed an awful effort high into the Kop.

Everton were left with no hope other than restricting the damage. They achieved this minor objective - how they recover from the way they were taken apart by a rampant Liverpool remains to be seen.

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Full time Match ends, Liverpool 4, Everton 0.

90:00+3:03 Full time Second Half ends, Liverpool 4, Everton 0.

90:00+1:47 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by John Stones.

90:00+1:46 Attempt blocked. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Luis Alberto.

90:00+1:04 Leon Osman (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90:00+1:04 Foul by Luis Alberto (Liverpool.

85:39 Attempt missed. Victor Moses (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Luis Alberto.

82:51 Foul by Antolin Alcaraz (Everton.

82:51 Simon Mignolet (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

82:38 Attempt missed. John Stones (Everton header from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Kevin Mirallas with a cross following a corner.

82:17 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Victor Moses.

79:34 Leighton Baines (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

79:34 Foul by Luis Suárez (Liverpool.

78:57 Substitution Substitution, Liverpool. Luis Alberto replaces Philippe Coutinho.

77:26 Attempt saved. Leon Osman (Everton left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Steven Naismith.

76:00 Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Aly Cissokho.

75:43 Substitution Substitution, Everton. Aiden McGeady replaces Ross Barkley.

73:32 Attempt missed. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

72:38 Substitution Substitution, Liverpool. Martin Kelly replaces Jon Flanagan.

72:10 Foul by Leon Osman (Everton.

72:10 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

71:04 Substitution Substitution, Liverpool. Victor Moses replaces Daniel Sturridge.

69:44 Attempt missed. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from a difficult angle on the left is too high. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho following a fast break.

69:10 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.

69:08 Attempt saved. James McCarthy (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Leighton Baines.

66:39 Attempt missed. Antolin Alcaraz (Everton header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Kevin Mirallas with a cross following a corner.

66:21 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.

65:10 Kevin Mirallas (Everton wins a free kick on the left wing.

65:10 Foul by Steven Gerrard (Liverpool.

62:57 Gareth Barry (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

62:57 Foul by Raheem Sterling (Liverpool.

61:41 Attempt blocked. Kevin Mirallas (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

60:50 Leon Osman (Everton wins a free kick in the attacking half.

60:50 Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool.

59:17 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Tim Howard.

59:16 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool hits the left post with a right footed shot from the left side of the box. Assisted by Luis Suárez following a corner.

58:59 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Antolin Alcaraz.

58:14 Foul by Antolin Alcaraz (Everton.

58:14 Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

56:19 Phil Jagielka (Everton wins a free kick on the right wing.

56:19 Foul by Luis Suárez (Liverpool.

55:13 Foul by Leon Osman (Everton.

55:13 Jon Flanagan (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

55:05 Attempt blocked. Ross Barkley (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Gareth Barry.

54:25 Leon Osman (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

54:25 Foul by Steven Gerrard (Liverpool.

53:56 Penalty missed! Bad penalty by Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot is just a bit too high. Daniel Sturridge should be disappointed.

53:10 Penalty conceded by Tim Howard (Everton after a foul in the penalty area.

53:10 Penalty Liverpool. Raheem Sterling draws a foul in the penalty area.

52:53 Attempt blocked. Kevin Mirallas (Everton right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Leon Osman.

51:28 Booking Kevin Mirallas (Everton is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

50:49 Foul by Kevin Mirallas (Everton.

50:49 Kolo Touré (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

49:17 Goal scored Goal! Liverpool 4, Everton 0. Luis Suárez (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner following a fast break.

48:57 Attempt saved. Leon Osman (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Leighton Baines.

47:44 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Steven Gerrard.

47:29 Attempt blocked. Ross Barkley (Everton left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.

45:00 Second Half begins Liverpool 3, Everton 0.

45:00 Substitution Substitution, Everton. Leon Osman replaces Steven Pienaar.

45:00+3:03 Half time First Half ends, Liverpool 3, Everton 0.

45:00+1:59 Booking Gareth Barry (Everton is shown the yellow card.

45:00+1:55 Foul by Gareth Barry (Everton.

45:00+1:55 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

45:00+1:48 Attempt blocked. Ross Barkley (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Pienaar.

45:00+0:01 Attempt blocked. Kevin Mirallas (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Ross Barkley.

43:24 Antolin Alcaraz (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

43:24 Foul by Luis Suárez (Liverpool.

42:47 Foul by Steven Pienaar (Everton.

42:47 Jon Flanagan (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

42:16 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Kolo Touré.

40:45 James McCarthy (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

40:45 Foul by Raheem Sterling (Liverpool.

40:06 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.

40:03 Attempt blocked. Gareth Barry (Everton header from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Kevin Mirallas with a cross.

39:47 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.

38:13 Foul by Gareth Barry (Everton.

38:13 Luis Suárez (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

37:18 Booking Steven Pienaar (Everton is shown the yellow card.

36:54 Steven Naismith (Everton wins a free kick on the left wing.

36:54 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

34:26 Goal scored Goal! Liverpool 3, Everton 0. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Kolo Touré with a through ball.

33:42 Foul by James McCarthy (Everton.

33:42 Luis Suárez (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

32:18 Goal scored Goal! Liverpool 2, Everton 0. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho with a through ball following a fast break.

31:32 Attempt missed. Kevin Mirallas (Everton right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the left.

30:10 Attempt missed. Gareth Barry (Everton left footed shot from the left side of the box misses to the right.

30:06 Attempt saved. Phil Jagielka (Everton left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the top left corner. Assisted by Kevin Mirallas.

29:28 Corner, Everton. Conceded by Aly Cissokho.

26:47 Gareth Barry (Everton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

26:47 Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool.

26:04 Attempt missed. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Luis Suárez.

25:40 Attempt blocked. Ross Barkley (Everton left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Pienaar.

24:38 Substitution Substitution, Everton. Steven Naismith replaces Romelu Lukaku because of an injury.

23:20 Offside, Liverpool. Raheem Sterling tries a through ball, but Daniel Sturridge is caught offside.

23:01 Delay over. They are ready to continue.

21:58 Delay in match Romelu Lukaku (Everton because of an injury.

20:39 Goal scored Goal! Liverpool 1, Everton 0. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool header from the centre of the box to the top left corner. Assisted by Luis Suárez with a cross following a corner.

20:02 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by John Stones.

20:01 Attempt blocked. Luis Suárez (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

18:22 Foul by Gareth Barry (Everton.

18:22 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

17:33 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Daniel Sturridge with a through ball.

17:13 Foul by Gareth Barry (Everton.

17:13 Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

16:18 Attempt missed. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

15:05 Attempt missed. Steven Pienaar (Everton right footed shot from the right side of the box misses to the left.

14:36 Attempt saved. Luis Suárez (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

10:08 Attempt saved. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

9:35 Foul by Steven Pienaar (Everton.

9:35 Jon Flanagan (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

7:45 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Steven Gerrard following a corner.

7:13 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Tim Howard.

7:12 Attempt saved. Luis Suárez (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner.

6:42 Delay over. They are ready to continue.

5:54 Delay in match Steven Pienaar (Everton because of an injury.

2:41 Attempt saved. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner.

1:03 Attempt missed. Ross Barkley (Everton left footed shot from outside the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Kevin Mirallas.

0:00 First Half begins.

0:00 Lineups are announced and players are warming up.