

Date: 6 March 2016  
 Opposition: Crystal Palace  
 Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Standard
Independent	Mail	BBC

6 March 2016

## THE TIMES

Benteke's penalty stuns free-falling Palace

Crystal Palace 1 Ledley 48 Liverpool Firmino 72, Benteke 90+6 (pen)  
 Referee: A Marriner Attendance: 24,000

Perhaps the next time that Jurgen Klopp ponders his team selection he may consider the possibility of fielding just the ten men in his starting line-up. Until the dismissal of James Milner in the 62nd minute, Liverpool had appeared laboured and lethargic in their play only to be transformed with the introduction of Philippe Coutinho and a dreadful error by Alex McCarthy, the opposing goalkeeper.

Trailing to Joe Ledley's 48th-minute strike and still recovering from the sending off of Milner, Liverpool found another gear as the ten men began to play with a zest and freedom that had eluded them for the majority of the contest.

Yes, they were fortunate. McCarthy's error gifted Liverpool an equaliser that Roberto Firmino gratefully received and Christian Benteke's penalty, which was converted in the 96th minute, also came from a mistake by Palace, but the manner in which Liverpool fought their way back into the contest was admirable.

"We played with more focus," Klopp, the Liverpool manager, said of his team after the dismissal of Milner. "We started well but we didn't have a shot at goal. It was not bad but not good enough. "Usually the plan is to play with more direction in the second half but then we conceded the goal and the red card. Then we had nothing to lose. When you're 1-0 down you have to be greedier.

"We deserved the luck at 1-1, forcing the mistake and using it to score our goal. To be honest, nobody really thought that we would try and make another goal but the ball went into the box, it was a challenge, it was a foul and it was a penalty. Christian took the chance for us."

This victory, Liverpool's first at Selhurst Park in the league since 1997, had appeared unlikely in the opening hour when they struggled to get in the game.

The home side, who had more than played their part in this contest, began brightly and showed little sign of lacking confidence, despite a run of 11 league games without a victory. Palace's assuredness might have come from having won four of their past six league meetings with Liverpool. They were certainly looking comfortable at the interval after the visiting team had failed to register a single effort on target. Palace's level of control was increased within three minutes of the restart. Liverpool, as so often has been the case this season, did not properly defend a corner and, after Damien Delaney's effort deflected into the path of Ledley, the midfielder fired an unstoppable effort past Simon Mignolet and into the far corner. It was no less than Palace deserved, given their dominance, and Liverpool's task became even more difficult with 28 minutes remaining when Milner, who had already been booked for a reckless foul on Yohan Cabaye in the first half, was shown a second yellow card for a poor challenge on Wilfried Zaha.

It was the moment that would transform the contest and yet not in the way Palace might have expected. Milner's absence and the introduction of Coutinho moments before the red card, brought about a whole new dimension to Liverpool's play. The diminutive Brazil playmaker began to exploit gaps in the Palace midfield as Liverpool started to look dangerous for the first time in the contest. Yet, when they did manage to haul themselves level there was nothing skilful or exceptional about it, rather it came as the result of a dreadful mistake by McCarthy. There appeared little danger when Ledley passed the ball back towards his goalkeeper but as McCarthy strode forward to kick the ball downfield he slipped and Firmino reacted first before calmly firing the ball into the net. It was a horrible moment for the Palace goalkeeper, playing in place of the injured Wayne Hennessey, and it was one from which his team would never fully recover. Now it was Liverpool who appeared most likely to win and McCarthy had to be alert to prevent Benteke, on in place of Divock Origi, from firing the visiting team ahead after meeting Dejan Lovren's header. Liverpool continued to push forward and, with three minutes of normal time remaining, came within a whisker of taking the lead. Alberto Moreno, who had endured a difficult afternoon in defence, strode forward to meet a loose ball 30 yards from the Palace goal before unleashing an unstoppable effort that flew past McCarthy before thudding against the post.

Palace, now clearly struggling to keep pace with Liverpool's renewed vigour, were dropping deeper and deeper with McCarthy once again called upon to turn Benteke's curling effort away to safety. The home side did not heed the warning. With the game in stoppage time, Liverpool struck in controversial circumstances. Benteke, who had been a nuisance since entering the action as a substitute, ran into the penalty area and tumbled to the ground under pressure from Delaney.

There appeared to be minimal contact, if any whatsoever, but Scott Ledger, the assistant referee, raised his flag and Andre Marriner, the referee, pointed to the spot.

Benteke, possibly the coolest man inside Selhurst Park, stood up and fired the spot kick past McCarthy before racing away to celebrate with the visiting supporters and leave Liverpool within six points of the Champions League places.

RATINGS Crystal Palace (4-2-3-1): A McCarthy 4 -- J Ward 6, S Dann 7, D Delaney 6, P Souare 7 -- M Jedinak 7, J Ledley 7 (sub: B Sako, 82min) -- W Zaha 7, Y Cabaye 7 (sub: J Mutch, 70 6), Y Bolasie 7 -- E Adebayor 7 (sub: D Gayle, 82). Substitutes not used: J Speroni, Lee Chung Yong, M Chamakh, M Kelly. Booked: Dann.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1): S Mignolet 8 -- J Flanagan (sub: P Coutinho, 61 8), D Lovren 8, M Sakho 7, A Moreno 6 -- E Can 7, J Milner 5 -- A Lallana 6, J Henderson 5, R Firmino (sub: K Toure, 88) -- D Origi 6 (sub: C Benteke, 80). Substitutes not used: D Ward, N Clyne, D Sturridge, J Allen. Booked: Moreno, Henderson, Milner. Sent off: Milner.

## the guardian

Benteke penalty snatches win for 10-man Liverpool at Crystal Palace

This was the kind of reverse which can knock the stuffing out of a team. Crystal Palace had been in a position to exorcise dismal form here, leading against depleted opponents with an opportunity theirs for the taking to move well clear of the condemned. That they still departed distraught, undermined first by a goalkeeping error and then the award of a penalty deep into stoppage time that had the locals apoplectic, has further darkened the gloom. At present, they are the team whose nosedive is offering hope of a reprieve to those in the bottom four.

The sense of despair was palpable at the final whistle. Palace could rage in the belief Christian Benteke had been on the tumble well before his left foot made slight contact with a sliding Damien Delaney's right knee. The centre-half, having initially and unwisely slid in as the striker eased around him, had been checking his left-foot challenge when Benteke flicked out to find contact with the Irishman's follow-through. The linesman in front of the visiting supporters flagged for the spot kick immediately, even if the referee Andre Marriner needed some persuasion to confirm the award. The conversion itself, six minutes into stoppage time, was the last action of the match.

Yet if that was a brutal finale, the home side really only had themselves to blame for failing to settle the contest well before a streetwise substitute could snatch such belated reward. Palace had been the dominant force up to the moment Joe Ledley thumped them ahead early in the second half, and should have been in total command as soon as James Milner was sent off for a second bookable offence just after the hour mark. Thereafter, however, they wilted horribly, betraying all the fragility of a team who have now staggered through 12 matches and 11 weeks in the Premier League without a win.

Their composure was shattered from the moment Alex McCarthy gifted the visitors an equaliser, all authority wrested away in the blink of an eye and Liverpool, suddenly focused where previously they had been limp and ineffective, the more persuasive threat in what time that remained.

The colour had rather drained from Alan Pardew as he confronted this latest setback post match. His exasperation with the penalty award was made clear, but it was the wastefulness of the display which had properly floored a manager who can normally pluck positives from the most emphatic of defeats.

"Alex's error affected us and made us nervous," he said. "We haven't won for a while but when you're struggling, you have to try and react well. One or two of my players didn't, if I'm honest.

"That's human nature to a certain extent, but also something I need to eradicate. The way the game unfolded was not good for us. It was all really disappointing after we scored. Up to that point it was as good as we've been, so I'm frustrated with the result, frustrated with the referee, frustrated with the way we didn't push on once ahead, frustrated with my substitutes who should have done better, frustrated with myself. We never pushed on in that last 15 minutes, and that was the biggest down side of the game. I don't feel like there were many positives to be had"

He took leave of his media briefing at that point, his mood having deteriorated. Ledley, down in the mouth of the tunnel, was busy telling the world the result was "devastating", which summed things up a bit more succinctly.

Not so for Liverpool. Jürgen Klopp, whose first Premier League loss had been suffered to these opponents back in November, can point to this win as evidence of proper progress given how Palace have haunted those from Merseyside in recent times. They have snuffed out title challenges and even gatecrashed Steven Gerrard's final hurrah, and the last three top-flight games had gone the way of the club from south London. Yet the manner in which the visitors responded to losing Milner, penalised for fouls on Yohan Cabaye and Wilfried Zaha, was admirable. Klopp spoke of passion taking over. It eclipsed anything Palace could offer.

Divock Origi had missed an open goal but Liverpool's urgency started to peg Palace back. Ledley's back pass 19 minutes from time was routine, but McCarthy slipped as he attempted to clear and presented the ball to Roberto Firmino. The Brazilian collected and converted a seventh goal in eight Premier League games and the complexion of the occasion changed. McCarthy had been making his first appearance since September. He would depart at the end inconsolable with tears stinging his eyes.

The visitors, now only six points off fourth place, struck a post through Alberto Moreno and Benteke twice went close in that baffling period when Palace would normally have expected to prevail. All their earlier authority, when Yannick Bolasie and Zaha had wounded Liverpool down the flanks and Emmanuel Adebayor nodded against the bar, felt an age away.

Ledley's crisp finish from the edge of the area as the visitors failed to clear a corner should have put them on the road to redemption. As it is, they continue to hover unneringly above the scrap at the foot. This whole occasion had been reduced to a microcosm of their season.

Man of the match Mile Jedinak (Crystal Palace).

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## The Mail

**BENTEKE HITS A HOT SPOT!** Christian's late tumble in box helps 10-man Liverpool sink Palace

SLOW- MOTION replays were scrutinised, rewind and scrutinised again. Debate raged about the weight of contact from Damien Delaney and the reaction by Christian Benteke but only one man mattered.

Referee Andre Marriner trusted his assistant on the touchline in close proximity to nearly 3,000 Liverpool fans and Scott Ledger was waving his flag to indicate a foul.

Marriner pointed to the spot and Benteke climbed to his feet to score with remarkable coolness for a striker who was close to 12 hours into a personal goal drought.

And that was that. The game was decided in a matter of seconds, deep into stoppage time. There was barely time to restart before the final whistle went. Liverpool banked three more points despite trailing when James Milner was sent off in the 62nd minute for a second yellow card for a second late, sliding tackle. It was a spirited fightback by Jurgen Klopp's team, who performed with a healthier tempo and created more chances with 10 men than they did with 11. Joe Ledley fired Crystal Palace ahead, but a mistake by goalkeeper Alex McCarthy gifted Roberto Firmino the chance to level.

Honours, it seemed, would finish even. Then Benteke, on as a late substitute, chased a lost cause into the area and everything changed. Delaney may have been tiring but his decision to go to ground was a bad one. His right knee touched the heel of Benteke's left boot, presenting an irresistible chance to go sprawling. Not surprisingly, the managers approached the flashpoint from opposite angles, but they were surfing on contrasting emotions.

The incident had supplied Klopp with the boost of back-to-back wins following the disappointment of defeat on penalties by Manchester City in the Capital One Cup final. Liverpool will go into Thursday's Europa League clash at home to Manchester United in good heart.

The same decision delivered an excruciating blow to Alan Pardew, who tore off his coat and hurled it furiously into the dug-out when the winner went in.

Pardew goes back to his old club Reading for an FA Cup quarterfinal on Friday, but Palace have gone 12 games without a win in the Barclays Premier League, a slump stretching back to mid-December. They have taken only four points from 36 and, while still nine clear of the bottom three, are locked in a downward spiral.

This was a game they ought to have taken something from, having started with great purpose and a flurry of good chances.

Simon Mignolet dashed out to make his first save at the feet of Yannick Bolasie after good work on the left by Emmanuel Adebayor, who opened with an impressive 20 minutes, before fading.

Adebayor forced Liverpool goalkeeper Mignolet into a sharp save, low to his right, and then rattled the bar when he should have hit the target with a header from a fabulous cross by Pape Souare.

Liverpool created nothing of note in a subdued first-half display and went behind three minutes after the interval, conceding from a corner for the 10th time this season. Souare and Mile Jedinak had shots blocked before the ball squirted loose to the edge of the box, where Ledley arrived to connect with a left-footer which zipped into the bottom corner.

Klopp refused to criticise his players for their worrying record from corners. Instead, he hailed Crystal Palace as the best team in the land from set-pieces. 'It feels like they have 500 set-pieces,' said the German.

Liverpool's first change was to send on Philippe Coutinho for Jon Flanagan but Milner was sent off within seconds. Frustrated not to be awarded a free-kick for a challenge by Adebayor, Milner chased after the ball and hurtled into Wilfried Zaha, just as the Palace winger shifted the ball out of reach with a quick shuffle of his feet.

Milner was dismissed and, strangely, Liverpool improved. Suddenly, they had more urgency or, as Klopp claimed, 'focus' in the 3-4-2 formation they adopted.

Divock Origi turned a good opportunity wide at the near post and then McCarthy's blunder invited the Merseysiders back into the game. There was no danger as Ledley rolled a simple pass back towards his goalkeeper. But McCarthy slipped and screwed the clearance straight to Firmino. The Brazilian took a touch, advanced towards goal and slid a low shot into the net for his seventh in his last eight league games.

Palace were gripped by the fear of a team with rotten form and fragile confidence and Liverpool, to their credit, went forward in search of a winner.

Benteke almost scored with his first touch when Dejan Lovren flicked on a corner but his volley was saved by McCarthy. Alberto Moreno then unleashed a terrific effort from 30 yards which smacked a post with McCarthy beaten.

Benteke saw another effort saved before the penalty and his first goal of 2016. It was his eighth since a transfer from Aston Villa and, although more was expected of the PS32.5million striker, his goals are usually significant. Four times in the league he has scored the winner: against Bournemouth, Leicester, Sunderland and now Palace. This one hoisted Liverpool into seventh, six points from the top four.

## The Daily Telegraph

Pardew demands action as Benteke provokes Palace

The most significant physical contribution at Selhurst Park was that provided by Damien Delaney's knee. In the last seconds of a game Liverpool had shown little inclination to win, the slightest of touches from the Palace defender sent substitute Christian Benteke hurtling dramatically to the turf. Initially referee Andre Marriner awarded a goal-kick. But after intervention from Scott Ledger, his assistant, he changed his opinion to a penalty.

The Belgian picked himself up and rolled the ball into the corner of Alex McCarthy's net, sending Jurgen Klopp on the touchline into a frenzy of exuberant celebration. And no wonder the Liverpool manager looked pleased: this was three points it would have been absurd to imagine half an hour before.

"We needed a bit of luck, of course," said Klopp. "To be honest nobody thought that we would try to make another goal, but Christian did. It was really good." So it was that the Liverpool manager left south London ahead of his very local European test on Thursday with the biggest gift of his season. His team were hardly in this game, barely registering a shot, a man down after James Milner had been sent off for two bookable lunges. Then first McCarthy, slipping on the turf to spoon the ball straight to the feet of Roberto Firmino, handed them an equaliser to match Joe Ledley's smart opener for the home side, before Delaney presented them with the win while on his knees. Some guys get all the luck. And Klopp's grin was as wide as Alan Pardew's scowl.

"That one: wow," said the Palace manager of the penalty decision.

"The linesman assumes that little touch is a penalty. He [Benteke] makes the most of it. If you think that touch affects the fall he makes you seriously need to have another look. It's an issue that people need to have a look at in the game."

You could understand Pardew's frustration. Palace had begun so brightly. With Yannick Bolasie back pulling the strings, with Wilfried Zaha tearing down the right wing, with Emmanuel Adebayor quick and mobile despite being weighed down by several excess pounds of hair, they bore no resemblance to a side who have the worst record in the Premier League this calendar year (and that includes Aston Villa).

Within the first 10 minutes Adebayor, played in by a deft Bolasie touch, had forced Simon Mignolet to save brilliantly, then hit the bar with a header from the ensuing corner. Everything suggested the long drought stretching back to Dec 12 was about to end: this was surely going to be a home win at long last.

Across the pitch, Liverpool were stretched. Alberto Moreno was struggling to contain Zaha; Milner was booked for a sharp tackle on Yohan Cabaye. Then, after 47 minutes, came the reward for Palace. Cabaye took a corner, the ball pinballed around the Liverpool area, Pape Souare had a shot that cannoned out to Ledley, who fired low from the edge of the area into the corner of Mignolet's goal.

The goal spurred Palace forward. Zaha was causing problems with every incursion and, on 62 minutes, an increasingly tetchy Milner brought him down on the edge of the Palace area and was sent off for a second bookable offence.

At that point Palace should have eased away. Instead, Klopp brought on Philippe Coutinho for full-back Jon Flanagan and told his team to attack. With such bold endeavour, the balance swung Liverpool's way. And their luck changed too.

Barely five minutes after going down to 10 men, a mistake by the Palace goalkeeper gifted Liverpool unearned parity. The ball was passed back to McCarthy by Ledley in such a routine manner that the Welshman peeled away looking for the return pass. But McCarthy slipped going to kick and spooned the softest of openings to Firmino, who slid the ball home.

"I have seen worse goalkeeper mistakes," said Klopp. "But if Firmino is not in that space, nothing happens. We make pressure. If you like, we forced that situation."

From there, Palace barely had another shot as Liverpool pressed ever higher up the pitch, Moreno rattling the post with a 30-yard fizzer of a shot. As Klopp sent on a further forward reinforcement in Benteke, the momentum shifted entirely. And then came the penalty, a moment that will occupy Pardew's nightmares for years.

Sinking Palace on the slide Crystal Palace's last 12 Premier League matches Lost Drawn 4 4pts 8 The previous 12 Premier League matches Lost Won 4 6 20 pts 2 Drawn

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### Benteke's penalty leaves a bad taste for Palace

From a draw that would have counted as a moral victory, Liverpool's 10 men lost the moral high ground and gained a win in the most dubious of circumstances. Substitute Christian Benteke, receiving the merest of touches in the last minute of added time from Damien Delaney's knee - not a trip, as required by the laws of the game - went to ground and then stood up to roll in the penalty awarded by a furiously flagging assistant referee.

It would have been perfectly acceptable justice had the striker knocked in one of the two chances that fell to him in his 10 minutes on the field after replacing Divock Origi, for Liverpool reacted superbly to James Milner's sending off with half an hour to play.

Rightly sensing that Palace would be nervous hanging on to their lead for a first league victory since mid-December, the visitors went for the jugular, benefiting from a howler by recalled goalkeeper Alex McCarthy 10 minutes after Milner's red card. It was just the manner of the winning goal that left a bad taste.

Palace, sliding from fifth place at the turn of the year to 15th, must feel most things are going against them, although they are not helping themselves. Denied that long overdue victory by Sunderland's late equalising goal in midweek, they never looked like the side with the extra man.

Just when they finally have a striker scoring goals, in Connor Wickham - four in the past two games - he was out injured. Yannick Bolasie proved a good partner for Emmanuel Adebayor, who hit the crossbar early on, but Wilfried Zaha had one of his days when the tricks did not come off and a telling final ball failed to materialise.

In a game that started and finished at full pelt, falling away somewhat in between, Liverpool were solid at the back, if lacking inspiration further forward. They were indebted, too, to Simon Mignolet on an afternoon of contrasting fortunes for the two goalkeepers.

In the first quarter of an hour the Belgian went down bravely to save from Bolasie, who had been played in by Adebayor during a classic Palace counter-attack. Mignolet then kept out Adebayor's low curler that was creeping inside the near post, but was beaten when the striker's header from a cross by left-back Pape Souar[c] came back off the bar.

Jordan Henderson, clattering Bolasie on the touchline right in front of an irate Alan Pardew, and Milner, late on Yohan Cabaye, both received deserved yellow cards from referee Andre Marriner but the Liverpool captain trod more carefully after that than his more experienced England colleague.

After Joe Ledley had put Palace in front with a low drive just inside a post, for his first goal in 13 months, Milner lost the ball and recklessly dived in on Zaha. For a player sent off at the far end of Selhurst Park it is a long and lonely walk to the tunnel.

Liverpool now made all the chances, short as they had been of them previously. Roberto Firmino's shot at McCarthy in the 65th minute was arguably their first on target and, shortly afterwards, Origi squeezed another effort wide after a cut-back by Adam Lallana.

The goalkeeper, back in the team for the first time since September because of an injury to Wayne Hennessey, had his moment to forget in the 72nd minute when slipping as he cleared Ledley's backpass, sending the ball straight to a grateful Firmino, who knocked it back past him.

Benteke probably ought to have scored with his first touch as Dejan Lovren headed down a corner to him, but there was insufficient power in the shot. Left-back Alberto Moreno showed him the way with a thunderous drive from 25 yards that hit the inside of a post, at which point Liverpool looked happy with an honourable draw and Kolo Tour[c] was sent on in an effort to secure it.

There was still time for Philippe Coutinho to feed Benteke for another shot at McCarthy and then, with four minutes of added time almost all over, came the decisive moment. Delaney, as Pardew, his manager, claimed, genuinely appeared to be pulling out of any challenge on Benteke, aware of what the consequences could be.

He was all the more horrified to see referee Marriner have a long think and then indicate a penalty that the substitute rolled in with the utmost calm for his first goal since 30 December, putting Liverpool just six points behind fourth-placed Manchester City.

The two teams will therefore turn to cup football this week in different moods. Pardew can only hope for a change of fortune in the FA Cup sixth round at Reading on Friday, while Jrgen Klopp claims to have the best range of substitutes he has had in 15 years ahead of the Europa League tie with Manchester United that starts at Anfield the previous night.



**BEAST OR FAMINE;** After a worrying lack of form and goals, Benteke roars back with a powerful display off the bench and a coolly-taken, controversial winner

CRYSTAL PALACE 1

LIVERPOOL 2

Ledley 48 Firmino 72,

Benteke 90 pen

HOW Christian Benteke needed this.

The PS32million striker bought to fire Liverpool to glory had been struggling so badly he had become the Premier League's most expensive sub.

Having failed to convince Jurgen Klopp that he could fit into his plans, Benteke started on the bench for the sixth game running, with the rumour factory hinting at a summer move for the big Belgian.

But he capped a dramatic fightback by 10-man Liverpool to end his 13-game goal drought and breathe new life not just into the Reds' bid for European football but his Anfield career too.

Yes, it was only a penalty but it was a crucial, match-winning one that came at the end of a 10-minute cameo off the bench that was full of pace, power and intent.

There was huge controversy surrounding his biggest impact on the game when he went crashing to the ground in the box after minimal contact from Palace defender Damien Delaney.

Fuming Palace boss Alan Pardew threw his jacket to the ground in disgust when referee Andre Marriner pointed to the spot after consulting his assistant and Palace players appealed in vain.

Benteke left them to it and calmly slotted home the winner to

help Liverpool make it three league wins in a row for the first time in a year.

Pardew's frustration was understandable. Palace had been well in control after Joe Ledley's opener, and James Milner's dismissal for two deserved yellow cards gave them a one-man advantage.

But the game turned after a howler from his goalkeeper Alex McCarthy led to Roberto Firmino's equaliser before Benteke's late show.

Palace have now gone 12 games without a win and, when they lose to Liverpool, maybe it really is time to start worrying.

The south Londoners have been a bogey side for Liverpool in the last couple of seasons and beating them had almost become routine.

They wrecked Liverpool's title bid in 2014 with a storming Selhurst Park comeback from 3-0 down to earn a draw, before winning the last three clashes.

And it looked like normal service would be resumed early on as Palace - inspired by Yannick Bolasie, Liverpool's chief tormentor over the last two years - overwhelmed the visitors.

Anfield keeper Simon Mignolet denied Bolasie and Emmanuel Adebayor and needed the help of his crossbar to keep out a header from the Togo striker.

Palace made the breakthrough three minutes after the break when Ledley rifled in from the edge of the box.

And their hopes of a first win since December grew when Milner chopped down Wilfried Zaha to earn his second yellow of the game after an hour.

But 10 minutes later McCarthy, in for the injured Wayne Hennessey, slipped as he attempted to clear Ledley's backpass and Firmino pounced to equalise.

Palace started to get nervous and Liverpool smelt blood.

Benteke volleyed his first touch straight at McCarthy, Alberto Moreno hit the post from 30 yards, and keeper McCarthy then won another duel with Benteke.

But, with seconds to spare, Benteke finally got the better of McCarthy from 12 yards, with a little help from Delaney and assistant referee Scott Ledger.

THINGS WE LEARNT

Bolasie is so vital for Palace's

Palace's dip in form coincided with Yannick Bolasie's absence through injury. He is renowned for his audacious trickery but he also showed great pace, power and work-rate

Benteke showed Klopp what he can do

Benteke doesn't fit into Klopp's style of play and will surely be on the move in the summer.. but he gave food for thought by winning and converting a late penalty Klopp had one eye on United

Liverpool face Manchester United in the Europa League on Thursday - and Klopp rested Daniel Sturridge, Philippe Coutinho and Nathaniel Clyne for that clash Palace's heads have not dropped

Palace might have been on a horror winless run but you wouldn't have known it by their performance. Their heads haven't dropped.. they just need a bit of luck Liverpool remain in top-four fight

It's a big ask but this win moves the Reds up to seventh in the table, six points behind Manchester City, who occupy the final Champions League spot

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### Graft and fight of Reds illustrates Klopp effect in all its glory

Here was the Jurgen Klopp effect in all its glory. This was the perfect illustration of what he has achieved over the past five months. Liverpool have enjoyed more emphatic triumphs under his stewardship and they have landed more prized scalps than Crystal Palace. But in many ways this was the biggest result of Klopp's blossoming tenure because it showcased more than any other the remarkable change in mindset he has overseen. When Palace inflicted his first defeat as Reds boss back in November, Klopp bemoaned that he felt "pretty alone".

The sight of hundreds of fans heading for the Anfield exits after Scott Dann scored late on was alien to him. That afternoon the scale of the challenge facing him was laid bare. Aside from concerns over quality, there was a chronic lack of belief both in the dressing room and in the stands. Klopp inherited a squad of players who had previous for wilting in the face of adversity. When the odds were stacked against them, they crumbled. Shoulders hunched. They looked resigned to their fate. Not any more. Now they graft and fight to the finish. That never-say-die spirit Klopp has instilled came to the fore at Selhurst Park.

When James Milner was sent off for recklessly picking up a second yellow card just past the hour mark, Liverpool looked doomed. They already trailed to Joe Ledley's strike and had struggled to cause Palace any real problems with 11 men. Yet, remarkably, they dug deep. Roberto Firmino capitalised on Alex McCarthy's howler to restore parity and then came the dramatic late twist deep into stoppage time. Substitute Christian Benteke was brought down by Damien Delaney's foolish lunge and the £32.5million striker stepped up to coolly slot home the spot-kick. It was the first time in Premier League history that Liverpool have come from a goal down and a man down to win. After the final whistle a beaming Klopp raced on to the field to embrace his players before joining in the celebrations in front of the jubilant travelling Kop. Doubters are now believers.

A week ago Liverpool had been left devastated by defeat on penalties to Manchester City in the Capital One Cup final at Wembley. The fear was that such a painful setback could derail the rest of the campaign. But the response has been hugely impressive. All that hurt has been channelled into achieving two very different victories. "Stay angry," was Klopp's message and it got through. A season has been revived. Having played with a real swagger in sweeping City aside in midweek, this win was all about guts and resilience. Liverpool are back in the race for the top four and will head into Thursday's mouthwatering Europa League last 16 first leg against Manchester United at Anfield with momentum.

Benteke showed he has stomach for fight to stay at Liverpool. This was payback for all the misery Palace have inflicted on the Reds in recent years. Since the infamous 3-3 draw which killed off Liverpool's title dream under Brendan Rodgers, the Eagles had won all three league meetings. They had wrecked Steven Gerrard's Anfield farewell before returning to upset Klopp last November. Alan Pardew cried foul and accused Benteke of diving to earn the penalty, but replays proved that Delaney clearly made contact with the Belgian. It was a big moment for Benteke, who picked himself up to end a 14-game goal drought dating back to December. It's been a torrid few months for Benteke with the second most expensive signing in the club's history dropping down the pecking order admit growing doubts about his future.

But he rejected interest from China in January because he's determined to be a success at Anfield and here was evidence that he has the stomach for the fight ahead. As well as being testament to Klopp's man-management skills, this was also a tactical triumph for the German. Fortune certainly favoured the brave as he threw on Philippe Coutinho and Benteke in search of a way back into the contest. His decision to switch to 3-4-2 after Milner's dismissal was crucial as Liverpool took control – despite their numerical disadvantage.

With the injury issues having eased, Klopp now has more options than at any point in his reign. Having game-changers on the bench makes a huge difference. Leaving out Daniel Sturridge was a bold call but Divock Origi deserved to keep his place. After a slow start to his Reds career, the young Belgian increasingly looks the part and didn't let anyone down before making way for Benteke late on. Liverpool started brightly before losing their way during a frenetic opening 45 minutes.

They matched Palace physically and refused to be bullied but it was all perspiration rather than inspiration. Klopp's men were indebted to birthday boy Simon Mignolet, who expertly denied both Yannick Bolasie and Emmanuel Adebayor. There was another let-off when Adebayor nodded against the bar. When they attacked, the Reds over-complicated matters and promising situations repeatedly came to nothing. Three minutes into the second half they conceded in familiar fashion. Liverpool failed to clear Yohan Cabaye's corner and Ledley took full advantage.

Booked for upending Cabaye in the first half, Milner then lunged in on Wilfried Zaha and paid the price. The experienced midfielder should have known better. But rather than capitulate like they have done in South London in recent years, Liverpool stood tall and rallied. Dejan Lovren was outstanding as the visitors dealt with everything else Palace threw at them.

The £20million Croatian centre-back won all his aerial battles and kept Bolasie quiet. Mamadou Sakho, who returned in place of Kolo Toure, was equally as combative alongside him. Emre Can, who dropped into a back three after the red card, maintained his recent purple patch.

The equaliser with 18 minutes to go was a gift. McCarthy slipped as he went to clear and scuffed it straight to Firmino, who pocketed his eighth goal of the season. Benteke was introduced soon after as Liverpool surged forward in search of a winner. Alberto Moreno's low 25-yarder cannoned back off the inside of the post before the ice-cool Benteke took centre stage.

Revenge really is a dish best served cold. Now Liverpool have a score to settle with United.

**MATCH FACTS**  
**Crystal Palace** : McCarthy, Ward, Dann, Delaney, Souare, Zaha, Jedinak, Cabaye (Mutch 69), Ledley (Gayle 81), Bolasie, Adebayor (Sako 81).  
**Not used** : Speroni, Kelly, Lee, Chamakh.  
**Liverpool** : Mignolet, Flanagan (Coutinho 61), Lovren, Sakho, Moreno, Henderson, Can, Milner, Lallana, Firmino (Toure 89), Origi (Benteke 80).  
**Not used** : Ward, Clyne, Allen, Sturridge.  
**Referee** : Andre Marriner  
**Goals** : Ledley 48, Firmino 72, Benteke 90+5  
**Bookings** : Henderson, Milner, Dann, Moreno  
**Red cards** : Milner (second yellow)  
**Man of the match** : Dejan Lovren. A dominant defensive display from the Croatian centre-back.

## EveningStandard.

### Christian Benteke penalty for 10-man visitors sees Eagles' winless run extend to 12 games

Christian Benteke scored a controversial injury-time penalty to give Liverpool victory against Crystal Palace and extend the Eagles' winless run to 12 Premier League games.

Substitute Benteke scored from the spot in the sixth minute of stoppage time after Damien Delaney was adjudged to have brought him down inside the area. Replays seemed to showed there was slight contact and Benteke went down. Palace protested but they are now without a win in 12 Premier League matches. A blunder from stand-in goalkeeper Alex McCarthy had earlier gifted 10-man Liverpool a way back into the game after Joe Ledley's opener. McCarthy was preferred to Julian Speroni with Wayne Hennessey out injured and his mistake cost Palace.

Palace had been heading for a vital three points when Ledley scored at start of the second half and James Milner was then sent off for Liverpool. But McCarthy handed Liverpool a route back into the game when he miss-hit a routine clearance straight to Roberto Firmino and the Liverpool forward scored. Liverpool won it deep into stoppage time.

Alan Pardew will rue a missed opportunity for Palace, who dominated most of this match and should have won the game.

Palace certainly did not play like a team looking for their first win since before Christmas and they should really have gone ahead inside the opening 10 minutes Yannick Bolasie and Emmanuel Adebayor had already seen good efforts saved by Liverpool goalkeeper Simon Mignolet before Adebayor smacked the crossbar with a powerful header from six yards. Pardew knew his side should have been in front.

But Palace were causing Liverpool all kinds of problems with the quick and direct style that saw them perform so well during the first half of the season. Yohan Cabaye curled into the side-netting with Mignolet struggling to get across. Damien Delaney headed over from a free-kick. Liverpool had blown Manchester City away at Anfield on Wednesday but they rarely threatened in the first half.

Milner saw a free-kick deflected wide before receiving his first yellow card just before the break for a foul on Cabaye.

Palace went ahead four minutes into the second half. Liverpool failed to clear a corner and Ledley buried the ball low past Mignolet from the edge of the area. It was no more than Palace had deserved. Klopp responded by brining on Philippe Coutinho just after the hour mark but, less than two minutes later, Liverpool were down to 10 men.

Milner received his second booking for bringing down the excellent Wilfried Zaha and the England midfielder had no complaints as he was shown a red card. Palace struggled against the 10 men and McCarthy gifted Liverpool an equaliser 18 minutes before time.

McCarthy, under no pressure, hit a routine clearance straight to Firmino and the Brazilian took a touch before calmly slotting home. Benteke won it at the death.

Date: 6 March 2016  
 Opposition: Crystal Palace  
 Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Standard
Independent	Mail	BBC

6 March 2016



A stoppage-time penalty by Christian Benteke gave 10-man Liverpool a dramatic 2-1 win over Crystal Palace.

Benteke went down following a challenge by Damien Delaney and got up to coolly score the spot-kick.

Palace had led through Joe Ledley's 48th-minute finish and Liverpool's James Milner was sent off for a second yellow card on 62 minutes.

A calamitous slip by Palace keeper Alex McCarthy gifted Liverpool their equaliser, scored by Roberto Firmino.

The defeat leaves Alan Pardew's men without a win in 12 Premier League matches.

**Penalty drama at the end**

The penalty was a sensational end to the match, with Palace boss Pardew hurling his coat to the ground in frustration.

Delaney's knee touched Benteke's ankle and referee Andre Marriner, guided by a well-placed assistant official, awarded the match-winning spot-kick.

It gave McCarthy the chance to become a hero after his earlier mistake, but Benteke stepped up to end 715 goalless minutes in all competitions.

**Costly blunder by keeper**

Palace, the only team without a Premier League victory in 2016, were on target to win after Ledley netted as the ball ping-ponged around the box following a corner.

But the error by the recalled McCarthy changed all that.

The 26-year-old keeper, back in the Palace side for the first time since September with Wayne Hennessey injured, slid in attempting what seemed a straightforward clearance.

But he kicked the ball straight to Roberto Firmino, who accepted the gift by making it 1-1 in the 72nd minute.

**Liverpool's 10 men on top**

The win means Liverpool are now up to seventh in the table and just six points behind fourth-placed Manchester City.

And they did it by dominating the match after going down to 10 men.

They were losing at that stage and it looked like another case of Liverpool's inconsistency after their superb 3-0 midweek win over Manchester City.

The stats show they earned it as, despite losing Milner, Liverpool ran further as a team than Palace over the 90 minutes, clocking a collective 113km to their hosts' 111km.

**Man of the match - Adam Lallana (Liverpool)**

**The stats you need to know**

Palace have gone 12 Premier League matches without a win (D4 L8), the current longest winless run in the top-flight.

Roberto Firmino (11) has scored or assisted more Premier League goals in 2016 than any other player (7 goals, 4 assists).

James Milner was sent off in a Premier League game for only the second time in his career (first v WBA in Oct 2012).

No Premier League side has scored more goals from corners this season than Crystal Palace (10) - level with Spurs.

Christian Benteke ended a run of 715 minutes in all competitions without a goal for Liverpool.

**What's next?**

Spirits will be high in the Liverpool camp as they host Manchester United in the first leg of their Europa League tie on Thursday. Their next Premier League match is away to Southampton on Sunday, 20 March.

Crystal Palace's sights now turn to their first FA Cup quarter-final final for 21 years. On Friday, they are away to Reading, the only non-Premier League club left in the competition.

Date: 6 March 2016  
 Opposition: Crystal Palace  
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6 March 2016



Match ends, Crystal Palace 1, Liverpool 2.

90'+7' Second Half ends, Crystal Palace 1, Liverpool 2.

90'+6' Goal! Crystal Palace 1, Liverpool 2. Christian Benteke (Liverpool converts the penalty with a right footed shot to the bottom right corner.

90'+4' Penalty Liverpool. Christian Benteke draws a foul in the penalty area.

90'+4' Penalty conceded by Damien Delaney (Crystal Palace after a foul in the penalty area.

90'+3' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool).

90'+3' Yannick Bolasie (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90'+3' Attempt saved. Christian Benteke (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

90' Christian Benteke (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

90' Foul by Scott Dann (Crystal Palace).

89' Attempt blocked. Emre Can (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Christian Benteke.

88' Substitution, Liverpool. Kolo Touré replaces Roberto Firmino.

88' Offside, Crystal Palace. Mile Jedinak tries a through ball, but Yannick Bolasie is caught offside.

87' Attempt missed. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the right.

87' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool hits the right post with a left footed shot from outside the box.

86' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

86' Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool).

86' Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace wins a free kick on the right wing.

83' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

83' Bakary Sako (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

82' Substitution, Crystal Palace. Dwight Gayle replaces Emmanuel Adebayor.

82' Substitution, Crystal Palace. Bakary Sako replaces Joe Ledley.

81' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

81' Foul by Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace).

81' Attempt blocked. Mile Jedinak (Crystal Palace right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

80' Attempt saved. Christian Benteke (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Dejan Lovren with a headed pass.

80' Substitution, Liverpool. Christian Benteke replaces Divock Origi.

79' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Pape Souaré.

76' Attempt missed. Scott Dann (Crystal Palace header from the centre of the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Jordan Mutch with a cross following a corner.

75' Corner, Crystal Palace. Conceded by Alberto Moreno.

74' Attempt missed. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Alberto Moreno.

74' Divock Origi (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

74' Foul by Joel Ward (Crystal Palace).

72' Goal! Crystal Palace 1, Liverpool 1. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner.

70' Substitution, Crystal Palace. Jordan Mutch replaces Yohan Cabaye.

69' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

69' Pape Souaré (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

68' Attempt missed. Divock Origi (Liverpool left footed shot from very close range is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

67' Dejan Lovren (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

67' Foul by Yannick Bolasie (Crystal Palace).

66' Attempt blocked. Yohan Cabaye (Crystal Palace right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Joe Ledley.

65' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

64' Offside, Crystal Palace. Pape Souaré tries a through ball, but Emmanuel Adebayor is caught offside.

62' Second yellow card to James Milner (Liverpool for a bad foul.

61' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool).

61' Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

61' Substitution, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho replaces Jon Flanagan.

61' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

61' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Mile Jedinak.

57' Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

57' Foul by Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace).

56' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by James Milner.

55' Attempt blocked. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

55' Attempt blocked. Divock Origi (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

53' Hand ball by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

51' Corner, Crystal Palace. Conceded by Emre Can.

48' Goal! Crystal Palace 1, Liverpool 0. Joe Ledley (Crystal Palace left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner following a corner.

48' Attempt blocked. Mile Jedinak (Crystal Palace right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked.

48' Attempt blocked. Pape Souaré (Crystal Palace left footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

48' Corner, Crystal Palace. Conceded by Roberto Firmino.

Second Half begins Crystal Palace 0, Liverpool 0.

33' Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool left footed shot from the right side of the

box misses to the left following a corner.

33' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Yannick Bolasie.

33' Attempt blocked. James Milner (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

32' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

32' Foul by Yohan Cabaye (Crystal Palace).

30' Offside, Crystal Palace. Alex McCarthy tries a through ball, but Emmanuel Adebayor is caught offside.

30' Attempt missed. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Emre Can.

29' Attempt missed. Damien Delaney (Crystal Palace header from the centre of the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Yohan Cabaye with a cross following a set piece situation.

28' Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool).

28' Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace wins a free kick on the right wing.

26' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

26' Pape Souaré (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the attacking half.

25' Attempt missed. Yohan Cabaye (Crystal Palace right footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Wilfried Zaha.

23' Offside, Liverpool. Simon Mignolet tries a through ball, but Divock Origi is caught offside.

22' Foul by Divock Origi (Liverpool).

22' Wilfried Zaha (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

22' Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

22' Foul by Yohan Cabaye (Crystal Palace).

20' Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool).

20' Emmanuel Adebayor (Crystal Palace wins a free kick on the left wing.

19' Divock Origi (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

19' Foul by Joel Ward (Crystal Palace).

18' Offside, Liverpool. Adam Lallana tries a through ball, but Divock Origi is caught offside.

17' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Joel Ward.

15' Corner, Crystal Palace. Conceded by Mamadou Sakho.

11' Scott Dann (Crystal Palace is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

11' Divock Origi (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

11' Foul by Scott Dann (Crystal Palace).

11' Emmanuel Adebayor (Crystal Palace hits the bar with a header from very close range. Assisted by Pape Souaré with a cross.

10' Attempt saved. Emmanuel Adebayor (Crystal Palace right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Yannick Bolasie.

10' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

10' Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool).

10' Yannick Bolasie (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

9' Attempt blocked. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

7' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool).

7' Pape Souaré (Crystal Palace wins a free kick in the defensive half.

7' Attempt saved. Yannick Bolasie (Crystal Palace right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

5' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Mile Jedinak.

3' Foul by Mile Jedinak (Crystal Palace).

3' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.