

Date: 17 March 2016
Opposition: Manchester United
Competition: Europa League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	MEN
Independent	Mail	BBC

17 March 2016

THETIMES

No way back for Van Gaal after flawed game plan
Manchester Utd 1 Martial 32 (pen) Liverpool 1 Coutinho 45
Liverpool win 3-1 on aggregate
Louis van Gaal's ill-fated reign at Manchester United continues to descend into darkness. United still have the FA Cup to fight for, and the chance of a top four place, but the Dutchman's 150th European game was excruciating for him. Liverpool were better organised and exposed the most obvious flaw in Van Gaal's game plan: Philippe Coutinho isolated Guillermo Varela, broke through and scored a magical goal, an away goal that killed United. And so Liverpool deservedly head into today's draw for the quarter-finals of the Europa League when Jurgen Klopp could be pitted against his old club, Bo-russia Dortmund. Liverpool were excellent, reminding everyone how they are reviving under the inspirational Klopp. This being United against Liverpool, tensions ran high between the fans. An offensive banner designed to rile Liverpool supporters was hung over a bridge on the M602 until it was removed by Greater Manchester Police. Liverpool fans insinuated their way into the home section and unveiled a flag, causing brief skirmishing until stewards eventually intervened. Uefa may investigate, but the real story here was of Van Gaal's error. He sat in the dugout, taking notes, as United's season continued to collapse.
Van Gaal has to accept culpability for this. His young right back, Varela, was left totally exposed when Coutinho made the brilliant run that brought Liverpool that precious away goal. Varela was given little protection by Juan Mata, who was playing on the right wing with Jesse Lingard operating off Marcus Rashford. It was bizarre from Van Gaal, leaving Varela without a shield. Mata is a gifted, creative talent but he rarely tracks back. He did at one point and then simply stopped. Lingard is more assiduous at helping out his full back. Lingard was otherwise engaged in the centre. Liverpool sensed the vulnerability on United's right flank. United could not afford one slip. They understood the maths, the wrecking ball to their dreams of conceding an away goal. Their tactics had to be right and Van Gaal left his left flank too open. With so much inviting space behind Mata to attack, Coutinho glided forward with the ball on the cusp of half-time, running at the backpedalling Varela. He kept the ball on his right foot, touching it forward, voyaging deep into David De Gea's area. Coutinho glanced across, planting the seed of doubt in United minds that he might be about to cut the ball back. The Brazilian had only one idea in his mind: he accelerated, taking the ball on his left and beating poor Varela. He still had De Gea blocking his path but he made light of this famous human barrier. Coutinho coolly dinked the ball over one of the world's most accomplished goalkeepers.
It appeared game over. The red pyrotechnic in the away end seemed like a victory signal. The Liverpool fans chanted Coutinho's name for most of half-time. Van Gaal acknowledged his mistake, removing Varela for Antonio Valencia.
It was so frustrating for the Stretford End. It had all started so promisingly. Trailing 2-0 from the first leg, the onus had been on United to attack and attack. Old Trafford demanded it. Van Gaal promised it. Ryan Giggs even sprinted from the dugout to grab a loose ball at one point to keep the pressure on. Rashford was quickly running at Mamadou Sakho, setting the tone.
Here was more of the United of old, going for it, taking a risk in front of the watching Sir Alex Ferguson and that ultimate chaser of lost causes, Roy Keane. Lingard, meeting Marcos Rojo's cross with a firm header, was denied by Simon Mignolet. Mata prodded a shot wide. Rashford went on a weaving run. Anthony Martial cut in from the left but shot wide. United inevitably lived dangerously, though. Daniel Sturridge went close. Only De Gea kept them in the tie with a magnificent save from Coutinho after 28 minutes. Three minutes later, United's pressure told. Mata released Martial, whose burst of pace tricked Nathaniel Clyne. Desperately trying to recover, the England right back stretched out his right foot and succeeded only in tripping Martial. Milorad Mazic, the Serbian referee, pointed straight at the spot. Martial calmly sent Mignolet the wrong way.
The roar from United fans was deafening. Ferguson gave a fist pump and broad smile. United believed. With Martial sweeping home that penalty, the fingertips of De Gea's left hand seemed even more coated with stardust. Liverpool raised their tempo. Sturridge bent a free kick on to the bar. Jordan Henderson played aonetwo with Coutinho but fired over. And then it came, that run and magical finish from Coutinho, that embarrassing of Varela, that shredding of Van Gaal's gameplan, and that crucial away goal. United attacked and attacked after the break but the equation was mocking them. Fellaini should have been dismissed for an elbow on Dejan Lovren. Rashford shot wide. Sakho made some great blocks. Carrick lifted in a cross that Fellaini headed at Mignolet and the life fully drained from United. Liverpool were playing with complete confidence, loving the discomfort of old foe. Sturridge was enjoying running at United's defence and looked distinctly unimpressed to be taken off by Klopp for Divock Origi.
Henderson was similarly underwhelmed to be replaced by Joe Allen. Van Gaal's substitutes hardly signalled much conviction in the mission. Matteo Darmian came on for Rojo and Bastian Schweinsteiger replaced Carrick. A penny for the thoughts of Memphis Depay.
Liverpool were untroubled, cruising through to the quarter-finals. They almost scored a second. De Gea made a routine save from a Coutinho strike and then did superbly to tip over a powerful drive from the Liverpool No 10. The cackling 3,000 travelling fans were loving it, singing about what Paul Scholes must think of his old team, and what Ferguson must think of the support, also chanting Klopp's name.

theguardian

Liverpool's Philippe Coutinho sends Manchester United out of Europe
As a measure of how Liverpool saw off their old enemy, nothing summed it up more than the break of play, with a quarter of an hour still remaining, when the first Manchester United supporters decided they had seen enough and the queues started forming for the exits. This was the club that once prided themselves on late feats of escapology – Barcelona in 1999, “Fergie Time” and all the rest – but those days have gone and Liverpool's supporters certainly enjoyed waving them goodbye before the burst of jubilation at the final whistle.
There was no doubt the better side had made it through and Liverpool, havingoverwhelmed their rivals at Anfield a week earlier, had a relatively stress-free night once Philippe Coutinho had delivered the away goal that struck United with the force of a sledgehammer. In Sir Alex Ferguson's day, one would still have fancied his team to have a go at saving themselves.
The modern-day side does not have the drive, wit or gumption and Liverpoolmoved into the quarter-finals with an aggregate win they will cherish for years.
The only possible regret for Jürgen Klopp is that David de Gea kept the score down over the two legs when Liverpool could conceivably have scored several more both times. Klopp will be grateful that Marcos Rojo could not convert a close-range chance that would have made it 2-2 on aggregate but Coutinho's goal arrived four minutes later, on a night when the Brazilian brilliantly decorated the pitch, and Liverpool had put themselves in a position where scoring even once was always likely to be decisive. From that position, no one would have envisaged such a poor United side turning the game upside-down.
At least this time United could not be accused of failing to understand what this fixture means. They set out as if affronted by the memory of their anaemic first-leg performance, snapping into tackles in a way that simply did not happen at Anfield, and played at a tempo that briefly offered hope after Anthony Martial scored from a 31st-minute penalty. Yet Liverpool had looked threatening even before that killer moment, with the final action of the first half, when Coutinho spun away from Guillermo Varela, scampered in from the left and clipped a shot over the oncoming De Gea.
By that stage Coutinho had already been denied with a powerful shot that was heading for the bottom corner until De Gea produced the first in a series of splendid saves. Daniel Sturridge curled a free-kick against the crossbar and Klopp looked on the point of spontaneous combustion when Jordan Henderson exchanged passes with Coutinho only to shoot over when it seemed he was bound to score.
Van Gaal was certainly being generous when he claimed his team had “played like Liverpool did in the first game”. It was true they had started briskly and early on Liverpool had seemed in two minds about whether they should protect their lead or go for more goals. The bottom line, however, was that Liverpool were the more rounded side by some distance. There is a distinct lack of quality in Van Gaal's team, with Marouane Fellaini increasingly becoming the crowd's scapegoat, and their rawness was brutally exposed for the game's key moment. Varela is a promising right-back but Coutinho beat him far too easily. De Gea had already shown it might need something special to beat him and, despite the difficult angle, Coutinho duly provided it with an audacious and beautifully weighted up-and-under finish.
That was the final contribution from Varela, replaced at half-time by the fit-again Antonio Valencia. Van Gaal also swapped his left-backs in the second half, bringing on Matteo Darmian for Rojo, and his final change was Bastian Schweinsteiger for Michael Carrick. For a side needing goals, these were perplexing substitutions. Marcus Rashford looks as if he needs a rest and it seemed strange that Van Gaal selected Juan Mata on the wing to face James Milner, standing in as Liverpool's left-back. Jesse Lingard, a quicker but less creative player, was given the No10 role and, though Memphis Depay has had an erratic season, there was surely an argument the Dutchman should have been involved at some point.
As it was, Martial was operating on the left, playing with the speed and directness that worried Nathaniel Clyne into tripping him for his penalty.
Martial was given penalty-taking duties because of Mata's inability to convert one against FC Midtjylland in the last round and when the ball went past Simon Mignolet the home crowd must have dared to think the comeback was on. Coutinho's goal changed everything, meaning United needed to score needed three in the second half, and the onslaught that might have been anticipated never materialised. On the contrary it was Liverpool who were more threatening during the final stages. Coutinho beat three players with one run through the middle and De Gea reminded everyone again of his goalkeeping qualities. Mignolet, in stark contrast, was barely troubled in the second half.
Liverpool had reduced their rivals to the point where large numbers of fans could not bear to stay and for those early-leavers it might be some time before they have shaken the latest disappointment out of their system.

Date: 17 March 2016
Opposition: Manchester United
Competition: Europa League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	MEN
Independent	Mail	BBC

17 March 2016

The Mail

Philippe Coutinho scores exquisite chip as Reds reach Europa League quarter-finals

Liverpool, and their manager Jurgen Klopp, are now five decent displays away from next season's Champions League. Manchester United, meanwhile, are as far away as they have ever been from whatever it is they are hoping to achieve under Louis van Gaal. Last month, Van Gaal rated winning the Europa League as United's best chance of making Europe's blue riband competition next season. Even Sir Alex Ferguson is no longer sure of a top-four finish in the Premier League. Now the Europa League safety net has gone, and defeat in the derby at Manchester City on Sunday could be fatal to United's loftiest ambitions. It wasn't that they were bad here — just too late. A European tie is a 180-minute commitment, and United only started playing after half-time, the initial 90 minutes. The first leg at Anfield was a write-off. By the time United took the game to Liverpool they were trailing 2-0 on aggregate and a single away goal at Old Trafford would as good as end the tie. Philippe Coutinho got it after 45 minutes and that was United done. They were tasked with scoring three in the second half to progress and this is not a team set up for that kind of rapid action — not against a good team, at least. Liverpool are not Midtjylland and, unsurprisingly, the score did not change from that point. The embarrassed scuttle for the exits had begun long before the end.

Credit to Liverpool, though, for their application over two legs and a useful draw here. This was an opportunity to make the first big statement of the Klopp regime against their bitterest rivals, and they took it. Who knows when these teams will play in Europe again? The first meeting has ended in a 3-1 Liverpool win and United may have to live with that for decades. It will not boost the case of those who wish to give Van Gaal a third season at Old Trafford. He would have been expected to place this club a considerable distance ahead of Liverpool by now. Instead, Klopp is in the ascendancy. His side outplayed United at Anfield, and outfoxed them here through the marvellous Coutinho. It was a big result for Liverpool, a big defeat for Van Gaal. Yes, it was a draw on the night, but it felt like a United loss — not least because they failed in their main objective.

United were nowhere near as poor as they had been a week ago, but keeping a clean sheet was essential and, for all Van Gaal's pragmatism, they could not do it. Liverpool simply had too much for them: too much energy, too much intensity, and in Coutinho too much quality in front of goal. Left one on one with De Gea, he beat him with a Lionel Messi-like chip. United had good possession chasing the game, but Liverpool were comfortable — even with a makeshift defence, James Milner performing impressively in an unfamiliar detail at left back.

If anything, De Gea made the save of the second half, from another shot by Coutinho. The rousing, positive emotion around Old Trafford gradually faded, bitter taunts about the Hillsborough tragedy rose in the throats of those whose reaction to losing is to lash out in all directions, and there were smoke bombs and seats thrown from the Liverpool end, as well as a fight in the upper tier.

It was an unsavoury conclusion on any number of levels. UEFA may wish to get involved, too. The bottom line for United, however, is that this tie was lost seven days ago. If United had played with half the vigour at Anfield as they did here, they would not have been in a position where an away goal could do for them, as it did here. Indeed, their first-half performance was so different to Anfield that it made Van Gaal's methods close to unfathomable.

What is 'his' United? Is it the turgid plodders of a week ago, or the vibrant, ambitious group that took the game to Liverpool and were, at times, hard to control? When are they disobeying his instructions — when they play like this, or when they play like that? The identities are so conflicting.

At their best, United stretched Liverpool to the full. On 16 minutes, Marcos Rojo played a cross from the left that appeared to catch Liverpool keeper Simon Mignolet in two minds. He came, thought better of it, retreated and in doing so left Jesse Lingard in the perfect position to make a fool of him.

Lingard met Rojo's cross but failed to steer it sufficiently wide of Mignolet, who did enough to palm it round his right post. From the corner, a manic scramble, Marouane Fellaini first having a go before Juan Mata shot wide from close range. Anthony Martial was causing Nathaniel Clyne problems on the left and after 22 minutes he cut inside into a good position, but snatched at his shot which flew over the bar. Clyne's difficulties were to result in United's opening goal — although some untypical carelessness from Coutinho will have infuriated Klopp even more. Liverpool had repelled a United attack down the right when Coutinho played a blind ball across the perimeter of his penalty area.

It was intercepted and eventually fed out to Martial on the left. He sped at Clyne, who panicked and couldn't resist a tackle, bringing him down. Martial stepped up and put his spot-kick to Mignolet's left. Perhaps the move of the match occurred after 40 minutes when Jordan Henderson played a beautiful ball in for Coutinho and then continued his run for the return. He got it, too, but as so often he lacked the precision in his finish and the ball flew over the bar.

Coutinho, of all Liverpool's midfielders, has the best eye for goal — and so it proved. In the last attack of the first half, he collected the ball wide and deep on the left and set off for the target. He sped past Varela as if the young man had inadvertently tied his shoelaces together and saw that De Gea was looking to save with his feet, as ever. A near-post dink defeated that plan, Liverpool were level and United were thrust further behind than square one. The inescapable truth is

that it was too much. They should have started playing earlier: last week, for instance.

MATCH FACTS

Manchester United: De Gea, 6, Varela, 6 (Valencia, 46, 6), Smalling, 7, Blind, 5.5, Rojo, 7 (Darmian, 62, 6), Carrick, 6 (Schweinsteiger, 70 6), Fellaini, 5, Mata, 6.5, Martial, 7, Rashford, 6.5 Subs not used: Romero, Depay, Schneiderlin, Williams.

Scorer: Martial, 31. Booked: Fellaini, Blind, Schweinsteiger. Manager: Louis van Gaal, 6.5

Liverpool: Mignolet, 6.5, Clyne, 5, Lovren, 6.5, Skaho, 7, Milner, 6, Can, 7, Henderson, 6 (Allen, 71, 6), Lallana, 5, Firmino, 6 (Benteke, 85), Coutinho, 8, Sturridge 6.5 (Origi, 68, 6.5) Subs not used: Ward, Toure, Ibe, Smith.

Scorer: Coutinho, 44. Booked: Clyne, Coutinho, Firmino.

Manager: Jurgen Klopp, 7 Referee: Milorad Mazic (Serbia), 6.5

The Daily Telegraph

THEY DINK IT'S ALL OVER; Coutinho touch of genius is too much for United

MAN UTD 1 Martial 32 pen LIVERPOOL 1 Coutinho 45 (Liverpool win 3-1 on aggregate)

JURGEN KLOPP celebrated 'the perfect goal' from Philippe Coutinho last night as Liverpool completed a momentous European triumph over bitter rivals Manchester United. Holding a two-goal lead from the first leg, Liverpool fell behind to an Anthony Martial penalty but Coutinho conjured a sublime solo effort just before half-time, chipping David de Gea to earn a draw and send Klopp's side through to the Europa League quarter-finals 3-1 on aggregate.

'What he did was brilliant,' said Klopp. 'Phil had a genius moment. It was the most unexpected thing he could do in that situation -- a perfect goal.

'We deserve to be in the next round, there is no doubt about that. I'm pretty proud of the boys.' Liverpool are now five games away from next season's Champions League. United, meanwhile, are as far away as they've ever been from whatever it is they hope to achieve under Louis van Gaal.

Last month, he rated winning the Europa League as United's best chance of making Europe's blueriband competition next season. Now the Europa League safety net has gone, and defeat in the Manchester derby on Sunday could be fatal to United's ambitions. 'You have to give credit to Coutinho,' said van Gaal. 'But the way we conceded that goal in the last second of the first half, the players were all disappointed and still they have given everything.'

Former United favourite Paul Scholes delivered another damning assessment of his old club, claiming there is not enough quality in the Dutchman's expensively assembled squad. 'They had a go, they didn't give up,' said Scholes. 'But when you're Man United you want quality and the quality wasn't there.

'Every time I watch United I look at the players who have been allowed to leave the club and I end up scratching my head. Danny Welbeck should never have been allowed to leave the club. 'They lost two massive figures in (Sir Alex) Ferguson and (David) Gill. The two of them going together was a massive mistake.' Marouane Fellaini once again came under fire for catching Dejan Lovren and Roberto Firmino in the face with his arm. Scholes added: 'He's probably part of the confusion with United when he plays.' United were nowhere near as poor as they had been a week ago at Anfield, but keeping a clean sheet was essential and, for all van Gaal's pragmatism, they could not do it.

Liverpool simply had too much for them: too much energy, too much intensity and, in Coutinho, too much quality in front of goal. Left one on one with de Gea, he beat him with his dink. There are good teams in this competition, but with a player of his quality in the ranks, Liverpool have a puncher's chance against any of them. United had possession chasing the game, but Liverpool were comfortable -- even with a makeshift defence.

If anything, de Gea made the save of the second half, from another shot by Coutinho. The rousing emotion around Old Trafford gradually faded, bitter taunts about the Hillsborough tragedy rose in the throats of those whose reaction to losing is to lash out in all directions, and there were smoke bombs and seats thrown from the Liverpool end, as well as a fight in the upper tier.

It was an unsavoury conclusion on any number of levels. UEFA may wish to get involved, too. The bottom line for United is that this tie was lost seven days ago. If they had played with half the vigour at Anfield as they did last night, they would not have been in a position where an away goal could do for them, as it did here. At their best, they stretched Liverpool to the full. On 16 minutes, Marcos Rojo played a cross from the left that appeared to catch Liverpool keeper Simon Mignolet in two minds. He came, thought better of it, retreated and in doing so left Jesse Lingard in the perfect position to make a fool of him.

Lingard met Rojo's cross but failed to steer it sufficiently wide of Mignolet, who did enough to palm it round his right-hand post. From the corner, Fellaini had a go before Juan Mata shot wide. Martial was causing Nathaniel Clyne problems on the left and after 22 minutes he cut inside into a good position, but his shot flew over. Clyne's difficulties were to result in United's opening goal. Liverpool had repelled a United attack down the right when Coutinho played a blind ball across the perimeter of his penalty area. It was intercepted and eventually fed out to Martial on the left. He sped at Clyne, who panicked and couldn't resist a tackle, bringing him down. Martial stepped up and put his spot-kick to Mignolet's left.

Yet, while Liverpool were challenged defensively in a way they were not in the first leg, Klopp's gameplan was too vital not to test United in turn.

17 March 2016

Times

Telegraph

Echo

Guardian

Mirror

MEN

Independent

Mail

BBC

Date: 17 March 2016

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: Europa League

In the 28th minute, Rojo missed a through ball, letting in Adam Lallana who played the ball back into the path of Coutinho. He hit a cracking shot, but de Gea's save was its equal. A wonderfully ambitious free-kick from Daniel Sturridge followed after 34 minutes, defeating de Gea but hitting the crossbar. Perhaps the move of the match occurred after 40 minutes when Jordan Henderson played a great ball in for Coutinho and then continued his run for the return. He got it, too, but as so often he lacked the precision in his finish and the ball flew over the bar. Coutinho has the best eye for goal -- and so it proved. In the last attack of the first half, he collected the ball wide and deep on the left and set off for the target. He sped past Guillermo Varela as if the young man had inadvertently tied his shoelaces together and saw that de Gea was looking to save with his feet, as ever. A near-post dink defeated that plan, Liverpool were level and United were thrust further behind than square one. The inescapable truth is that it was too much. They should have started playing earlier: last week, for instance.

MAN UTD (4-2-3-1): de Gea; Varela (Valencia 46), Smalling, Blind, Rojo (Darmian 62); Fellaini, Carrick (Schweinsteiger 70); Lingard, Mata, Martial; Rashford. Subs not used: Romero, Depay, Schneiderlin, Williams. Booked: Blind, Fellaini, Schweinsteiger.

LIVERPOOL (4-3-3): Mignolet; Milner, Lovren, Sakho, Clyne; Henderson (Allan 71), Can, Coutinho; Lallana, Sturridge (Origi 68), Firmino (Benteke 85). Subs not used: Ward, Smith, Ibe, Toure. Booked: Clyne, Coutinho, Firmino. Referee: Milorad Mazic (Serbia). Attendance: 75,000. Man of the match: Philippe Coutinho.

THE INDEPENDENT

Philippe Coutinho brilliance keeps Liverpool in Europa League

In the end, it was a victory for Brazilian flair over Belgian belligerence as the class of Philippe Coutinho, rather than the recklessness of Marouane Fellaini, ensured Liverpool progressed to the Europa League quarter-finals at the expense of Manchester United last night. Jürgen Klopp's team will take their place in today's draw for the last eight because they simply wanted it more than their bitter rivals, who ended the game fortunate to have 11 on the pitch despite the best efforts of Fellaini to throw his arms and elbows into anyone wearing a Liverpool shirt. Little wonder that Ryan Giggs, the United assistant manager, cut an agitated figure on the touchline. His team were schooled by Liverpool and taunted by chants of "Scholesy's right, your team are shite", as they exited a competition few at Old Trafford appeared to want to be in.

United now face Manchester City in the Premier League at the Etihad on Sunday knowing that a defeat will all but close another route into next season's Champions League. Not that they deserve to be there on this evidence. Liverpool, meanwhile, who triumphed 3-1 on aggregate after Coutinho cancelled out Anthony Martial's penalty opener, can now contemplate returning to Europe's top table by winning the Europa League.

Off-field relations between the two sets of supporters had taken a further nosedive during the first leg at Anfield, with a vocal minority in the United contingent singing Hillsborough-related chants to goad their Merseyside rivals. A banner draped across a bridge at the Liverpool end of the M62 last week also carried the message "Manc Bastards", so it was perhaps inevitable that retaliation came in the form of another banner, saying simply "Murderers", hanging from a bridge on the approach to Old Trafford.

Chants outside the stadium from both sets of supporters, referring to Hillsborough and the 1958 Munich air disaster – which took the lives of eight United players – injected a further unsavoury element to this meeting between English football's most distinguished clubs. The decision tomove this game from its original 6pm kick-off time to 8.05pm was taken in order to diminish the threat of disorder, but the chanting continued inside the stadium before the football finally began to claim centre stage in the early stages of the first half.

Prior to that, the opening skirmishes were largely centred on Fellaini and Emre Can, with the two midfielders renewing the battle which had ended at Anfield last week with Fellaini appearing to elbow the Liverpool player in an off-the-ball incident. Can could count himself fortunate, however, that the Serbian referee Milorad Mazic waved away United appeals for a penalty on eight minutes after the German had shoved Fellaini in the back inside the penalty area.

United claimed that the award of a penalty to Liverpool in the first leg, following a tug by Memphis Depay on Nathaniel Clyne was soft, and this one was perhaps a stronger appeal. Still, it was not given and Fellaini was at the heart of the action again two minutes later when he escaped punishment for a stray arm in the face of Roberto Firmino. Fellaini has always walked a tightrope with flailing arms but he got away with it. United, without the injured Ander Herrera, settled into the game quickest, though, and they dominated the first-half, with Jesse Lingard forcing the first save from goalkeeper Simon Mignolet with a header from Marcos Rojo's 18th-minute cross.

Juan Mata then shinned a volley wide from six yards as Liverpool battled to keep the home side out, but United continued to press, with Marcus Rashford and Martial linking well before the French forward shot over from 12 yards.

Liverpool were falling into the trap of defending their lead rather than going for the kill and they sat too deep, inviting United forward.

Aside from two efforts from Coutinho, one of which brought a fine save from David De Gea, Liverpool were impotent until Martial put United ahead.

On this occasion, referee Mazic did point to the spot after Martial had been tripped by Clyne and the United forward stepped up to convert the spot-kick past Mignolet. Old Trafford shook, but United still needed one more to level the tie and Daniel Sturridge almost put it beyond them when he rattled the crossbar with a 35th-minute free-kick. Jordan Henderson then wasted a golden chance to level on the night when he shot over from 10 yards after being set free by Coutinho. Coutinho was Liverpool's best hope of a breakthrough, with the Brazilian offering Jürgen Klopp's team the pace and invention in the final third that Mata was unable to provide for United. He was knocking at the door and, after both Rojo and Firmino had gone close to scoring in the dying seconds of the first half, the Liverpool No 10 hauled his team level and left United needing a further three goals to progress. It was a killer goal in every sense, but it was also one of the highest quality. Guillermo Varela, United's Uruguayan right-back, has done well in recent weeks after being promoted to the team by Louis van Gaal owing to a defensive injury crisis, but he was outdone by Coutinho on numerous occasions before the Liverpool playmaker scored. Coutinho simply ghosted past Varela as though he wasn't there in the 45th minute, but faced with De Gea he did not panic. Instead, Coutinho coolly lifted the ball over the goalkeeper and into the net to put Liverpool firmly in control of the tie.

Coutinho's goal ended the tie as a contest and United simply stumbled through the second half, with Fellaini missing the best chance when he shot over after being teed up by Rashford.

Liverpool just coasted to the draw which took them through, and deservedly so.

DAILY Mirror

Coutinho dink sees off listless Red Devils

Liverpool came out on top in the Europa League Battle of Britain as their 1-1 draw at Old Trafford gave them a comfortable 3-1 win over bitter rivals Manchester United .

Anthony Martial had given the hosts hope, when he converted a penalty in the 32nd minute after he was brought down by Nathaniel Clyne in the box. But Liverpool re-established their two-goal advantage - and crucially got an away goal - when Philippe Coutinho skipped down the left win, beat Guillermo Varela with ease and dinked the ball past De Gea.

A listless second-half display from the hosts saw them unable to trouble Jurgen Klopp's men, who will now go into Friday's quarter-final draw.

Here are five things that David McDonnell learned at Old Trafford.

Martial cool on the spot

With Mata demoted from penalty-taking duties after missing in the previous round, Martial won and converted the spot-kick that gave United the lead. Needs to show same composure when shooting in open play, after a couple of wild swipes.

Clyne trip gave United hope

United needed an early goal to get back into the tie and Clyne gifted them the opening, tripping Martial to conceded a needless penalty which gave United a way back into the encounter, until Liverpool equalised.

Coutinho shows class with finish

Having been denied by De Gea, who saved his low first-half effort, Coutinho finally beat him just before the break, lifting the ball into the net with a touch of class from an acute angle.

Varela suffers a wretched night

It says everything about how bad Varela was that he was replaced at half-time by Valencia, who has been out for five months. Varela let Coutinho go for Liverpool's leveller and paid the price.

Van Gaal's tactics continue to baffle

With United needing three goals to progress, Van Gaal showed caution when he needed to be bold, bringing on Darmain for Rojo, a defender for a defender, having already switched his other full-backs.

Date: 17 March 2016 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: Europa League	Times	Telegraph	Echo		17 March 2016		
	Guardian	Mirror	MEN				
	Independent	Mail	BBC				
							
Coutinho strike eases nerves as Reds win through Liverpool are into the quarter-finals of the Europa League after seeing off Manchester United at Old Trafford. Philippe Coutinho 's goal gave the Reds a 1-1 draw on the night, securing a 3-1 aggregate triumph against their fierce rivals. Liverpool had come under pressure during a disjointed first-half display, and saw their 2-0 first-leg lead halved by Anthony Martial. But as United threatened to turn the tie around, Coutinho produced a piece of magic on the stroke of half-time to effectively kill the tie. Jurgen Klopp 's side now await the outcome of tomorrow's draw in Nyon. With Alberto Moreno ruled out with a hamstring problem, Klopp boldly went for James Milner at left back in an otherwise-unchanged line-up. United, meanwhile, made two changes to the team that had started at Anfield, with Michael Carrick and Jesse Lingard in for Morgan Schneiderlin and Memphis Depay. Liverpool enjoyed decent possession early on, when the main incident surrounded an elbow from Marouane Fellaini on Roberto Firmino which went unpunished. Simon Mignolet was forced into action on 20 minutes, pushing away a Lingard header after Liverpool had failed to deal with Marcos Rojo's cross from the left. From the resulting corner, Juan Mata volleyed wide from close range. Liverpool looked to play mainly on the break, but were let down by carelessness and loose touches when in decent positions. Daniel Sturridge and Coutinho were particularly guilty. Coutinho did, however, draw a smart save from David De Gea low to his left with a swept effort from the edge of the box. The Brazilian was soon punished for giving the ball away in his own half though, as Martial ran at Clyne and drew a foul. The Serbian referee pointed straight to the spot, and Martial sent Mignolet the wrong way to halve the deficit. Sturridge hit the bar with a whipped free kick as Liverpool looked to rise from their slumber. Jordan Henderson then missed a great chance to level, missing the target from eight yards after Coutinho's reverse pass. It was not to prove costly, though, as in first-half stoppage time Coutinho ran away down the left, skinned Guillermo Varela and, from a tight angle, scooped the ball quite brilliantly over De Gea and inside the near post for the equaliser. That left United needing three unanswered goals in the second half. They sent on Antonio Valencia for the shellshocked Varela, but didn't really threaten Mignolet's goal much. At the other end Sturridge sliced a chance wide on his right foot. He was replaced by Divock Origi, and it was Liverpool who carried the greater threat, with Coutinho twice drawing the brilliant De Gea into action, and sending a free kick off target. It was his night, though, his piece of magic settling Liverpool's nerves and sending them on their way to the last eight. By the end, Old Trafford was half empty. No wonder. For the 3,000 travelling Reds, this was heaven. MAN UTD (4-2-3-1): De Gea; Varela (Valencia 46), Smalling, Blind, Rojo (Darmian 62); Carrick (Schweinsteiger 70), Fellaini; Mata, Lingard, Martial; Rashford. Subs: Romero, Depay, Schneiderlin, Williams. GOAL: Martial pen 32. BOOKINGS: Blind, Fellaini, Schweinsteiger. LIVERPOOL (4-4-1-1): Mignolet; Clyne, Lovren, Sakho, Milner; Lallana, Henderson (Allen 71), Can, Coutinho; Firmino (Benteke 85), Sturridge (Origi 68). Subs: Ward, Toure, Ibe, Smith. GOAL: Coutinho 45. BOOKINGS: Clyne, Coutinho, Firmino. REFEREE: Milorad Mazic (Serbia).			Manchester United manager Van Gaal's poor preparation exposed by Liverpool Fail to prepare, prepare to fail Daley Blind was not a part of the 18-man Manchester United matchday squad that arrived at The Lowry Hotel on Thursday yet it was his name that appeared on the squad sheet ahead of Cameron Borthwick-Jackson's. Blind, described as 'very tired' two weeks ago, has started every United game since late October and it again showed against Liverpool . Needing goals to remain in the Europa League, United were bound to be porous and never quite had the measure of an attack with two of the most gifted footballers in England. With Michael Carrick ahead of Blind, he lacked sufficient cover when on the back foot. Blind's footballing ability was prioritised over his defending, which epitomises Van Gaal's questionable handling of United's defence and the paucity of options he is sanguine with. United were not as over-reliant on the Dutchman's distribution as they were at Anfield with Carrick in the side, but it speaks volumes of Van Gaal's inexplicably casual preparations that when a stopgap central defender like Blind might be sidelined it sparks panic. The Rafael conundrum Guillermo Varela was United's best player against West Ham but he was the worst against Liverpool. Even before Philippe Coutinho strolled past him, the Uruguayan's composure was lacking and his positional awareness, one of his biggest weaknesses, was affording Liverpool plenty of space down the left, which made his interval withdrawal inevitable. Van Gaal might not have planned on using Varela at all this season with Matteo Darmian, Antonio Valencia and even Ashley Young ahead of him. However, it is hypocritical of the United manager to retain someone as raw and risky as Varela but sell Rafael, a player whose cult status was built on his performances against Liverpool. United missed the Brazilian. Van Gaal didn't do his research Two years and one day ago, United lost at home to Liverpool in a 4-2-3-1 formation with a central midfield axis of Marouane Fellaini and Michael Carrick. United's regression to their David Moyes level occurred months ago but Van Gaal has a spectacular tendency to channel the spirit of the Scot. It says much about the Dutchman's reign that had Morgan Schneiderlin – a player who is essential as United rebuild its spine – lined up it would have been a surprise. In such a rigid formation, United were bypassed, as the attempt at fluidity was limited to Jesse Lingard's and Juan Mata's interchanging. United's efforts were more spirited than Moyes' men but they are easy to counter against even with a 'safe' coach in charge. Fellaini might not regain fans' support There was one occasion in the first-half when a Fellaini pass went in the right direction and some in the mild-mannered south stand were so apoplectic they were brought to their feet, spitting venom in the Belgian's direction. It was the most caustic reaction to a pass by a United player at Old Trafford since Jonny Evans' infamous back pass against Sunderland last season. Fellaini then went backwards when he should have gone forwards in the second-half. Again, the crowd was on his back. Then he spooned the ball over. “Scholesy's right, your team is s****e,” Liverpool fans crowed. Signings sidelined Of United's five outfield signings bought in the summer, only Anthony Martial started their biggest game of the season. Bastian Schweinsteiger was not regarded fit enough for 90 minutes and Matteo Darmian might still be ring-rusty, but Van Gaal's hesitancy over Schneiderlin is a symptom of the problematic and restrictive 4-2-3-1 formation which has defined United's joyless season. United did not have the intensity in midfield to counter Liverpool's attack with Carrick, eight years Schneiderlin's senior, patrolling the midfield. Ander Herrera was not risked against Liverpool again. As for Memphis, in the autumn he looked Nani-lite. That would now be a compliment to the struggling Dutchman, who has failed to capitalise on his dazzling and determined displays against Midtjylland and Arsenal last month.				

Date: 17 March 2016 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: Europa League	Times	Telegraph	Echo		17 March 2016
	Guardian	Mirror	MEN		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

BBC

Philippe Coutinho's brilliant solo goal killed Manchester United's hopes of a Europa League comeback and sent Liverpool into the last eight in comfort at Old Trafford. Jurgen Klopp's side were protecting a two-goal lead from the first leg at Anfield but Anthony Martial's 32nd-minute penalty offered United brief hope after he was fouled by Nathaniel Clyne. Jesse Lingard and Juan Mata had missed clear opportunities for United but Liverpool were also a threat as David de Gea saved superbly from Coutinho while Daniel Sturridge hit the bar with a free-kick and Jordan Henderson missed an open goal. The away goal Liverpool threatened, and which left United needing four on the night, came right on half-time when Coutinho beat Guillermo Varela with ease before lifting a near-post finish past De Gea. It ended the game as a contest with United unable to rouse themselves again as Liverpool completed the formalities to win the first European meeting between the two clubs. Sadly, the final stages of the match were marred by clashes between supporters near the Liverpool corner of the ground - and it remains to be seen if Uefa take any action.
Too little too late for Man Utd
Manchester United, in the first half at least, played with a pace, and showed a spirit and endeavour, that has rarely been displayed at Old Trafford this season - but the task was too much. And that was down to the lamentable performance at Anfield last Thursday when Liverpool dominated every facet of the first leg to secure a two-goal lead that could actually have been much more.
It left United vulnerable to one goal from Liverpool that would leave them needing four, and so it proved when Coutinho's brilliant dribble provided that crucial away strike. United, from that point on, looked like the team they have been for most of this season - pedestrian, uninspired and struggling to illuminate an Old Trafford stage that has suffered much this season.
And there was suffering in hearing songs of celebration from 3,000 Liverpool fans tucked away in one corner of the stadium as their arch-rivals celebrated victory in the first European meeting between the two sides and a place in the last eight of the Europa League. It was also further evidence that, for all those who still feel United might be better off without Wayne Rooney, that this team still misses him very badly as he was reduced to watching the game from the stands with his son as the England captain recovers from a knee injury.
Can Liverpool go all the way?
Liverpool are progressing rapidly under Klopp, who is putting his imprint on the side six months after he succeeded sacked Brendan Rodgers.
And some of the old European anticipation will be rising at Anfield as they contemplate Friday's quarter-final draw. Time for some perspective, though, and a warning that Klopp is embarking on a rebuilding programme that will not be a quick fix. There are still some tasty potential opponents lying in wait, none more so than Klopp's old club Borussia Dortmund, tournament favourites and impressive winners against Tottenham over two legs. The notion of Klopp facing Dortmund is an enticing one and he would be guaranteed a rapturous reception at the club he took to two Bundesliga titles and the Champions League final.
And that is before you even get to Sevilla, winners in the past two seasons and who cruised into the last eight against FC Basel.
Young guns offer hope for Man Utd
This was another disappointing night in a disappointing season for Manchester United - and there will be extra pain in losing a European tie to such fierce adversaries. If there is some comfort, it can be gained in the performances of young strike duo Marcus Rashford and Anthony Martial. Rashford, just 18, never gave up at any point, chasing lost causes endlessly while trying to provide United's lost spark. Martial, 20, tormented Clyne with his pace in the first half to earn - and score - the penalty that gave United some hope. They are small crumbs of comfort on a miserable night for United but they need all the hope they can get after this. 'Punches and seats thrown'

Liverpool's on-field celebrations were marred by trouble in the stands in the closing minutes and after the final whistle. BBC Radio 5 live commentator Ian Dennis had a clear view of the disturbances in the crowd and said he saw fighting and seats being ripped out. "Punches are being traded by rival supporters," he said. "I have seen three red seats from the Liverpool section being thrown into the Manchester United fans. "There are about 10 Liverpool supporters sat on the front row of the top tier and there is a human wall of police officers in luminous clothing protecting the Liverpool fans sat in the Manchester United end.
"Uefa will take action - mark my words."
Man of the match - Philippe Coutinho
What the managers said
Manchester United boss Louis van Gaal: "I am not angry, I am not frustrated. I was very proud of my players. "They gave everything and I was very pleased the fans recognised that. They applauded after the match despite us being out - that was remarkable I think. "I hope Man City is the catalyst. We have to beat City and we have a chance to still qualify (for the Champions League)."
Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp: "They got a penalty - it was a penalty - and Phil had a genius moment. "I love it two minutes before half-time because he twice reacted quicker than his opponent. "It was the most unexpected that he could do in a situation like this."

Date: 17 March 2016 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: Europa League	Times	Telegraph	Echo		17 March 2016
	Guardian	Mirror	MEN		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

BBC

Match ends, Manchester United 1, Liverpool 1.
90'+3' Second Half ends, Manchester United 1, Liverpool 1.
90'+1' Attempt saved. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Christian Benteke.
90' Attempt saved. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Christian Benteke.
87' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Matteo Darmian.
86' Attempt missed. Jesse Lingard (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box misses to the right. Assisted by Marouane Fellaini following a corner.
86' Attempt missed. Matteo Darmian (Manchester United right footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the left following a corner.
86' Attempt missed. Bastian Schweinsteiger (Manchester United right footed shot from the left side of the box misses to the right following a corner.
85' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by James Milner.
85' Substitution, Liverpool. Christian Benteke replaces Roberto Firmino.
83' Attempt missed. Daley Blind (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box misses to the left following a set piece situation.
83' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
83' Jesse Lingard (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.
83' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).
82' Foul by Chris Smalling (Manchester United).
82' Divock Origi (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
81' Attempt missed. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high from a direct free kick.
80' Bastian Schweinsteiger (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
79' Foul by Bastian Schweinsteiger (Manchester United).
79' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
79' Offside, Liverpool. Mamadou Sakho tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.
78' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by David de Gea.
78' Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Adam Lallana.
75' Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Emre Can.
72' Attempt missed. Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United right footed shot from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Marcus Rashford.
71' Substitution, Liverpool. Joe Allen replaces Jordan Henderson.
70' Substitution, Manchester United. Bastian Schweinsteiger replaces Michael Carrick.
70' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.
70' Foul by Mamadou Sakho (Liverpool).
68' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Matteo Darmian.
68' Substitution, Liverpool. Divock Origi replaces Daniel Sturridge.
67' Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United).
67' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
64' Jesse Lingard (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.
64' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool).
63' Attempt missed. Anthony Martial (Manchester United right footed shot from the right side of the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Jesse Lingard.
62' Substitution, Manchester United. Matteo Darmian replaces Marcos Rojo.
62' Attempt missed. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool right footed shot from a difficult angle on the right misses to the right. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.
60' Attempt saved. Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United header from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Michael Carrick with a cross.
59' Attempt blocked. Jesse Lingard (Manchester United right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Juan Mata.
58' Foul by Marcus Rashford (Manchester United).
58' Dejan Lovren (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
57' Attempt missed. Marcus Rashford (Manchester United right footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Juan Mata.
56' Attempt blocked. Marcus Rashford (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Juan Mata.
53' Foul by Marcos Rojo (Manchester United).
53' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
53' Attempt blocked. Jesse Lingard (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Michael Carrick.
52' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by James Milner.
52' Attempt blocked. Michael Carrick (Manchester United right footed shot from a difficult angle and long range on the left is blocked.
51' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
51' Marcus Rashford (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.
51' Foul by Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool).
50' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
50' Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United).
50' Dejan Lovren (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
49' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Mamadou Sakho.
48' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.
48' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool).
47' Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United).
47' Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
Second Half begins Manchester United 1, Liverpool 1.
29' Foul by Marcos Rojo (Manchester United).
29' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.
29' Foul by Daley Blind (Manchester United).
29' Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
28' Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box

is saved in the bottom right corner.
26' Guillermo Varela (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.
26' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).
25' Offside, Liverpool. Daniel Sturridge tries a through ball, but James Milner is caught offside.
24' Attempt blocked. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked.
22' Attempt missed. Anthony Martial (Manchester United right footed shot from the left side of the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Marcus Rashford.
19' Attempt missed. Juan Mata (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Chris Smalling with a headed pass following a corner.
19' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Adam Lallana.
19' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.
18' Attempt saved. Jesse Lingard (Manchester United header from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Marcos Rojo with a cross.
17' Offside, Liverpool. Daniel Sturridge tries a through ball, but Adam Lallana is caught offside.
16' Foul by Daley Blind (Manchester United).
16' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
16' Guillermo Varela (Manchester United wins a free kick on the right wing.
16' Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool).
12' Foul by Juan Mata (Manchester United).
12' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
10' Foul by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United).
10' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.
9' Hand ball by Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United).
6' Marouane Fellaini (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.
6' Foul by Adam Lallana (Liverpool).
2' Offside, Liverpool. Nathaniel Clyne tries a through ball, but Philippe Coutinho is caught offside.
First Half begins.
Lineups are announced and players are warming up.