Date: 15 May 2016
Opposition: West Bromwich Albion
Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Bham Daily Mail
Independent	Mail	BBC

15 May 2016

THE TIMES

Liverpool reserves make point before Euro final

West Bromwich Albion 1
Rondon 13
Liverpool 1
Ibe 23
Referee: R Madley Attendance: 26,196

On previous occasions this season when he has rotated his squad, Jurgen Klopp has insisted that freshening things up was necessary to give Liverpool the best chance of winning. Away to West Bromwich Albion yesterday he made 11 changes and the argument stopped holding credibility. This was not about prevailing in this fixture, it was about triumphing in their next one and given that it happens to be the Europa League final, Klopp's strategy was understandable.

A 1-1 draw ensured that Liverpool finished eighth in the Barclays Premier League, their joint lowest placing since returning to the top flight under Bill Shankly in 1962. If that is underwhelming, their season could still be transformed should they defeat Seville in Basle on Wednesday night. It is not only a European trophy at stake for Liverpool, a place in next season's Champions League could also be earned.

Liverpool's first XI, minus Simon Mignolet, an unused substitute at The Hawthorns, continued their preparations for the final at Melwood, the club's training ground. They were joined by Divock Origi, who has been recovering from an ankle injury, as the forward's chances of featuring against Seville were boosted.

Their second string went through the motions, as did West Brom who enjoyed the luxury of a final game of the season with nothing at stake having found safety through Tony Pulis's astute management.

"We made 11 changes and it made sense because I have experience of finals and it can be hard to focus in the game before them," Klopp said. Asked to rank Liverpool's next game in terms of importance, Klopp was emphatic: "It's not how important it is for me. It is a European final. What could be bigger?" The quality of the goals was out of keeping with the rest of the game. West Brom's, a crisp, low finish by Salomon Rondon, owed much to the quick feet of Jonathan Leko, a 17-year-old winger, who opened up the Liverpool defence. Liverpool's equaliser was all about Jordon Ibe who, for once, poured all of his talent into a single, devastating run beginning with an outrageous dummy on Jonny Evans deep in his half and culminating in a low finish.

West Brom enjoyed the better chances in an otherwise humdrum second half as Rondon struck a post with a header and saw a close range effort cleared off the line by Lucas Leiva. By the latter stages both sides were content to see out time.

"We had the chances in the second half; Salomon could have had a hat trick," Pulis said. "But you have to give the team a lot of credit. There was a lot of talk about the changes Liverpool made but their team still cost PS69 million, compared to ours which cost PS34 million, so that shows the divide. We've finished 14th but next year there'll only be one club in the West Midlands flying that Premier League flag."

For Klopp, next season can wait; Wednesday is all that matters. With Jordan Henderson enjoying a 26-minute run-out at The Hawthorns,
the Liverpool manager is likely to have his captain available to face Seville. The bench is likely to be the best that he can hope for, though. Unlike in West Bromwich, Basle will play host to Liverpool's strongest available team and, regardless of Klopp's protestations, that pretty much pick themselves on form.

RATINGS West Bromwich Albion (5-4-1): B Foster 6 -- C Dawson 6, G McAuley 6, J Olsson 5 (sub: J Chester, 46min 5), J Evans 6, J McClean 6 (sub: S Field, 87) -- J Leko 6 (sub: T Roberts, 73), D Fletcher 6, C Yacob 6, C Gardner 7 -- S Rondon 7. Substitutes not used: B Myhill, Sandro, R Lambert, S Berahino.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1): A Bogdan 5 -- J Flanagan 6, M Skrtel 7, L Leiva 7, B Smith 5 -- K Stewart 5, J Allen 6 (sub: J Henderson, 64 5) -- J Ibe 6 (sub: D Ings, 64 5), C Brannagan 6, S Ojo 6 (sub: S Canos, 80) -- C Benteke 5. Substitutes not used: S Mignolet, T Ilori, C Randall, P Chirivella. Booked: Smith, McClean, Roberts, Evans.

theguardian

Jordon Ibe's Liverpool wonder goal earns a point at West Bromwich Albion

This match was illuminated by two brilliant goals, first by Salomón Rondón and then by Jordon Ibe, but the brightest points for Liverpool were the returns from injury of Jordan Henderson and Danny Ings. The draw meant Jürgen Klopp's team finished eighth in the Premier League but their season will end in glory – and qualification for next season's Champions League – if they beat Sevilla inWednesday's Europa League final.

Henderson, who had been out of action with knee trouble since early April, is nowin contention to feature in that game, and most of the players in line to start in Basel spent Sunday training at Melwood while a largely second-string held their own in a keenly contested conclusion to the domestic campaign at The Hawthorns. Divock Origi also trained at Melwood as he continues his recovery from an ankle injury but seems unlikely to be fit enough to feature on Wednesday.

Klopp scoffed at the suggestion that he could be punished by thePremier League for not fielding his strongest available side here. "I thought I decide what's the strongest side?" he said. "The problem would have been that we come with other players and they already have their minds on the next game, which would be absolutely normal for human beings. You cannot change this. If the situation is that [if] I come here with those players everybody thinks I'm silly, and if I don't come here with those players everybody thinks I did not do the right job, then obviously it's not possible for me to do the right thing."

The German was pleased that Henderson and Ings showed no ill-effects of the knee injuries that had kept them out of action – for five weeks in the case of the captain, for 224 days in the case of Ings. Klopp suggested that fielding the striker was "about giving this really nice lad something before the break, being able to say: 'I am back and able to play football again,'" whereas Henderson could play on Wednesday. "I haven't made a decision yet about the lineup for Wednesday but it's nice to have the option," he said.

After a well-judged tribute by Albion to the victims of the Hillsborough tragedy, sporting hostilities at The Hawthorns got under way, and with slightly less ruggedness than when the sides met at Anfield in mid-season, when Klopp was angered by Albion's approach. Tony Pulis's side had no intention of making things easy for the visitors here but it was magic rather than muscle that inflicted the first wound on Liverpool in the 13th minute.

Jonathan Leko, a 17-year-old with thrilling dribbling skills, seized on a slack ball by Joe Allen before skedaddling past three defenders and flipping a clever pass through to Rondón. The Venezuelan smashed a low 10-yard shot in at the near post. The drive was ferociously struck but Adam Bogdan, making his first appearance since January, might have done better.

Liverpool were looking lethargic until Ibe injected urgency in the 23rd minute. The winger made Jonny Evans seem oafish as he feinted his way past him on the right and then glided 20 yards forward before racing into the box, past Jonas Olsson, and firing into the net despite an attempted block by Craig Dawson. If you are going to wait until the final game of the season to score your first Premier League goal, best make it a beauty.

Liverpool, Ibe included, offered little by way of attacking threat thereafter even if they retained possession quite well for the remainder of the first half. Albion refocused during the break and almost regained the lead soon afterwards, Rondón darting between Christian Benteke and Allen to head a free-kick by Craig Gardner against the post and then skew the rebound over the bar from a tight angle.

Rondón went close again in the 61st minute after another fine run by Leko, who offloaded for Dawson to fizz a cross from the right into the near post. Rondón got to it first but glanced his header wide. Four minutes later the Venezuelan was presented with yet another chance but miskicked when left free at the back post. He shanked his second effort wide.

Lamenting his side's failure to win here and ignoring grumbles about the dull style of his team throughout most of the campaign, Pulis declared this a triumphant season for Albion. "You can't become blase because you just have to look at the teams that have gone down this year and look at what we have done," he said. "We will be the only West Midlands club in the Premier League next year and that's the first time in 138 years, so I think that's something to be proud of."

Man of match Craig Gardner (West Bromwich Albion)

Compiled by Graeme Riley

Date: 15 May 2016
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15 May 2016

The Mail

ALL CHANGE FOR KLOPP AS LIVERPOOL MAKE A POINT

WEST BROM 1
LIVERPOOL 1

TONY PULIS conducted his final press conference of the season wearing a fedora but it's Jurgen Klopp who now has the chance to sign off in style as Liverpool head for Switzerland this afternoon. Liverpool's manager changed his entire line-up on the basis that the players who will face Sevilla in Wednesday's Europa League final in Basle would not have had their minds on events at the Hawthorns. Eighth place is Liverpool's joint lowest finish since 1962 and means the door back into the Europa League is closed. Now they must beat Sevilla to secure a place as Champions League qualifiers. But for the fans Klopp can do no wrong. No point risking European glory chasing a couple of places in the Premier League. 'The problem could have been that we come with other players and their mind was on the next game,' said Klopp (right). 'That is absolutely normal.' The German's most notable selections were on the bench, where Jordan Henderson was joined by Danny Ings. Both back from knee injuries in a double substitution after 63 minutes. Ings has been out since rupturing a cruciate ligament in October and Klopp was keen to reward his hard work in regaining fitness.

Henderson's comeback after almost six weeks' out could not be timed better with Roy Hodgson set to announce his provisional England party for Euro 2016 today. A place in Liverpool's Basle squad is now a distinct possibility. 'I didn't want to force the situation and say, "Come on, Hendo, try", because it's his knee, but everybody could see there were no issues,' said Klopp. 'I haven't made a decision about Wednesday, but it's good to have him back.' With so many young players in the line-up, it was one of Liverpool's older heads who contributed to West Brom's goal in the 13th minute.

Joe Allen's poor pass was seized upon by Jonathan Leko, 17, who beat three men, then slipped the ball to Salomon Rondon. Albion's PS12million record buy appeared to have let the ball run too far but he suddenly blasted a fierce shot past keeper Adam Bogdan.

Rondon also hit the post with a header from Craig Gardner's free-kick. By then Jordon Ibe had equalised with his first league goal, a fine solo effort through the legs of Albion's Craig Dawson.

Palace boss Pulis, wearing his fancy hat for charity, also came kitted out with some facts after his team sealed 14th place. 'People talked about Liverpool playing a second team but that team were worth PS69m. Ours cost PS24m,' he said. SUPER STAT: Jonathan Leko, 17, is the first player born in 1999 to assist on a Premier League goal.

WEST BROMWICH ALBION (4-2-3-1): Foster 6; Dawson 6.5, McAuley, 6.5 Olsson 6 (Chester 46min, 6), Evans 5.5; Fletcher 7, Yacob 6.5; Leko 7.5 (Roberts 72, 5.5), Gardner 6.5, McClean 6 (Field 87); Rondon 6.5. Subs not used: Myhill, Lambert, Berahino, Sandro. Scorer: Rondon 13.

Booked: McClean, Roberts. LIVERPOOL (4-3-3): Bogdan 6; Flanagan 6, Lucas 6.5, Skrtel 6.5, Smith 7; Brannagan 6.5, Stewart 6, Allen 5.5 (Henderson 64, 6.5); Ojo 6 (Canos 80), Benteke 5, Ibe 7 (Ings 64, 6). Subs not used: Mignolet, Ilori, Randall, Chirivella. Scorer: Ibe 23. Booked: Smith.

Man of the match: Jonathan Leko. Referee: Robert Madley 6.

The Daily Telegraph

Ibe gives Klopp reminder as Albion denied

With interest wholly focused on Wednesday's Europa League final, Jurgen Klopp had said that nobody was interested in this fixture yesterday. Including, if the Liverpool teamsheet was indicative, the manager. He made 11 changes from his last game, a line-up featuring no one likely to start in Basel.

"I know about playing finals," he said. "I brought the best line-up for this game."

The fact was, while the West Bromwich team might have had eyes on the beach (they had lost their last three home games, failing to score in any of them), this Liverpool side were playing for the bench.

Yet it was Albion who began here with real purpose, scoring a delightful goal on 13 minutes. Joe Allen gave the ball away with a loose pass and Jonathan Leko picked it up and ran directly at the goal, leaving four defenders in his wash. He pushed the ball out to Salomon Rondon, who fired under Adam Bogdan.

A really nice goal, was how Klopp described it. He was right. In his third Premier League start, Leko, a 17-year-old academy graduate, had provided a spark of excitement to a lacklustre Hawthorns season. He looked, until he was given a standing ovation on his substitution in the second half, a real prospect. Confident, strong and ambitious, with excellent control, he was keen to run at defenders at any opportunity.

Nine minutes after his intervention, however, Liverpool suggested that anything Albion could do, they could do better. Jordon Ibe took the ball from Jon Flanagan in his own half by the right touchline. As Jonny Evans attempted to intercept, Ibe left him floundering on the turf. He turned and galloped into the space vacated by the Albion defender, cutting inside and across the penalty area to shoot past Ben Foster. It was the 20-year-old's first Premier League goal and a terrific one.

Such riches, though, could not be replicated. Not that there was a shortage of opportunity. Immediately after half-time, Rondon met Craig Gardner's free-kick with a deft header that beat Bogdan but hit the far post.

Then, after another excellent bit of jinking footwork by Leko, Rondon got his head to Craig Dawson's cross, but the ball spun wide. On 65 minutes, the Albion centre forward completed a hat-trick of missed chances when, again arriving unnoticed at the far post as a corner drifted his way, he mis-hit his first effort, then recovered his footing to fire again only for Bogdan to save.

From there, the main interest came in the procession of substitutes. First out for Liverpool was Jordan Henderson, who gave a hint to Roy Hodgson that he may be fit for the European Championship finals. Danny Ings, too, made a welcome return, while Tony Pulis, encouraged by Leko's display, sent on two more academy recruits, Sam Field and Tyler Roberts.

As Klopp looks forward to Wednesday, Pulis, the West Brom manager, appears to be casting his eye farther ahead.

"Next season we'll be the only west Midlands club in the top division," he grinned. "That will do for me."

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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THE INDEPENDENT

Jordon Ibe earns Jurgen Klopp's Europa League finalists a point

With a moving nod to the past, sharp focus on the future and minimal interest in the present; Liverpool's Premier League season ended with the handbrake on at The Hawthorns.

With his club's gaze fixed firmly on Basel on Wednesday and the final of the Europa League, Jurgen Klopp collected a point of little relevance at West Brom with a line-up that will bear no relation to that which will tackle Sevilla in midweek.

West Brom led through Salomon Rondon's 13th-minute goal and did enough in the second half to warrant a winner, but Rondon was unable to add to his 10 goals for the season.

That left both sides content with a point from a game that lacked any real intensity but featured a fine equalising goal from Jordon Ibe.

The travelling Reds supporters could look forward to the week in the knowledge that their manager had, sensibly, risked none of the key figures from his European side.

And they caught a glimpse of the youngsters that could be stars in the longer term.

They included Danny Ings, making his first appearance since October, and Ibe, who bagged a magnificent first Premier League goal.

They also witnessed in a touching gesture from West Brom, who marked the Liverpool fans' victory in the recent Hillsborough inquest with 96 unoccupied red seats and a pre-match floral tribute.

"We made a few changes - 11," smiled Klopp, whose senior players trained at Mellwood while the second string played in the Midlands.

"It absolutely made sense because it's perfectly clear you cannot play here with 50 per cent concentration.

"I know about playing finals and it would have been quite difficult for the players. It was clear it was going to be quite intense.

"The young boys did really well and we played football.

"The problem would be if we came with other players and they were already with their mind on the next game. That would be absolutely normal, we cannot change this."

Jordan Henderson made his own comeback after more than a month out with a knee injury and could now figure in midweek, although Klopp was cagey about the England man's hopes of starting in Basel.

After an uneventful opening spell, it was West Brom's new young hero who brought the crowd to life by creating the opening goal on 13 minutes.

Jonathan Leko, a 17-year-old forward signed by Albion as a schoolboy after arriving from DR Congo as a refugee, seized on Joe Allen's poor pass, rode two challenges with fine balance and picked out Rondon.

The Venezuelan still had plenty to do but mate his low, drilled finish look easy.

But Ibe then went one better with a wonderful solo goal to level the scores on 23.

He's superb dummy on the right touchline left Jonny Evans for dead, with the Liverpool wideman racing 50 yards into the box, side-stepping Jonas Olsson and placing a shot past Ben Foster.

At times the match resembled a testimonial but there were moments of promise in a largely uninspiring second half.

Craig Gardner delivered an excellent free-kick from which Rondon glanced a header against the far post.

It was the same combination again when Gardner's corner found Rondon, whose first shot was fluffed but whose second effort drew a smart save from Adam Bogdan in the Liverpool goal.

The game appeared to be petering out until the closing stages, when Christian Benteke should have engineered a Liverpool winner when he burst away with the unmarked Jordan Henderson unmarked inside him.

But the Belgian's indecision allowed Gareth McAuley to get back and make a challenge to protect West Brom's point and leave manager Tony Pulis reflecting on a satisfactory season, even if there is discontent among some fans about the lack of entertainment.

"It's fantastic," he said. "It's the only West Midlands club in the Premier League next year, so we've got something to be proud of.

"We have finished 14th in the Premier League and that's great credit to the players and everyone connected to the football club.

"The problem you get sometimes is that people can get a little bit blaize about things or complacent, because you just have a look at the size of the teams who have gone down this year, then look what we've done."

DAILY Mirror

WITH HOPE IN THEIR HEARTS; Klopp has Reds fans singing again

WEST BROM 1
Rondon 13
LIVERPOOL 1
Ibe 23

JUDGED by the way the Liverpool fans sang Jurgen Klopp's name, you could have thought they had won the title, rather than equal their worst finish since 1962.

But the Kop have seen enough from Klopp's first seven months to know better times lie ahead.

Wednesday's Europa League final presents a chance to win a first trophy since 2012 and that Capital One Cup success is their only piece of silverware from the last decade.

Klopp promises an end to the club's most barren run since the bad old days of the 1950s and he has restored Liverpool's verve and self-belief.

With both eyes on Sevilla, the German made 11 changes at the Hawthorns and he will make another 11 for the final. Jordan Henderson will hope he is one after coming on for the last 25 minutes, after five weeks out with a knee injury.

Klopp admits Henderson is under consideration and said: "It was his only chance for Wednesday. I said from the beginning I didn't want to force the situation by saying, 'Come on Hendo'. But he didn't feel anything in the last few sessions.

"He managed half an hour with no issues and that's good.

I've not made a decision regarding Wednesday, but it's good to have him."

Danny Ings also came on to make his first appearance under Klopp since he ruptured his cruciate ligaments within days of the German's appointment back in October.

"It's nice that I could give him an opportunity," said Klopp, who handed a debut to Sergi Canos.

"He can go into the break knowing he's already back and able to play football again." The other plus for Liverpool was Jordon Ibe's first Premier League goal on his 41st top-flight appearance.

It was worth the wait as he ran half the length of the pitch to score a great solo effort.

West Brom also have reasons to be optimistic, despite failing to win any of their last nine games.

Jonathan Leko looks a real talent and the 17-year-old academy product created Salomon Rondon's goal on 13 minutes from a fantastic run.

He picked up a loose ball from Joe Allen and dribbled past three Reds players before feeding Rondon on the right, who beat keeper Adam Bogdan.

Liverpool replied 10 minutes later when Cameron Brannagan fed Ibe on the right and he left Jonny Evans on the deck to run unopposed at West Brom's goal before slotting home. Rondon had chances to add to his 10 goals and he headed against the post from Craig Gardner's free-kick before blazing over the rebound.

The Venezuelan missed another opening before being denied by Bogdan.

Boss Tony Pulis, who wore a fedora instead of his trademark baseball cap to his press conference for charity, was proud of the Baggies' 14th-place finish.

"It's absolutely fantastic," he said. "We will be the only West Midlands club in the Premier League for the first time, so that's something to be proud of.

"Sometimes people get blase and complacent about that, but you only have to look at the size of the clubs who have gone down to appreciate it."

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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15 May 2016

LIVERPOOL ECHO

Basel or bust for Reds as season comes down to one defining game

The stakes just got even higher. It really is Basel or bust. If Liverpool's marathon season reaches a glorious conclusion against Sevilla on Wednesday night then the club will be celebrating a return to the Champions League. However, if they fall short on the big stage at St Jakob-Park they won't even have the consolation prize of Europa League football to fall back on. A final day stalemate achieved with a shadow line up against West Brom consigned the Reds to an underwhelming eighth place in the Premier League. That equalled Liverpool's worst top-flight finish since Bill Shankly got the club promoted back in 1962.

Yet there wasn't a whiff of negativity as Jurgen Klopp and his players accepted the applause of the buoyant travelling Kop after the final whistle at the Hawthorns. The return to action of both captain Jordan Henderson and striker Danny Ings added to the feelgood factor ahead of the mass exodus to Switzerland. The squad fly off on Monday afternoon. Rather than be remembered as flops, the fact is the class of 2015/16 will go down in the history books as heroes if they deliver Liverpool's first European trophy for 11 years at St Jakob-Park.

What a contrast to 12 months earlier when anger and vitriol tumbled down from the away end on the final day at the Britannia Stadium. Liverpool had been humiliated 6-1 by Stoke City and Brendan Rodgers' reign had lurched into a full blown crisis. The Reds actually finished this campaign two places and two points worse off than 2014/15. But the vastly different mood among the fanbase proves that perception really is everything. Klopp has provided hope where previously there was none. He has masterminded one of the most thrilling European runs in the club's illustrious history and led the Reds to two cup finals.

Reds will play 20 more games this season than champions Leicester

There's also an appreciation for the mitigating circumstances behind Liverpool's patchy league form. For a start, this is someone else's squad with Klopp having worked with what he inherited after declining the opportunity to start his overhaul during the January window. Then there's the gruelling schedule which has seen Liverpool already clock up 62 games in all competitions. Premier League champions Leicester City played 43. Competing on four fronts well into February undoubtedly took its toll as Klopp wrestled with an injury crisis which at one stage saw 13 members of the first-team squad sidelined. The manager lost both Danny Ings and Joe Gomez to serious knee injuries shortly after his appointment in October. Captain Jordan Henderson was restricted to just 17 league appearances and Daniel Sturridge only 13. Chuck into the mix Mamadou Sakho's failed drugs test and no shortage of obstacles have been thrown into Klopp's path.

The league took a back seat during the run-in as Klopp prioritised the Europa League matches and rightly so. Yet still it's a tale of what might have been. Over the past nine months what has really cost Liverpool the top-four spot they targeted back in August has been infuriating inconsistency.

The points that could have bridged the gap so easily

Six points ultimately separated them from Manchester City and it's not difficult to think how that gap could have been bridged. Liverpool took just one point from a possible six off relegated Newcastle, they grabbed defeat from the jaws of victory at Southampton having already conceded a last-gasp equaliser at home to them, and they capitulated late on against Sunderland at Anfield. It's been some ride with the Reds sending Kopites hurtling from one end of the emotional spectrum to the other. From the depths of despair after the wretched defeats at Vicarage Road and Upton Park to the dizzy heights of the emphatic victories at Stamford Bridge and at the Etihad, as well as the 4-0 derby demolition of Everton.

The chaotic 5-4 triumph at Norwich will live long in the memory as will coming from a goal down and a man down to win at Selhurst Park. A lack of firepower in the first half of the campaign proved the Reds' undoing – they scored just 22 goals in their first 20 league matches. The brilliance of Philippe Coutinho, coupled with the blossoming duo of Roberto Firmino and Divock Origi, and the returning Daniel Sturridge, enabled Klopp's men to kick on.

The German has transformed the likes of Dejan Lovren, Emre Can and Origi, while giving opportunities to youngsters like Connor Randall, Kevin Stewart, Sheyi Ojo, Ryan Kent, Danny Ward, Pedro Chirivella and Cameron Brannagan.

Sergi Canos became the latest debutant when he came off the bench against the Baggies, while Brannagan enjoyed an accomplished full Premier League bow.

Nobody can bemoan not having had the chance to prove that they deserve to be part of Klopp's Anfield revolution. Another summer of change awaits as he puts his own stamp on the squad and for some this will be the end of the road.

Jose Enrique has already been shown the door and Jordan Rossiter has agreed a deal with Rangers. Jerome Sinclair and Joao Carlos Teixeira are both out of contract, while the Europa League final is set to be Kolo Toure's final game for the Reds. Christian Benteke, Martin Skrtel, Adam Bogdan and Tiago Ilori are among those likely to follow, while Joe Allen's future remains uncertain.

Ibe offers timely reminder of what he can offer

Those who will be entrusted with beating Sevilla on Wednesday night had their feet up at home during the game against West Brom having trained on Sunday morning at Melwood. In their absence, Liverpool's second string had to recover from a wretched start. The Baggies were gifted the lead inside 13 minutes. Allen's error was pounced on by Jonathan Leko, who got away from Kevin Stewart and picked out Solomon Rondon. Brad Smith was slow to react to the danger and the Venezuela international rifled low past Bogdan.

To their credit, a youthful side rallied and Jordon Ibe ensured they restored parity in stunning fashion. Picking up the ball inside his own half, the winger burst away from Jonny Evans and surged down the right. Ibe cut inside, evaded the lunge of Jonas Olsson and coolly slammed a left-footer past Ben Foster.

It was an individual goal of true quality and a timely reminder of what he can do when he's positive, direct and believes in himself. The 20-year-old hasn't kicked on like many hoped he would this season. He's gone from starter to squad player but he deserves to be persevered with. There is potential there for Klopp to unlock. The second half was scrappy with the Reds looking vulnerable from set-pieces and Rondon nodding against the post. The travelling Kop erupted at the sight of Ings being brought on for the final 25 minutes – seven months after he ruptured his cruciate ligament. Henderson also made his comeback after a month out to prove his fitness ahead of the final.

An entire season will be defined by one night in Basel.

MATCH FACTS

Liverpool : Liverpool: Bogdan, Flanagan, Skrtel, Lucas, Smith, Stewart, Brannagan, Allen (Henderson 65), Ibe (Ings 65), Ojo (Canos 80), Benteke.
Not used : Mignolet, Ilori, Randall, Chirivella.
West Brom : Foster; Olsson (Chester 45), Yacob, Evans, Gardner, McClean (Field 87), McAuley, Fletcher, Dawson, Rondon, Leko (Roberts 73).
Not used : Myhill, Lambert, Berahino, Sandro.
Referee : Robert Madley **Attendance** : 26,196 **Goals** : Rondon 13, Ibe 23.
Bookings : Smith, McClean, Roberts, Evans
Man of the match : Lucas Leiva. Rock-solid defensively and used the ball well.

Birmingham MAIL

West Bromwich Albion signed off with a draw after they were pegged back an experimental Liverpool side. Albion took the lead 13 minutes in when Salomon Rondon drilled past Adam Bogdan after excellent work from Jonathan Leko.

The visitors hit back 12 minutes later through Jordan Ibe's dazzling solo effort.

Rondon squandered several chances after the break to ensure Albion's long wait for a win extends into next season. In the wake of the Hillsborough inquest verdicts, which ruled the victims were unlawfully killed, and as a mark of respect, 96 red seats were installed in the away end. Liverpool-born Rickie Lambert and Albion skipper Darren Fletcher also laid wreathes in front of the Liverpool fans as a further act of solidarity before kick-off. With a Europa League final on the immediate horizon, Jurgen Klopp named a completely different side to that which drew 1-1 with Chelsea midweek. On the flip side, Tony Pulis kept with the exact same eleven that drew 1-1 at Bournemouth.

Neither side were able to make in-roads in the early part of the match until, that is, the ball dropped to Jonathan Leko in space. Leko played a hand in Rondon's goal on the south coast last week. But he was to play an even bigger part in the Venezuelan's 10th goal of an encouraging maiden campaign. On his third successive Premier League start, Leko skipped past four Liverpool defenders before laying off to Rondon in the box. The striker steadied himself before firing low and hard past stand-in keeper Adam Bogdan.

"Jonathan Leko, he's one of our own," rang out around the Hawthorns.

Liverpool responded well to the goal and were nearly back on level terms three minutes later. Joe Allen rolled the ball into Sheyi Ojo who dummied for Chrstian Benteke. With little back lift, the Belgian found room for a shot that struck the side netting. Twenty two minutes in, Reds rookie Cameron Branagan jinked his way into the box and forced Ben Foster into a stop low down.

But Albion' resistance was broken 60 seconds later courtesy of some wing wizadry from Ibe. Perhaps inspired by Leko, he collected a Jon Flanagan and ran at a retreating Baggies backline. Ibe left Jonas Olsson on his backside before slotting smartly past Foster. It had been coming and Liverpool quickly went in search of a second. Wales international Joe Allen dragged a shot wide half an hour in after Cameron Branagan beat Claudio Yacob to a loose Gareth McAuley pass into midfield. As the first half drew to a close, Craig Gardner was harshly penalised for catching Kevin Stewart on the follow-through of a clearance.

Ideally positioned 20 yards from goal and bang in the middle, Benteke lined up the free-kick, but could not beat the wall.

Just as well for referee Robert Madley who would surely have incurred the final whistle wrath of Tony Pulis. Rondon was agonisngly close to bagging his second seconds after the re-start. His glanced header from Craig Gardner's free-kick struck a post and rebounded to him, but he could not adjust his body in time to keep the second effort down. Fresh from being named in the Republic of Ireland squad for friendlies later this month, James McClean lacked compsoure and shot woefully wide with two efforts in quick succession.

Albion struggled to find Leko, but when they did the teenager wreaked more havoc. He ghosted past two defenders and teed up Craig Dawson's whose first time cross needed a more forceful connection from Rondon.

It was a golden chance for Rondon, but two more were to arrive in almost identical circumstances. Two Gardner corners found Rondon lurking unmarked at

Compiled by Graeme Riley

the far post.
At the first one, Rondon mis-kicked his first effort and saw his second touched wide by a Liverpool defender.
Liverpool were caught napping again minutes later, but again Rondon could not capitalise.
His shot from the far post flew into a crowd of bodies and neither Craig Dawson or Tyler Roberts, on his Premier League debut, could conert.
Sam Field followed Roberts onto the pitch to make his top flight bow.
But there was to be no fairytale finish for either of the newcomers or Albion as a collective.
Albion:
Foster, Dawson, Olsson (Chester, 46), McAuley, Evans, Fletcher (c), Yacob, Leko (Roberts, 72), McClean (Field, 86), Gardner, Rondon.
Liverpool:
Bogdan, Flangan, Skrtel, Smith, Lucas (c), Brannagan, Stewart, Ibe (Ings, 64), Ojo (Canos, 81), Allen (Henderson, 64), Benteke.
Bookings:
McClean (foul, 45) Roberts (foul, 74) Evans (dissent, 87)
Smith (simulation, 40) - Liverpool
Goals:
Rondon (13) - Albion
Ibe (23) - Liverpool
Star man:
Leko

BBC

Liverpool must win the Europa League final to secure European football next season as a draw at West Brom ensured an eighth-place league finish.
West Brom led when 17-year-old Jonathan Leko skipped free to tee up Salomon Rondon for an emphatic low finish.
Liverpool responded soon after though Jordon Ibe's fine run and shot.
Neither side could do enough after the break to win all three points, but the Baggies came closest with Rondon hitting the post with a deft header.
Youngsters impress
The reverse fixture at Anfield in December had been a heated affair, ending with Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp declining to shake the hand of West Brom opposite number Tony Pulis.
With the Baggies long since safe and Liverpool saving themselves for Wednesday's Europa League final, this was a far tamer encounter enlivened by two excellent goals.
Leko - a constant threat during his 73 minutes on the pitch - burst between Cameron Brannagan and Joe Allen to set up Rondon with a cute reverse ball for the first, before 20-year-old Ibe cut in off his flank, swerved Jonas Olsson and buried a low shot into the bottom corner to level.
The appearance of England internationals Jordan Henderson - out with knee ligament damage since April - and Danny Ings - missing since October with a knee injury - as late substitutes drew cheers form the travelling fans.
Pre-match unity
Both sets of supporters were united in applause and acclaim before kick-off as West Brom paid tribute to the courage and tenacity of the families of those who died at the Hillsborough disaster in 1989.
The rest of the Premier League showed their solidarity with their campaign at the time of April's verdict of unlawful killing, but West Brom chose to save their salute until Liverpool's final-day visit.
Ninety-six red seats were set up in the away end, each bearing a name of a Hillsborough victim and left unfilled for Sunday's match.
Former Liverpool striker Rickie Lambert - now at West Brom - and Baggies captain Darren Fletcher laid flowers in front of the away supporters before kick-off as the 2012 Hillsborough charity single - a cover of the Hollies' He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother - played over the public address system.
Trouble ahead?
This season's on-field business is done for West Brom, but the discussions over Pulis' future are only just about to start.
The Baggies boss will meet chairman Jeremy Peace in the next few weeks to discuss the possibility of extending his contract beyond the end of next season.
Fourteenth in the league before Bournemouth replay their abandoned fixture against Manchester United, Pulis will likely point to his success in securing the West Midlands club's Premier League status several weeks before this meeting with Liverpool.
His critics may suggest that security has come at the cost of style with West Brom scoring only 34 goals this season. Only Aston Villa - with 27 - have managed fewer.
Man of the match - Jonathan Leko
What they said
West Brom boss Tony Pulis: "That has been us for seven or eight games - we needed the second goal, created the chances but have not been able to put them away. We have to have that little bit more in the final third.
"Saido Berahino, James Morrison and Chris Brunt have not played half the games that we would have liked them to this season. With the injuries and the lads we have had to call on, I think the lads have done fantastically.
"I think this is a wonderful club with fantastic tradition. We have to improve, especially at the top end of the pitch."
Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp: "I think we deserved this point. We knew that we would have lots of problems if we gave them set-pieces because that was an area in which they could be stronger than us today.
"We created not enough real chances, but we played football, could have done a little bit better, but I am fine with the game.
We have got 60 points. We could have had more, everyone knows this. Could we have had less? No, I don't think so. If we don't play European football next season we have to use the time we have."
The stats you need to know
West Brom have had fewer shots on target than any other team in the Premier League with 107.
West Brom's Jonathan Leko is the first player born in 1999 to assist a Premier League goal.
Salomon Rondon has opened the scoring eight times in the Premier League this season, only Jamie Vardy (12) and Harry Kane (9) have done so more often.
Jordon Ibe's goal, in the 23rd minute, was the final shot on target of the game.
Liverpool used 34 players in the 2015-16 Premier League campaign, four more than in any previous season.
Liverpool have finished outside the top five for the sixth time in seven seasons.

Date: 15 May 2016
Opposition: West Bromwich Albion
Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Bham Daily Mail
Independent	Mail	BBC

15 May 2016

BBC

Match ends, West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 1.
90'+3' Second Half ends, West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 1.
90'+2' Foul by Kevin Stewart (Liverpool.
90'+2' Sam Field (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the left wing.
90' Attempt blocked. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.
89' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Brad Smith.
87' Jonny Evans (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card.
87' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Gareth McAuley.
86' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. Sam Field replaces James McClean.
86' Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool.
86' Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.
86' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Gareth McAuley.
83' Foul by Sergi Canos (Liverpool.
83' Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.
82' Offside, West Bromwich Albion. Craig Gardner tries a through ball, but Salomón Rondón is caught offside.
82' Attempt blocked. Tyler Roberts (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from very close range is blocked. Assisted by Salomón Rondón.
82' Attempt missed. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from the left side of the box misses to the right following a corner.
81' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Brad Smith.
81' Substitution, Liverpool. Sergi Canos replaces Sheyi Ojo.
80' Foul by Danny Ings (Liverpool.
80' Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.
77' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Christian Benteke.
77' Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool.
77' James McClean (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.
74' Tyler Roberts (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
74' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
74' Foul by Tyler Roberts (West Bromwich Albion.
73' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Gareth McAuley.
73' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. Tyler Roberts replaces Jonathan Leko.
72' Danny Ings (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
72' Foul by Jonny Evans (West Bromwich Albion.
67' Attempt missed. Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion header from very close range is too high. Assisted by James McClean with a cross following a corner.
67' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Sheyi Ojo.
66' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.
66' Attempt blocked. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.
66' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Lucas Leiva.
64' Substitution, Liverpool. Jordan Henderson replaces Joe Allen.
64' Substitution, Liverpool. Danny Ings replaces Jordon Ibe.
63' Foul by Christian Benteke (Liverpool.
63' Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.
62' Attempt blocked. Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Craig Dawson.
62' Foul by Christian Benteke (Liverpool.
62' Darren Fletcher (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.
61' Attempt missed. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion header from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Craig Dawson with a cross.
59' Attempt missed. James McClean (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Salomón Rondón.
58' Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.
58' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.
57' Attempt missed. Sheyi Ojo (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Christian Benteke.
56' Foul by Jordon Ibe (Liverpool.
56' James Chester (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.
54' Attempt missed. James McClean (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left following a corner.
54' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Jon Flanagan.
48' Jordon Ibe (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
48' Foul by James Chester (West Bromwich Albion.
47' Attempt missed. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from the right side of the six yard box is too high following a set piece situation.
47' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion hits the left post with a header from the centre of the box. Assisted by Craig Gardner with a cross following a set piece situation.
46' Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.
46' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.
Second Half begins West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 1.
45' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. James Chester replaces Jonas Olsson because of an injury.
45'+3' First Half ends, West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 1.
45'+2' James McClean (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
45'+2' Jon Flanagan (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
45'+2' Foul by James McClean (West Bromwich Albion.
45'+1' Attempt blocked. Christian Benteke (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.
44' Kevin Stewart (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
44' Foul by Craig Gardner (West Bromwich Albion.
44' Sheyi Ojo (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.
44' Foul by Darren Fletcher (West Bromwich Albion.
43' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jonathan Leko.
40' Brad Smith (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.
40' Brad Smith (Liverpool has gone down, but that's a dive.
39' Attempt blocked. James McClean (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Darren Fletcher.
38' Christian Benteke (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
38' Foul by Jonas Olsson (West Bromwich Albion.
36' Delay over. They are ready to continue.
35' Delay in match Jonathan Leko (West Bromwich Albion because of an injury.
34' Foul by Brad Smith (Liverpool.
34' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.
31' Attempt missed. Joe Allen (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Cameron Brannagan.
29' Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
29' Foul by Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion.
26' Sheyi Ojo (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
26' Foul by Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion.
23' Goal! West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 1. Jordon Ibe (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Jon Flanagan.
22' Attempt saved. Cameron Brannagan (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Sheyi Ojo.
19' Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.
19' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.
16' Attempt missed. Christian Benteke (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Sheyi Ojo.
15' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Craig Gardner.
13' Goal! West Bromwich Albion 1, Liverpool 0. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from the right side of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Jonathan Leko.
13' Brad Smith (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
13' Foul by Jonathan Leko (West Bromwich Albion.
10' Attempt saved. Sheyi Ojo (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Joe Allen.
2' Foul by Jonathan Leko (West Bromwich Albion.
2' Brad Smith (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
1' Foul by Brad Smith (Liverpool.
1' Jonathan Leko (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.
First Half begins.
Lineups are announced and players are warming up.

Compiled by Graeme Riley