

Date: 22 October 2016
 Opposition: West Bromwich Albion
 Competition: League

Mail	Sunday Times	Times	Telegraph
Echo	Sun Independent	Guardian	Mirror
BBC	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Birmingham Mail

22 October
2016

THE TIMES

We have no defensive problem, insists Klopp after late wobble

Liverpool 2
 Mane 20, Coutinho 35
 West Bromwich Albion 1
 McAuley 81

Referee: N Swarbrick Attendance: 53,218

"Read my lips: we have no defensive problem." On the Premier League campaign trail, Jurgen Klopp is a masterful candidate. The polls are supportive and his team are buzzing. But this election race is going to be a tough one, and the key marginal here is Liverpool's defensive fragility at set pieces.

Until the 81st minute, this was a strategist's dream. Liverpool's principal owner John W Henry, taking time out from tweeting anti-Donald Trump articles, was there. His wife Linda Pizzuti Henry posted via Periscope the Kop singing You'll Never Walk Alone, then sat back to enjoy shot after shot raining in on West Bromwich Albion's goal. Klopp's side were 2-0 up and anticipating a first return to the pinnacle of the Premier League since May 2014.

Unfortunately for Klopp, the happy ending was derailed by an event that has become all too familiar. Liverpool conceded from a corner and the waverers who were becoming convinced by his policies were undecided once more.

Klopp, though, is refusing to concede any ground when it comes to suggestions that his defence is an issue. "Really, I've heard this a few times and I lose respect when people say this," he said. "It's not important because I don't have to respect everybody. I'm the coach of this team, I'm pretty close to them. I see all the games from a quite good perspective.

"If people say we have some issues with set pieces how can I say they are wrong. I think 70-80 per cent of the goals we have conceded are from set pieces [actual percentage is much lower, see table above].

"But they are all different and we are still working on it and we defended well against [Manchester] United, brilliantly, and this match it was so difficult -- but we have no defensive problem."

Perhaps Liverpool were unlucky - 21 shots to six tells a story, and inspired by Sadio Mane and Philippe Coutinho, Liverpool's slippery front four strangled the life out of West Brom. Albion's hopes were kept alive only through the defiance of Ben Foster, their goalkeeper, and last-ditch blocks from Jonas Olsson and others. Mane, again proving to be a wonderful signing, made the breakthrough. A masterful dummy by Coutinho opened up West Brom, Roberto Firmino's cross eluded the defenders and the former Southampton forward, waiting at the far post, dispatched it. A rare blunder by Foster, scooping a clearance, led to the second -- Mane fed Coutinho who feinted to shoot, cut inside and fired in at the near post.

The alarm bells only rang for Liverpool when Albion had a set piece and were able to send their giants to tower over Liverpool's diminutive players. West Brom had two corners, scored from one -- Gareth McAuley ramming home a loose ball -- and nearly did so from the other.

James Morrison, the midfielder, confirmed that his side had identified Liverpool's Achilles heel, saying: "They have got small, quick players and that was the one thing before the game we spoke about -- aerial balls, set pieces and crosses into the box. We nearly got the second in the end but it didn't fall for us."

Klopp does not anticipate a similar approach from Tottenham Hotspur in the EFL Cup fourth round on Tuesday -- "They park a lot of things but no buses" -- but accepts other sides may take the same approach as United did in last Monday's 0-0 draw.

For Adam Lallana, making his 100th appearance for Liverpool, it was a sign of progress. He said: "We lost the last four league games against United and I think we'd not won in eight against West Brom so I think it's a very good week, to back that point up from Monday with this win."

There was a handshake for Klopp this time from Tony Pulis -- they did not do so after last season's fiery draw -- and a warm endorsement from West Brom's head coach that, thanks to the lack of European games, Liverpool have a "free run" at the title.

Klopp brushed that suggestion aside too but, despite his protestations, he gives the impression that he really does know the key to being head of state in the Premier League. It's the defence, stupid.

RATINGS

Liverpool (4-3-3): L Karius 6 -- N Clyne 6, J Matip 7, D Lovren 7, J Milner 7 -- J Henderson 7, E Can 6, A Lallana 6 (G Wijnaldum, 79min) -- P Coutinho 8 (L Leiva, 88), S Mane 8 (sub: D Origi, 90+1), R Firmino 6. Substitutes not used: S Mignolet, A Moreno, D Sturridge, R Klavan. Booked: Henderson. West Bromwich Albion (4-5-1): B Foster 6 -- C Dawson 6, G McAuley 7, J Olsson 7, A Nyom 5 -- C Yacob 5 (C Brunt, 46 6), M Phillips 5 (J Morrison, 51 6), D Fletcher 6, N Chadli 7, J McClean 6 (H Robson-Kanu, 65 6) -- S Rondon 5. Substitutes not used: C Gardner, B Myhill, B Galloway, J Leko. Booked: Yacob, Morrison, McClean.

the guardian

Philippe Coutinho clinches win over West Brom but Liverpool miss top spot

Steven Gerrard seems homeward bound having posted what reads as a farewell message to LA Galaxy on Instagram and who can blame the former Liverpool captain for swapping the California sunshine for autumn on Merseyside? He must long to be part of what Jürgen Klopp has created at Anfield in his absence.

One year to the day since Klopp's first home game as Liverpool manager his side moved level on points with Premier League leaders Arsenal courtesy of an unnecessarily hard-fought win over West Bromwich Albion.

The stadium announcer declared Liverpool top after the full-time whistle. A mistake but his excitement was understandable.

Liverpool required victory by a two-goal margin to go top of the Premier League for the first time since May 2014 but another set-piece goal against put that ambition on hold. Another win is what counts and another impressive attacking display provided it, Sadio Mané and Philippe Coutinho scoring two excellent first-half goals before Gareth McAuley reduced the arrears and Liverpool's league position.

"Who wants to be on top in October?" said Klopp, exuding the calm assurance he will get there eventually. "That was a little bit of a joke. We have 20 points. It was not possible that we get any more tonight. When you play like this, it is really difficult to be kind of satisfied with football games. 2-1 keeps you more awake than 4-0.

"Maybe we are not experienced enough in a situation like this to feel it could be easy. It is not easy. You need luck, the players fit. I have absolutely no problem with the goal we conceded. I would like to have it that nobody can score against us but first we have to have it that nobody can create chances. We have improved that."

Liverpool overcame an assured Albion start and some wayward passing of their own to take a commanding lead at the interval. They were utterly dominant for the first 25 minutes of the second half too only for Tony Pulis's side to haul themselves back into the contest and unnerve Anfield through McAuley's goal. Even then Firmino and substitute Georginio Wijnaldum went close to restoring Liverpool's two-goal advantage but, despite missing out on top spot, there was no blot on Klopp's landscape. "In dreamland you always win four- or five-nil and the crowd can go earlier and people can do something more serious. But this game created one of the best atmospheres because it was exciting towards the end."

The breakthrough left Klopp celebrating with right hand uppercuts in front of the main stand and stemmed from an innocuous source. The commanding Coutinho was about to receive a pass inside his own half from James Milner when, with an exquisite dummy, he took Darren Fletcher and Claudio Yacob out of the game and sent Emre Can into a dangerous attack.

"They had runners and we didn't want to let that happen," said Pulis. Can released Firmino down the left, he floated an inch-perfect cross over the head of Allan Nyom and there was Mané to volley home his fourth goal of the season. It was another example of the collective threat that Klopp cherishes in his teams, as his manic reaction testified.

Can was inches away from making it two when he stretched to meet Nathaniel Clyne's inviting low cross from the right. The two-goal advantage that Liverpool sought was not long coming, however, as the visiting defence went into meltdown. Fletcher instigated the problems with an awkward back pass towards Ben Foster that his goalkeeper sliced skywards.

The former Manchester United midfielder was beaten by Can in the air as he attempted to clear up the mess and Mané set Coutinho free on the left.

Liverpool's No10 had plenty to do but, with another telling drop of the shoulder, he sent Craig Dawson and McAuley sliding out of the equation and drilled a fine finish inside Foster's near post.

Firmino, Dejan Lovren and Can all came close to a third in the second half, Foster denying the Brazilian and the Croat and Jonas Olsson thwarting the German international with a full body block.

Albion's unlikely comeback should have started with 20 minutes to go but Nacer Chadli sliced horribly wide with the goal at his mercy from a Chris Brunt corner. Pulis's introduction of Brunt and James Morrison eventually paid dividends as the visitors forced Liverpool back and, with nine minutes remaining, the Northern Ireland international's corner dropped for McAuley to volley beyond Loris Karius at close range.

Liverpool responded well and the merits of victory were not in dispute. "Their front five is as good as any in the league," said the Albion manager. "With no Europe this year they have a free run at it. They've got a great chance this year."

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The Mail

Coutinho leads in samba style

LIVERPOOL 2

WEST BROM 1

TONY PULIS was in the middle of a textbook post-match debrief -- short, sharp, with no words wasted -- when his train of thought was interrupted.

From the corner of his eye, he caught the hulking figure of Jurgen Klopp marching purposefully towards him. When Pulis was last at Anfield, in December 2015, the two managers had been embroiled in a heated touchline squabble and the fallout lasted long after the final whistle.

This time, though, there was no animosity. Klopp had sought out his opposite number to shake his hand after his side had been taken to the wire by West Brom.

It was the first time a Pulis team had lost to Liverpool since February 2011 and, given he is not someone who hands out platitudes easily, the West Brom manager's assessment was candid.

'Liverpool are as good as anything we have played against,' Pulis said. 'They are probably the most difficult test we have had so far. They've spent, what, PS200million on those three or four front players? It's not bad, is it? Their movement is outstanding.'

'Their rotation around the ball, and around those forward players is excellent, and their inter-changing is impressive. They are a very good side and they have got a chance this year.'

Pulis said he feels Liverpool 'have got a free run' at the title. 'The last time they came close, with Brendan [Rodgers], they had a free run as well.'

In 2013-14, that charge for the title was predominantly about the majesty of Luis Suarez and how he dragged the players around him up to new levels.

But if this campaign is going to result in a shot at the prize Liverpool want more than any other, it will be about the collective.

For 60 minutes in this contest they were exhilarating, with Sadio Mane, Roberto Firmino, Adam Lallana and Philippe Coutinho -- combined cost PS92m -- hunting, pressing and plundering. Mane and Coutinho scored the goals and the samba style extended to their elaborate celebrations.

'On another day, we would have had three or four,' said Lallana, whose influence on this team is growing by the week.

Yet in the final 10 minutes, Liverpool were forced to cling on. Once again, they conceded from a set-piece -- the fourth time this season -- Gareth McAuley bundling in a corner as West Brom laid siege and showed future opponents where they could expose Klopp's ambitions.

'It was disappointing to concede from a set-piece,' said Lallana. 'It's no secret that we've let a few in.'

But it's not down to any individual, it's us as a team. We need to be more aggressive, with a better starting posture. But three points is massive for us.'

Can they keep winning, though, if they keep conceding when a ball is slung into their box? Klopp pulled one of those faces that is crammed with a thousand expressions all in one when he was asked if Liverpool's defence will ultimately prove to be their Achilles' heel. 'It's good that people can talk about some things,' Klopp said. 'Do you believe that we work on it?'

'They are brilliant at set-pieces,' he said, highlighting the return after injury of West Brom's Chris Brunt in the second half. 'It is not the same problem we had last year. I like it more than they create chances whenever they want because we defend like crazy.'

'I'm fine with this for the moment but only for the moment. I don't care how we conceded. We won and it was well deserved.'

'If people say we have some issues with set-pieces, how can I say they are wrong? I think 70 to 80 per cent of the goals we have conceded are from set-pieces. But they are all different and we are still working on it -- we have no defensive problem.'

One problem Klopp may have is containing expectations. More judges are saying they can be in the argument for the title, so will 'the free run' be an advantage?

'Where it will lead us to, I've no idea,' said Klopp. 'In December, January a few other teams will not have Europe and they start again.'

Referring to Pulis's comments, Klopp said, 'I'm not sure if it was meant to be a compliment or to make pressure on us, I've no idea, but thank you. I'll tell the players.'

SUPER STAT: There has been just one goalless draw in this fixture at Anfield since 1953

LIVERPOOL (4-3-3) Karius 6: Clyne 7, Lovren 7, Matip 8.5, Milner 7: Henderson 7, Can 7, Lallana 7.5 (Wijnaldum 79mins): Mane 7.5 (Origi 90), Firmino 7.5, Coutinho 8 (Lucas 88). Subs not used: Mignolet, Sturridge, Klavan, Moreno. Booked: Henderson.

Scorers: Mane 20, Coutinho 35. WEST BROM (4-2-3-1) Foster 6.5: Dawson 7, McAuley 7, Olsson 6, Nyom 5: Fletcher 5, Yacob 5 (Brunt 46, 6.5): Phillips 5 (Morrison 51, 6) Chadli 7, McClean 5 (Robson-Kanu 65, 6): Rondon 6. Subs not used: Myhill, Galloway, Gardner, Leko. Booked: Yavob, Morrison, McClean. Scorer: McAuley 83.

Man of the match: Joel Matip. Referee: Neil Swarbrick 7.

The Daily Telegraph

Why Liverpool can mount a credible challenge for title

Coutinho is taking his game to another level Liverpool's talent drain was becoming an annual event. From Xabi Alonso to Javier Mascherano, Fernando Torres, Jamie Carragher, Luis Suarez and Steven Gerrard through to Raheem Sterling, there were more farewell parties than a series of Strictly Come Dancing.

The fear last summer was that Philippe Coutinho would be the next to go, the long-held suspicion being that a career path has been mapped out for the Brazilian, and Anfield is a pit-stop until Barcelona need him.

Fortunately, no club is yet prepared to pay PS50 million, and the maestro is improving every week. When Coutinho plays well, there is no more attractive side in the Premier League than Liverpool. The attacking quartet he forms with Roberto Firmino, Sadio Mane and Adam Lallana has made this the most productive Liverpool side since Suarez and Daniel Sturridge.

'Just look at the squad. We've got dynamic players, technical players, clever players and quick players,' said Lallana. Coutinho already has four goals this season. Adding consistency has elevated his game and Liverpool's potency. Rumours of defensive frailty are exaggerated if Jose Mourinho sarcastically described Liverpool's attack as a "wonder of the world", it is the blunders they commit when defending set-pieces that raises doubts about their long-term title credentials.

Jurgen Klopp has made a habit of turning his back whenever his side has a penalty. Their supporters feel the same whenever opponents win a corner, and West Bromwich Albion gave themselves hope of claiming an implausible point when they took advantage of one.

Klopp, however, will not listen to broader criticism of his defenders. 'I've heard this a few times and I lose respect when people say this,' he said. 'We have no defensive problem. If people say we have some issues with setpieces, how can I say they are wrong? I think 70 or 80 per cent of the goals we have conceded are from set-pieces. But they are all different and we are still working on it and we defended against United brilliantly, and [against West Brom] it was so difficult.' There is some merit to Klopp's protest, and although the set-piece deficiencies will continue to cause concern, so far they are not stopping Liverpool winning games.

Anfield is living up to its reputation once again For the last two seasons, Liverpool's home form has been dreadful. Heading into this campaign they had won just 18 of their 38 previous league games in front of the Kop. It was a fortress built of straw.

That started to change towards the end of last season, and buoyed by an extra 8,000 seats, Liverpool are starting to make home advantage count. Of their last 12 home Premier League games they have won seven - three out of four in this campaign.

Most significantly, visiting sides at Anfield this season have scarcely looked capable of entering the hosts' half, let alone winning. This ensures that new goalkeeper Loris Karius might need to take a decent book on to the pitch with him to keep his mind occupied until there is a corner to defend (preferably a paperback offering helpful advice about catching corners).

For the first time in years, Liverpool bought well There was some consternation when Liverpool's summer transfer business yielded more in sales than they had spent on recruits. Perhaps those obsessed with net spend would rather Liverpool had joined the bidding for John Stones for PS48 million rather than make the shrewd free transfer of Joel Matip. There will also be a mass deleting of tweets from those initially bemused when Mane cost PS32 million. Matip could be Liverpool's greatest free transfer since Gary McAllister. He has already excelled against Diego Costa and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, and for all West Brom's late pressure, the centrehalf remained unflustered. 'In Germany there are not too many teams [who play like West Brom], but there were a couple of sides who played like this - hitting balls really high,' said Matip. 'It's a different type of game when you play against these teams, but you have to respect the way they play.'

There are no clear title favourites this season Klopp is in no doubt that Manchester City and Spurs, whom Liverpool face in the League Cup tomorrow, have the quality to challenge over the season, but Manchester United and Chelsea continue to resemble works in progress, while Arsenal's technical brilliance is too often undermined by results such as the stalemate against Middlesbrough on Saturday. Mourinho may have said the hype around Liverpool was a media obsession. You can guarantee those with designs on winning the Premier League now see Klopp's side as a threat - and that counts for much more.

Klopp's men show the right stuff

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THE INDEPENDENT

Klopp dismisses criticism of Liverpool's defending

A corner. A goalkeeper reacting like David James after a night playing on computer consoles. West Bromwich Albion's hulking players barging past Liverpool's defenders to meet the cross. They score. An inquest. Liverpool won in the end and it was fair of Jurgen Klopp to remind that if performance was equalled by reward, the margin of victory would have been more convincing in his team's favour than it was. Philippe Coutinho was at his trickiest " a season's best for him, helping unlock the visiting side's defensive plan for Liverpool's first goal, then sliding in the second before half-time. Klopp rarely answers questions about individuals so that might explain why he was not asked to comment about the Brazilian's role. Liverpool were not quite clinging on during three minutes of injury time because they were still creating chances. Yet the tension across Anfield's terraces was tangible and ultimately it explains why Klopp was probed about the way Liverpool finished, with defensive inequalities the theme.

oeIt is not the same problem we had last year, Klopp insisted. oel like it more than when they create chances whenever they want because then we defend like crazy. I'm fine with this for the moment but only for the moment. For tonight I don't care how we conceded, as we won and it was well deserved.

When one journalist told Klopp people doubt Liverpool mainly because of the way they concede goals like Gareth McAuley's here, Klopp fought back the suggestion. oeReally, I've heard this a few times and I lose respect when people say this. It's not important because I don't have to respect everybody and you can say what you want but I cannot say more.

It is not one of those situations where a manager laughs off criticism with other coaches inside Melwood.

oeI'm not interested so why should I laugh about something when I am not interested? I'm the first who knows it and we work on it. If people say we have some issues with set pieces how can I say they are wrong? I think 70/80 per cent of the goals we have conceded are from set pieces. But they are all different and we are still working on it. We defended well against United brilliantly, and tonight it was so difficult - but we have no defensive problem.

Since Alberto Moreno was dropped to the substitutes' bench, since Jol Matip was introduced to the starting XI and since Jordan Henderson has become more confident in his ability to complete the dog-work as a number 6 in midfield, Liverpool, at least, have looked more secure from open play and risk of mistake has reduced.

If Tony Pulis is to be believed, it is the attacking threat of Liverpool's front five that will define whether they are successful or not. Pulis did not need to be asked about Liverpool's title credentials inside Anfield's new press room. Instead, he offered his thoughts voluntarily, revealing that he believes Klopp's team have a genuine chance because they do not have the distraction of European fixtures unlike their competitors.

Klopp later just about accepted the Pulis's praise but was not prepared to take it at face value.

oeI played in Europe before, and actually it never stopped us doing what we had to do, he said. oePlaying good football is a big advantage, having good players is a big advantage, don't play in the week can be a big advantage when you get injuries. You need the time we have for training. Where it will lead us to I've no idea. In December and January a few other teams will not have Europe. I'm not sure if it was meant to be nice or a compliment or to make pressure on us, I've no idea but thank you and[bar] I'll tell the players.

DAILY MIRROR

TWITCHES & WIZARDS; Don't be fooled by the nervy ending.. this talented Liverpool side is the real deal and will have a say in the title race

LIVERPOOL 2
 Mane 20, Coutinho 35
 WESTBROM 1
 McAuley 81

WHAT a difference a goal makes.

The significance of West Brom's late consolation went way beyond preventing Liverpool from sitting proudly on top of the Premier League on Saturday night.

It transformed the feel of this game. The reality was that for virtually the whole 90 minutes Jurgen Klopp's side dominated in what was surely one of their most complete performances since the German's arrival.

Yet allowing the outclassed and outmanoeuvred visitors to score from a set-piece 10 minutes from time once again raised questions about the Reds' defence, when really, their aggressive, organised display against the longball didn't warrant it. Klopp himself knew that. He believes his team are working hard on what he knows was a deficiency, and in an entertaining post-match performance of his own, suggested the critics needed to up their game.

"Really, I've heard this a few times and I lose respect when people say this," he replied to the question of what he makes of the idea his defence is woeful.

"If people say we have some issues with set-pieces, how can I say they are wrong? I think 70-80 per cent of the goals we have conceded are from set-pieces. I'm the first who knows it and we work on it. But they are all different and we are still working on it and we defended brilliantly against United, and tonight it was so difficult - but we have no defensive problem."

In fact, individually, the Reds' defence is performing well.

James Milner is perhaps the best left-back in the Premier League right now, Nathaniel Clyne not far behind, and both Dejan Lovren and Joel Matip look assured.

Perhaps as a unit, though, they are still learning and prone to small lapses of concentration, like here when they failed to clear a corner and Gareth McAuley (above) rammed home for Albion to set up the tense finale.

But Klopp points to the case for the defence, when he said: "Do you believe that we work on it?"

"There was another team and did you see who was in it? They were all my size and brought in the set-piece specialist who was injured for a long time. They are brilliant at set-pieces.

"It is not the same problem we had last year. I like it more that they create chances whenever they want because we defend like crazy. I'm fine with this for the moment but only for the moment.

"We needed to be really aggressive to defend their long balls and without making fouls, and that is a challenge, but we did it brilliantly."

For all the inevitable focus on set-piece defending, if Liverpool had a failing in this game, it was not killing off the Baggies with the avalanche of chances their stunning approach play created.

Sadio Mane's perfect volley finished off a fine move instigated by the outstanding Philippe Coutinho, and then the little Brazilian produced more magic for a second. But that should have been doubled. Or trebled.

Perhaps it was too easy and they got complacent in their finishing, or perhaps it was just one of those days.

But this Liverpool team is the real deal. If they can carve open a Tony Pulis side so efficiently, then they really can be a title influence this season.

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Reds survive late scare

Liverpool survived a late scare as they held on to beat West Brom 2-1 in the Premier League at Anfield.

The Reds appeared to be cruising to an emphatic win after first-half goals from Sadio Mane and Philippe Coutinho did the damage.

However, Jurgen Klopp's side missed a stack of chances and ended up surviving a nervy finale after Gareth McAuley pulled one back.

A two-goal win would have put Liverpool top but instead they sit second to Arsenal on goal difference.

Klopp made just one change from the frustrating stalemate with Manchester United as Adam Lallana returned at the expense of Daniel Sturridge.

West Brom set their stall out from the start as they defended in numbers and launched it long in search of lone frontman Salomon Rondon.

For 20 minutes Liverpool struggled to break them down with James Milner nodding over from Jordan Henderson's cross.

It was always going to take something special to find a way through and the Reds provided it with a goal of the highest quality.

Coutinho's intelligence and awareness was key as he dummied Milner's pass and Emre Can surged forward. The German released Roberto Firmino down the left and his cross dropped perfectly for Mane to fire past Ben Foster.

Energised by the breakthrough, Liverpool raised the bar and threatened to blow the Baggies away.

Lallana curled over the bar before the second goal arrived 10 minutes before the break.

Foster sliced a clearance high into the air and after it bounced off Darren Fletcher, the Reds pounced. Mane played in Coutinho, who cut inside past Craig Dawson and kept his composure to beat the keeper at his near post.

Pulis' master plan lay in tatters and there was no let up from the dominant hosts. Just before the hour mark Mane and Coutinho combined to set up Firmino, whose effort was blocked.

Foster then produced a fine save to keep out Dejan Lovren's glancing header from Coutinho's free-kick.

Can was much improved following his performance against United but he should have had a goal to show for his efforts.

Coutinho put it on a plate for him in front of the Kop but Can allowed Jonas Olsson to deny him.

The away end celebrated when West Brom broke off the shackles to earn their first corner of the night with 21 minutes to go.

Substitute Chris Brunt's delivery was nodded away by Firmino. It dropped to the feet of Nacer Chadli, who scooped it wide under pressure.

From a position of total control, Liverpool got sloppy and paid the price on 81 minutes.

Loris Karous kept out McAuley's header at the far post but from the ensuing corner the Reds' lead was halved.

They didn't deal with Brunt's corner and McAuley drilled home from close range. Suddenly, the nerves were jangling but Liverpool dug deep to get the job done.

MATCH FACTS

Liverpool: Karius, Clyne, Matip, Lovren, Milner, Henderson, Can, Lallana (Wijnaldum 79), Coutinho (Lucas 88), Mane (Origi 90), Firmino

Not used: Mignolet, Moreno, Klavan, Sturridge.

West Brom: Foster, Dawson, McAuley, Olsson, Nyom, Fletcher, Jacob (Brunt 45), Phillips (Morrison 51), Chadli, McClean (Robson-Kanu 65), Rondon.

Not used: Myhill, Galloway, Gardner, Leko.

Referee: Neil Swarbrick

Attendance: 53,218

Goals: Mane 21, Coutinho 35, McAuley 81

Bookings: Jacob, McLean, Morrison, Henderson

Man of the match: Philippe Coutinho.



Liverpool survived a late fightback from West Bromwich Albion to record a win that sends them joint top of the Premier League table.

Sadio Mane finished a slick team move to put Liverpool in front inside 20 minutes.

Phillipe Coutinho doubled the lead nine minutes before the break as Liverpool blew the Baggies apart with incisive football. Albion rallied and set up a nervy finish when Gareth McAuley volleyed home nine minutes from time.

But the Baggies could not quite find an equaliser that would have extended their unbeaten run to five matches. Albion survived an early scare when Mane went down in the box following a tangling of legs with Allan Nyom.

Neil Swarbrick did not cower to intense pressure from the home fans and awarded a goal kick. It was a reprieve Albion nearly took full advantage of moments later.

On a speedy counter-attack, Salomon Rondon fed Nacer Chadli who knocked the ball on to Matt Phillips. His return pass very nearly found Rondon 12 yards out, but just clipped the heels of a back-tracking defender.

That was as good as it got for the Baggies in the first half as Liverpool dominated.

And it wasn't long before their superiority was reflected in the score line as Mane volleyed in Firmino's tantalising cross from the left.

Tony Pulis might not have thought so, but Coutinho's dummy in the build-up was a thing of beauty. Adam Lallana, back in the starting line-up, curled over the bar, but the second goal soon followed.

Darren Fletcher's looped back pass forced Ben Foster into a sliced clearance that Mane picked up. The Senegal international found Coutinho who cut inside and fired past Foster at his near post. Chris Brunt emerged after the break for Claudio

Yacob. Presumably to give the Northern Irishman a decent run ahead of next weekend when the Argentinian will be banned following a fifth booking of the season.

But the second period followed a similar pattern, with Liverpool knocking the ball around in Albion's half, probing for space and an opening.

Gareth McAuley used his entire frame to block Firmino's goalbound shot before Foster was at full stretch to keep out Dejan Lovren's firm header.

If McAuley's interception was spectacular it was nothing on Jonas Olsson's.

It was bravery personified as the Swede flew into a sliding barrier to deny Can from Coutinho's cutback. Nacer Chadli poked a shot wide from Albion's first corner more than an hour into the match.

Substitute James Morrison then tried his luck from the edge of the box as West Brom finally began to threaten as the game entered the final quarter.

And it wasn't long before the Baggies profited from their bright spell.

Loris Karis could only divert a McAuley header out for a corner.

But the Liverpool keeper could not stop the Northern Irishman from the resulting set-piece - making the most of a kind bounce to volley into the corner.

Foster denied Firmino at close range as Liverpool responded.

An unlikely lifeline nearly become something more for the Baggies with Chadli firing wide before substitute Hal Robson-Kanu had an effort blocked inside the area.

The Reds held on and might have scored a third late on were Foster not alive as always.

Analysis: As expected, Nacer Chadli tucked in as a fifth midfielder when Albion were out of possession. In possession, he tried to get as close to Salomon Rondon as possible with further support from the flanks.

Albion have been dangerous on the break in a number of games this season.

And that was their most threatening weapon at Anfield, with Rondon, Chadli and Matt Phillips combining well on the counter. Problem was, it was seen all too

infrequently with Liverpool depriving Albion of the ball, a tactic Jurgen Klopp had spoken about before the match.

Crowd watch: Albion's largest travelling contingent of the season stuck right behind their team. But not every member of the squad.

"He's massive you know, Saido Berahino," they sang in reference to the out of shape striker's weight issues. "Oh Jimmy Jimmy. Jimmy Jimmy Morrison," the travelling fans sang as Morrison replaced Phillips just five minutes into the second half. In fairness, there was little on the pitch to cheer until the last 25 minutes when the Baggies suddenly came alive as an attacking force.

Bigger picture: The final chapter in Albion's tricky trilogy concludes next week with the visit of Manchester City. The Baggies will have played three of the top four consecutively. A small of crumb of comfort, but any team in the country would have struggled to contain Liverpool in this ruthless mood.

Bookings: Henderson (foul, 88) - Liverpool. Yacob (dissent, 43) McClean (foul, 57) - Albion Goals: Mane (20), Coutinho (36) - Liverpool McAuley (81) - Albion

Star man: McAuley Attendance: 53,218

Liverpool: Karius, Clyne, Matip, Lovren, Milner, Henderson, Can, Lallana (Wijnaldum, 79), Coutinho (Lucas 88), Mane (90+1), Firmino.

Subs not used: Mignolet, Moreno, Klavan, Sturridge.

Albion: Foster, Dawson, McAuley, Olsson, Nyom, Phillips (Morrison, 51), Yacob (Brunt, 45), Fletcher (c), McClean (Robson-Kanu, 64), Chadli, Rondon.

Subs not used: Myhill, Galloway, Gardner, Leko.

Date: 22 October 2016

Opposition: West Bromwich Albion

Competition: League

Mail	Sunday Times	Times	Telegraph
Echo	Sun Independent	Guardian	Mirror
BBC	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Birmingham Mail

22 October
2016



THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Coutinho masterminds victory but top spot goes begging once again

Tracksuit met concrete as Tony Pulis leant back and placed his bottom on the low wall of the dugout; his crossed legs, his folded arms, his pursed lips and silent breath reflecting a smouldering mood.

For the second time in five days, Liverpool knew that a decent victory would send them to the top of the Premier League table, this time at Arsenal(tm)s expense. For the second time in five days, Liverpool met an opponent with a similar if not identical tactical strategy.

Pulis has managed enough teams at Anfield to realise how defining starts can be. He knows how tension can rise inside this stadium when Liverpool fail to score early; how the nervous atmosphere from the terraces infiltrates those on the pitch and playing in red.

The earliest signs were positive for the visiting manager. Emre Can, Adam Lallana and Philippe Coutinho each misplaced a pass inside the opening six minutes. The Imperial Walkers that represent Pulis in defence gleefully headed balls away with such force, it seemed that only by introducing harpoons and tow cables would Jrgen Klopp be able to traverse them.

And then the feeling changed. Liverpool scored their first goal in the 20th minute. A second came before half-time. Liverpool were a whirlwind of skill and trickery and West Brom(tm)s taller, bulkier players were unable to keep up. From his sitting position, Pulis looked like he knew his scheme had been foiled.

This, indeed, was an important win for Liverpool because it sends out a warning that parking whichever armour plated vehicle you choose to call it in front of whichever goal Liverpool are attacking will not always be enough to achieve the desired result.

Whereas Coutinho did not do much right when Manchester United came and took a draw on Monday night, having been selected then in a more central position, here he was the game(tm)s outstanding player from the left. Had Ben Foster not somehow clawed away Dejan Lovren(tm)s header from the Brazilian(tm)s free kick in the second half and had Jonas Olsson not flung himself in front of Can(tm)s shot from near the penalty spot soon after, then Coutinho would have had involvement in four Liverpool goals rather than two.

The first arrived just when Liverpool needed it because West Brom(tm)s confidence was growing at the time. It happened, largely because Coutinho(tm)s dummy took two West Brom midfielders out of the game, forcing Craig Dawson to consider whether it was worth going to apprehend Can, who was released by Coutinho(tm)s genius. Instead, Dawson did not really stay nor stray and his indecision left Roberto Firmino with the space to supply a cross and from there Sadio Man[c] volleyed Liverpool into the lead.

Like the first, the second involved both Coutinho and a mistake, this one from goalkeeper Ben Foster, whose kick fell dreadfully short of the half-way line. Once free, Coutinho was too swift and assure of himself to allow the droids following him to have any influence and his disguised shot was able to hoodwink Foster with the direction of his finish.

Because Liverpool could not register a third goal, Pulis remained consistent with his demand that West Brom(tm)s players work possession down the wings in order to gain the corners and throw-ins, which are the centre-piece of his attacking plan.

The well-rehearsed set-piece drill came into operation when Chris Brunt pinged in a corner, Olsson acted as a road block for defensive runs and Gareth McAuley made it 2-1.

With that, Anfield became stressed. West Brom, though, had left themselves with too much to do. Liverpool would have been top had Georgino Wijnaldum(tm)s curling shot crept inside the post with seconds remaining.

Instead, they move into second.

Teams

Liverpool (4-3-3): Karius; Clyne, Maitop, Lovren, Milner; Lallana (Wijnaldum 79), Henderson, Can; Man[c] (Origi 90), Firmino, Coutinho (Lucas 88). Subs not used: Mignolet, Sturridge, Klavan, Moreno.

West Bromwich Albion (4-4-1-1): Foster; Dawson, McAuley, Olsson, Nyom; Phillips (Morrison 50), Fletcher, Yacob (Brunt h-t), McClean (Robson-Kanu 65); Chadli; Rondon. Subs not used: Myhill, Galloway, Gardner, Leko.

Referee: N. Swarbrick (Lancashire)

Attendance: 53, 218

The Sunday Telegraph

Liverpool survive scare but waste chance to go top

Liverpool 2 Mane 20, Coutinho 35 West Bromwich Albion 1 McAuley 81

Att: 53,218

Were it not for Gareth McAuley's late goal then Liverpool would have sat at the top of the Premier League for the first time since that night in south London in May 2014 some like to call "Crystanbul", but as it was they fell just short of the summit for now. It is only by virtue of goal difference that Arsenal remain above Liverpool, both level on 20 points, and it beggared belief that Jurgen

Klopp's team only won this game by a single goal. A winning margin of two would have put them on top in this, their 27th consecutive season without the league title, and yet somehow at times they found themselves hanging on at the end in the face of a classic Tony Pulis bombardment.

For all but one West Bromwich Albion corner, Klopp's team were far too good for the away side who came with a determination to sit deep in defence and repel the quick passing and sharp running of the home side.

They conceded two within 15 minutes, the first was a beautifully worked goal for Sadio Mane, the second a moment of smart opportunism by Philippe Coutinho and it was a wonder there were not more in the second half.

Liverpool were last on top of the Premier League when propelled there by a point against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in that 3-3 comeback by the home side in 2014 that effectively ended the dream of a league title for Brendan Rodgers's side. It was a reversal of the 2005 Istanbul narrative and a painful event from which the manager then never truly recovered in terms of his Anfield career.

"Who wants to go top in October?" Klopp asked rhetorically afterwards. "In dreamland you always win four or five nil and the crowd go early and do something more serious," he said. "This game created one of the best atmsomy pheres because it was exciting to the end. We created the chances and we didn't use them." He added: "Obviously not having a clean sheet is part of our game. It is not a big problem. Defending is not letting them create a lot of chances and I can't remember [the opposition] having a lot of chances in the last few games other than lucky ones from corners and free-kicks."

The Liverpool manager was also asked about Steven Gerrard's Instagram post that seemed to confirm he would be leaving Los Angeles and the Galaxy Major League Soccer franchise after the play-offs in November. Klopp said: "Steven Gerrard is always welcome at Liverpool FC, you can't imagine how welcome. Everything we have spoken about stays in that talk [private]. Nobody should be worried that there is no space for Steven Gerrard. Everything will be fine, 100 per cent."

Klopp had left out Daniel Sturridge with Roberto Firmino back in the false nine role and Coutinho and Mane either side of him. Their first goal began in Liverpool's own half when a ball forward by James Milner was permitted by Coutinho to roll under his foot which was enough to open up West Brom's five-man midfield. From there Emre Can was set free upon the West Brom back four and he waited until just the right moment to release the ball left to Firmino who had a good view of Mane arriving at the back post. The cross was perfect, hit with the left foot and dropped just over the head of the left-back Allan Nyom where Mane hit it first time. For the West Brom players it was a reminder of what Pulis, no doubt, had told them many times during the week, that given the space Liverpool are capable of turning a small opening into an important goal.

Joel Matip looked composed in the centre of defence alongside Dejan Lovren where the job in hand was to deal with Salomon Rondon's appetite for the long balls. The second goal originated with Ben Foster's sliced clearance that went up rather than forward and to make matters worse was mis-controlled by Fletcher, who gave possession away to Mane. He found Coutinho in the left channel with much to do to get a sight of goal. He did so by selling McAuley and Craig Dawson an outrageous dum-that had them scrambling left while the Brazilian went right. The job was completed with a Coutinho shot tucked in past Foster. Pulis said that at halftime he told his full-backs to push higher up the pitch and that made a difference. Even so, the list of opportunities for Liverpool in the second half felt endless. Foster saved well from Lovren's header. Milner hit the pass of the game to Coutinho but Can's shot from the cut-back was blocked by Jonas Olsson. "I can never fault their attitude and commitment and willingness to have a go," Pulis said. "It was epitomised by that Olsson block and the way they worked when they were up against it."

McAuley scored from a corner when it struck him on the shoulder and the ball dropped nicely for him to lash home at close range. The concern for Liverpool was obvious - that if they were asked to defend another corner West Brom might just do the same again. At the other end they carried on missing chances: a Firmino shot blocked and then a shot wide from the substitute Georgino Wijnaldum. "A 2-1 keeps you more awake than a 4-0," Klopp said. "Maybe we are not experienced enough in these situations to feel it could be easy. It is not easy. It is so difficult, all these players and all these games. You need luck and you need players fit. "I have no problem with the goal we conceded. I would like to have it that nobody can score against us but first we have to have it that nobody can create chances [against us]." As Klopp congratulated his players on the pitch afterwards the stadium announcer told the supporters that the club were top of the Premier League, which raised a cheer. They remain second although it is, as their manager would surely agree, early days yet.

Liverpool (4-2-3-1) Karius 6; Clyne 6, Matip 7, Lovren 6, Milner 7; Henderson 6, Can 6, Lallana 7 (Wijnaldum 79); Mane 6 (Origi 90), Firmino 6; Coutinho 7. Subs Sturridge, Klavan, Moreno, Mignolet. Booked Henderson. West Bromwich Albion (4-5-1) Foster 6; Dawson 5, McAuley 6, Olsson 6, Nyom 6; Phillips 5 (Morrison 90), Fletcher 6, Yacob 5 (Brunt h-t), Chadli 5, McClean 5 (Robson-Kanu 64); Rondon 6. Subs Gardner, Myhill, Galloway, Leko. Booked Yacob, McClean.

Referee N Swarbrick (Lancashire).

Date: 22 October 2016 Opposition: West Bromwich Albion Competition: League	Mail	Sunday Times	Times	Telegraph	22 October 2016
	Echo	Sun Independent	Guardian	Mirror	
	BBC	Sun Telegraph	Independent	Birmingham Mail	



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Coutinho inspires Reds

Jurgen Klopp's love affair with the red half of Merseyside shows no sign of losing any of its ardour but a momentary defensive lapse from his team will have angered the German as his side threw away the chance of moving to the top of the Premier League for the first time in two-and-a-half years.

First-half goals from Sadio Mane and Philippe Coutinho had Klopp's side on course for precisely that until, nine minutes from time, Chris Brunt's left-wing corner was helped on by Craig Dawson, allowing Gareth McAuley to volley in for Albion's consolation at the far post and to push Liverpool down to second place, behind Arsenal only on goal difference. Last night marked the oneyear anniversary of Klopp's first home game as Liverpool manager and, for all the disappointment of missing out on top spot, it provided ample proof of the giant steps his team have made since that inaugural match in the Anfield dugout, a drab 1-1 draw against Rubin Kazan on a Thursday night in the Europa League.

The late kick-off time, allied with results elsewhere, meant that victory by two clear goals would take Liverpool top of the Premier League table on goal difference. After 21 minutes they were half-way to that target, courtesy of Mane's fourth goal of the season. It was a superbly worked opening as well. Emre Can's pass down the inside-left channel played in Roberto Firmino, who delivered a chipped cross of improbable accuracy, the ball clearing a defender's leap by inches and finding Mane at the far post for a finish that was no less impressive. It was the culmination of a typically-dominant opening from the hosts, but one which had not seriously threatened Ben Foster's goal until that point.

There had been flashes of Liverpool's attacking potency. Adam Lallana, recalled at the expense of Daniel Sturridge, had seen a dangerous cross well defended by Jonas Olsson, Allan Nyom had survived a penalty appeal after contact with Mane, and a powerful header from James Milner had soared over.

But with the deadlock broken, Albion, having conceded a first-half goal for just the second time in the league this season, looked a long way short of being able to find an equalising goal. The opening quarter of the contest had offered Tony Pulis' side, winners of just one of their past 10 away league games, little hope, although an unforced Liverpool error had allowed Salomon Rondon to launch a counter-attack, and Nacer Chadli to slip through an immaculate pass to Matt Phillips before Joel Matip came to the rescue.

Searching for the goal that would take them top for the first time since late in that illfated-but-meomorable challenge for the 2014 title, Liverpool pressed on, Can teeing up Lallana who pivoted nicely and lobbed just over.

After 35 minutes, the victory looked all but assured and top place an increasing probability, when Coutinho doubled the lead as Foster's clearance struck Darren Fletcher and presented the ball to Mane.

A short pass to Coutinho, and a magnificent dummy which left McAuley and Dawson on their backsides in their penalty area, allowed the Brazilian to drive a low, unstoppable shot low into the corner of Foster's goal.

Pulis' face as the teams trudged down the tunnel at half-time told its own story and, sure enough, the Albion manager responded with his first substitution, bringing on Brunt for Claudio Jacob, who had been booked late in his team's underwhelming firsthalf performance. His mood would not have been improved when Mane and Coutinho linked a few moments later in an almost identical move to that which led to the second goal although, this time, McAuley remained on his feet to block.

Still, Pulis had seen enough and, just five minutes after the re-start, the visitors made another change, James Morrison replacing the ineffective Phillips.

The re-shuffle may have been an exercise in damage limitation, which looked a priority for the hosts as Liverpool continued their dominance.

On 56 minutes, Mane and Coutinho's intricate passing put Firmino clean in on goal, where he was blocked by the prone goalkeeper, and, shortly afterwards, Coutinho landed a pinpoint free kick onto the head of Dejan Lovren, who forced a magnificent, onehanded save from Foster. Can cleared the bar from 25 yards, after a Jonas Olsson clearance ended up at his feet, then Coutinho's breakaway ended with him finding Can in a promising position, only for Olsson to bravely throw himself into the path of his powerful shot in defence of the beleaguered Albion goal.

Milner, still operating so effectively in that unfamiliar left-back position, chanced his arm with a low shot which Foster required two attempts to smother, and any lingering Albion hopes of rescuing the most unlikely of points surely evaporated when Chadli guided a shot high and wide following a halfcleared corner.

West Brom at least had in them that costly consolation, although Liverpool did all in their power to try and reclaim the necessary two-goal cushion in the minutes that followed, Firmino proving particularly influential as he was twice denied by Foster.

Liverpool: Karius 6, Clyne 7, Matip 8, Lovren 6, Milner 7, Can 7, Henderson 7, Lallana 7 (Wijnaldum 79, 6), Mane 7, Firmino 7, Coutinho 9 (Lucas 88min, 5) West Bromwich Albion: Foster 8, Dawson 6, McAuley 6, Olsson 7, Nyom 5., Fletcher 7, Jacob 5 (Brunt h-t, 7) Phillips 5 (Morrison 50, 5), Chadli 7, McClean 5 (Robson-Kanu 64, 6) Rondon 6

The Observer

Date: 22 October 2016
 Opposition: West Bromwich Albion
 Competition: League

Mail	Sunday Times	Times	Telegraph
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22 October
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Liverpool secured a deserved victory over West Brom but conceded a late goal to miss out on going top of the Premier League.

Jurgen Klopp's team dominated at Anfield and took the lead as Sadio Mane steered in Roberto Firmino's dinked cross.

Philippe Coutinho added a second when he picked up the ball from Mane, cut inside Baggies defender Gareth McAuley and shot into the bottom corner.

A two-goal victory would have taken Liverpool top, but McAuley denied them first place when he smashed in a late goal after the hosts failed to clear a corner.

Nevertheless, the victory extended their unbeaten run to nine games in all competitions to leave them second in the Premier League table, behind leaders Arsenal on goal difference.

Liverpool do not miss dropped Sturridge

Liverpool have scored 20 times in the Premier League this season - more than anyone else - despite England international Daniel Sturridge failing to score in his seven league outings.

He did not feature as he was dropped to the substitutes' bench at Anfield, but was not missed as his side dominated, having 21 shots on goal and 68% of possession.

Liverpool had further chances but Adam Lallana, recalled in place of Sturridge, curled over the bar and James Milner also headed off target.

The Baggies had goalkeeper Ben Foster to thank for keeping them in the game in the second half as he acrobatically pushed away Dejan Lovren's header and also did well to save a Roberto Firmino effort.

West Brom create little but make Liverpool panic

But Liverpool failed to kill off the game and West Brom looked for an improbable equaliser despite previously having little of the ball and creating few chances.

Tony Pulis's side had to wait until the 70th minute to have a shot when Nacer Chadli curled an effort over the top and McAuley's late goal came from their only attempt on target.

Substitute Hal Robson-Kanu had a late opportunity, but his shot was blocked by Dejan Lovren. Anything other than a Liverpool victory would have been an injustice.

West Brom have only scored 10 goals in nine Premier League matches, with Saido Berahino a constant issue for Pulis.

The 23-year-old striker, who got 20 goals in all competitions back in 2014-15, has only netted one Premier League goal in 2016 and been placed on a fitness programme after being "**eight pounds over his ideal weight**".

Yet again, he was not included in West Brom's 18-man squad, but they need their striker back fit with the right attitude quickly. Salomon Rondon struggled to get in the game and Robson-Kanu is yet to score since joining the Baggies in September. Can Liverpool last the pace in the Premier League title race?

Jurgen Klopp has been in charge of Liverpool for just over a year and created an attacking side that is pleasing on the eye and a squad that could challenge for the Premier League title.

They only finished eighth last season, but do not have the distraction of European football this year and have made a fantastic start, despite a tough run of games.

In their nine league matches in 2016-17, they have played four of the current top seven - Arsenal, Tottenham, Chelsea and Manchester United - as well as defending champions Leicester.

They now have what appears to be, on paper at least, a favourable run of fixtures, with their next seven matches against sides all outside of the top seven.

One major concern for Klopp would be their inability to kill off this game, and the late goal they conceded means they have kept just one clean sheet in their last 11 Premier League games.

Man of the match - Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool)

The stats you need to know

Liverpool are unbeaten in 12 home Premier League games (won seven, drawn five), their longest run since a sequence of 14 in April 2014.

Since Jurgen Klopp's first game in charge, there have been more Premier League goals netted in games involving Liverpool than any other team (126 - 75 for, 51 against).

Roberto Firmino has had a hand in 17 Premier League goals (12 goals, five assists) in 2016; more than any other Liverpool player.

Sadio Mane has both scored and assisted in two of his four Premier League appearances at Anfield this season.

70% of West Brom's Premier League goals this season have come via set-pieces (including penalties) - seven of 10 goals.

Indeed, West Brom have scored more Premier League goals from corners this season than any other team (five).

Gareth McAuley is the only West Brom defender to hit double figures for Premier League goals (11).

What they said

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp: "I am happy with the performance of my team. It is difficult against West Brom, so many balls in the air and they are so dangerous from set pieces.

"It would have been a joke if we had drawn today, it was unbelievable how we played. It was a good performance against a team like this. They were here to get something, but we never let them back into the game.

"Their corners kicks are so good, I had a feeling that 15 players in white kit were in the box. It was a big, big challenge to stay cool, stay concentrated. It is a really nice team I am really happy to have these boys around."

West Brom boss Tony Pulis: "In the first half we were OK, just two poor mistakes. It is quality at times when we get the ball, to get in their final third.

"In the second half we had a go, it opened up at our end and Ben made some wonderful saves. We made changes, freshened it up and caused them problems.

"You know if you get a goal it puts them on the back foot and it is a shame it didn't come earlier.

"We lack certain qualities we are looking for. The squad has improved, they have faults and we accept that but they worked hard today."

Analysis

Former England and Liverpool midfielder Danny Murphy on Match of the Day: "Coutinho is the jewel in the crown for Liverpool. He is special in so many ways, now he is adding that end product.

"He has scored four (league) goals this season, he only scored eight last season. He's playing with confidence and his decision making is much better than it was before.

"He's dictating games, he's frightening the opposition. His performance was absolutely magnificent. Long may it continue."

Former Middlesbrough and Fulham goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer on Match of the Day: "Liverpool's defending from set pieces is one of their Achilles' heels. They are playing with a zonal marking system and as a player I hated it.

"They do not have players on the posts at corners and it just makes it more difficult. As a goalkeeper, you feel more exposed."

What's next?

Liverpool are back in action on Tuesday when they entertain Tottenham in the fourth round of the EFL Cup, before they play away at Crystal Palace in the Premier League next Saturday.

For West Brom, they have a week without a match before taking on Manchester City at home in the Premier League on Saturday, 29 October.

Date: 22 October 2016

Opposition: West Bromwich Albion

Competition: League

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Match ends, Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 1.

90'+4' Second Half ends, Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 1.

90'+3' Attempt missed. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Divock Origi.

90'+2' Offside, Liverpool. Emre Can tries a through ball, but Divock Origi is caught offside.

90'+1' Substitution, Liverpool. Divock Origi replaces Sadio Mané.

90'+1' Offside, West Bromwich Albion. Salomón Rondón tries a through ball, but Nyom is caught offside.

90'+1' 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.

88' Substitution, Liverpool. Lucas Leiva replaces Philippe Coutinho.

88' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.

88' Attempt missed. Sadio Mané (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Roberto Firmino with a through ball.

87' Attempt blocked. Hal Robson-Kanu (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Gareth McAuley with a headed pass.

86' Foul by Joel Matip (Liverpool).

86' Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.

85' Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Emre Can.

85' James Morrison (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

85' Attempt missed. Nacer Chadli (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Hal Robson-Kanu.

84' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Georginio Wijnaldum.

83' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Sadio Mané with a cross.

81' Goal! Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 1. Gareth McAuley (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from very close range to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Hal Robson-Kanu following a corner.

81' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Loris Karius.

80' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool).

80' Hal Robson-Kanu (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.

79' Substitution, Liverpool. Georginio Wijnaldum replaces Adam Lallana.

79' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Hal Robson-Kanu.

77' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

77' Foul by Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion).

76' Attempt blocked. Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by James Morrison.

75' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

75' Foul by Nyom (West Bromwich Albion).

74' Attempt missed. James Morrison (West Bromwich Albion right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Hal Robson-Kanu.

72' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nacer Chadli.

70' Offside, West Bromwich Albion. Craig Dawson tries a through ball, but Salomón Rondón is caught offside.

70' Attempt missed. Nacer Chadli (West Bromwich Albion left footed shot from the centre of the box is high and wide to the right following a corner.

69' Corner, West Bromwich Albion. Conceded by Dejan Lovren.

67' Attempt missed. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

66' Attempt saved. James Milner (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

66' Attempt blocked. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

65' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. Hal Robson-Kanu replaces James McClean.

63' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

63' Foul by Nyom (West Bromwich Albion).

62' Attempt missed. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high.

59' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nyom.

59' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

59' Gareth McAuley (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.

58' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the six yard box is blocked.

58' Attempt saved. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is saved in the top left corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho with a cross.

57' James McClean (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

57' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

57' Foul by James McClean (West Bromwich Albion).

57' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

55' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

55' Foul by Gareth McAuley (West Bromwich Albion).

53' Dangerous play by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

53' Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.

51' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. James Morrison replaces Matt Phillips.

50' Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Adam Lallana is caught offside.

47' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

46' Offside, Liverpool. James Milner tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.

Second Half begins Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 0.

45' Substitution, West Bromwich Albion. Chris Brunt replaces Claudio Yacob.

45'+2' First Half ends, Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 0.

45' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

45' Foul by Jonas Olsson (West Bromwich Albion).

43' Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion is shown the yellow card.

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

42' Foul by Darren Fletcher (West Bromwich Albion).

41' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

41' Foul by Claudio Yacob (West Bromwich Albion).

38' Attempt missed. Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

38' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

38' Foul by James McClean (West Bromwich Albion).

35' Goal! Liverpool 2, West Bromwich Albion 0. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

34' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool).

34' Nacer Chadli (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the attacking half.

32' Attempt missed. Adam Lallana (Liverpool left footed shot from the right side of the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Emre Can.

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

28' Foul by Salomón Rondón (West Bromwich Albion).

26' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

26' Foul by Darren Fletcher (West Bromwich Albion).

25' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

25' Gareth McAuley (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.

24' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by James Milner.

20' Goal! Liverpool 1, West Bromwich Albion 0. Sadio Mané (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Roberto Firmino with a cross.

20' Hand ball by Darren Fletcher (West Bromwich Albion).

19' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

19' Craig Dawson (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick on the right wing.

18' Attempt missed. James Milner (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Jordan Henderson with a cross.

17' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Joel Matip.

11' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

11' Foul by James McClean (West Bromwich Albion).

9' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

9' Jonas Olsson (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.

6' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

5' Offside, West Bromwich Albion. Nyom tries a through ball, but Salomón Rondón is caught offside.

3' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

3' Nyom (West Bromwich Albion wins a free kick in the defensive half.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.