

Date: 15 August 2017

Opposition: TSG 1899 Hoffenheim

Competition: Champions League

Times	Telegraph	BBC
Guardian	Mirror	RNZ
Independent	Mail	Echo

15 August 2017

THE TIMES

Teenager's wonder strike gives Liverpool edge

Hoffenheim Uth 87 Liverpool Alexander-Arnold 35, Nordtveit 74 (og)

The ball was positioned 30 yards out, central to the Hoffenheim goal and the opportunity to conjure something out of nothing was too good to turn down. For once Philippe Coutinho's absence was to prove a blessing in disguise for Liverpool. While the Brazil midfielder nursed a back injury at home, at the same time as holding out for a move to Barcelona, it was left to Trent Alexander-Arnold, an 18-year-old playing right back, to step into the spotlight and create the sort of jaw-dropping moment that could define his career over the coming years.

A swish of his right boot and his effort arced goalwards, finding a gap in the wall before nestling in the corner with Oliver Baumann, the goalkeeper, unmoved. A path into the Champions League had suddenly opened up.

If it spoke volumes that the homegrown teenager was prepared to take responsibility by stepping forward in his first European game, then the reality that he was designated for dead-ball duties by Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp ahead of more senior team-mates serves to illustrate the size of his talent.

That the strike which edged Liverpool in front came from a set piece, supposedly their Achilles' heel, meant the irony on an evening of unrelenting drama was to prove two-fold. There had been expression of astonishment on Klopp's face when the breakthrough came in the 35th minute of a breathless match, although that sense of surprise was not to last. The sight of substitute James Milner's clipped cross brushing off Havard Nordtveit and looping into the far corner of the home net with 16 minutes remaining should have been the signal for Liverpool to shut down the contest and all but secure their passage into the group stage of the Champions League. Yet they are not designed that way. Even when they are not taking risks going forward, there will be lapses of concentration in defence and Hoffenheim gleaned reward for their relentlessness with time running out. A fine angled drive from just inside the penalty box by Mark Uth finally beat Simon Mignolet, who had saved a first-half penalty, and ensures the return leg at Anfield next Wednesday is more complicated than it might have been.

That said, Klopp could hardly complain at the outcome. For every chance Liverpool spurned to add another layer of gloss on the scoreline, Mohamed Salah found the side netting when clean through and Roberto Firmino was culpable of missing from six yards on his return to his former club, so Hoffenheim could claim the same. Sandro Wagner hit the post, substitute Nadiem Amiri went close and, as the Sudkurve at the Rhein-Neckar-Arena roared itself hoarse, a Benjamin Hubner header was a yard too high.

That, in itself, will give hope to the German side, and their 30-year-old coach, Julian Nagelsmann, when they pitch up on Merseyside next week. Hoffenheim will also take heart from an opening passage in which they attacked and Liverpool rocked. The visitors were indebted to Mignolet for preserving parity at a stage in the game when an upsurge in momentum might have been fatal to their aspirations. The Germans raided down Liverpool's left, where Alberto Moreno kept his place at full back ahead of Milner, and one such attack allowed Serge Gnabry, once of Arsenal, to burst free and cut menacingly into the area. Confronted by Dejan Lovren he slipped the ball through the defender's legs before collapsing on to the turf as the Croatia centre back attempted to tackle him. There was a moment's hesitation from Bjorn Kuipers, the referee, before he awarded a penalty and Andrej Kramaric stepped forward, charged with creating a slice of history for his team. Kramaric has been rejuvenated since a disappointing spell at Leicester City, which ended midway through that title-winning campaign, but he reverted to the kind of form that those at the King Power Stadium will remember. A poor spot-kick lacked both power and direction and Mignolet's seventh penalty save in a Liverpool jersey could prove his most important to date given progress is about prestige and status.

That platform offered a way forward and Alexander-Arnold applied the impetus. The youngster was born in West Derby, not far from the club's training ground, and was picked out by the former Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard as a star-in-the-making two summers ago. Understandably, there remain rough edges to his game, his defensive positioning is something he is working on, but the slight admonishment from Klopp that "we conceded the goal because our little hero had his hand up" felt harsh especially as Lovren had played Uth outside.

That sting in the tail detracted from Liverpool's second goal which came when the electric Sadio Mane was bundled to the floor and a quick free kick found Milner in acres of space. Hoffenheim's aberration was compounded when a cross clipped Nordtveit and found the corner. Compared with that moment, the celebrations were restrained at the final whistle. However, Liverpool have spent the past 10 months coveting a return to the Champions League so waiting another 90 minutes for confirmation should hardly feel like a chore.

Hoffenheim (3-4-2-1) O Baumann 7 -- E Bicakcic 5 (sub: H Nordtveit 52min, 6), K Vogt 6, B Hubner 6 -- B Kaderabek 6, L Rupp 6 (sub: N Amiri 53, 6), K Demirbay 7, S Zuber 6 -- A Kramaric 6, S Gnabry 7 (sub: M Uth 70) -- S Wagner 7. Substitutes not used G Kobel, J Toljan, A Szalai, D Geiger. Booked Bicakcic, Hubner. Liverpool (4-3-3) S Mignolet 8 -- T Alexander-Arnold 8, J Matip 6, D Lovren 6, A Moreno 6 -- J Henderson 6 (sub: J Milner 63, 6), E Can 6, G Wijnaldum 6 -- M Salah 6, R Firmino 6 (sub: D Solanke 84), S Mane 7 (sub: M Grujic 89). Substitutes not used L Karius, J Gomez, R Klavan, D Origi. Booked Can, Alexander-Arnold. Referee B Kuipers (Neth).

the guardian

Liverpool close on Champions League group stage with win at Hoffenheim

It took Liverpool 90 minutes to switch off at a set piece against Hoffenheim. Benjamin Hübner met Nadiem Amiri's free-kick with an unmarked header six yards out and the recurring theme of Jürgen Klopp's reign made a fleeting reappearance. Not again? Not this time. Hübner headed over and Liverpool found themselves within touching distance of the [Champions League](#) group stage – a vast reward for fine margins.

Klopp left his homeland with a precious, timely play-off victory built on the confidence of youth and the value of experience.

Trent Alexander-Arnold, the homegrown right-back who was born a stone's throw from Melwood, swept [Liverpool](#) ahead with a stunning free-kick. The 18-year-old's first goal for the club arrived on his Champions League debut and, although he was caught out for Hoffenheim's late consolation, he chose a perfect way to announce himself to a wider audience.

As for experience, Simon Mignolet saved a first-half penalty having studied Andrej Kramaric's dubious technique with the goalkeeping coach, John Achterberg. James Milner appeared to have secured the game and the tie with a cross that deflected in off the former West Ham United defender Havard Nordtveit only for Mark Uth to set up a tense finale with a fine finish. It is all to play for but advantage Liverpool.

In truth a two-goal cushion would have flattered Klopp's team. Their defending, particularly that of Alberto Moreno, once again offered encouragement to their opponents and struck fear into their supporters. Hoffenheim also played with a confidence and adventure befitting their 30-year-old coach Julian Nagelsmann – Milner's junior – but quality often eluded them in Mignolet's penalty area, much to Liverpool's relief.

"We played a good match here and I promise you we will play a good match at Anfield," said Nagelsmann, who took umbrage at Klopp's claim that Liverpool had allowed Hoffenheim the ball in unthreatening areas.

"I would have been confident of coming back from 2-0," he added. "We had great possession in these so-called unimportant areas."

Hoffenheim controlled the early exchanges and were awarded a soft penalty when the former Arsenal forward Serge Gnabry nutmegged Dejan Lovren having cut in from the right – Moreno's flank – and went down under a slight touch. Klopp raged at the officials but would have saved his energy with the benefit of hindsight. Kramaric took a short run-up to the spot-kick and placed it weakly down the centre of Mignolet's goal. The visitors' keeper barely had to extend himself to make an invaluable save. Liverpool had a reprieve.

Within seconds the Hoffenheim captain, Kevin Vogt, overcommitted himself on the half-way line and invited Mohamed Salah to play a swift one-two with Roberto Firmino. Liverpool's record signing raced clear from the half-way line but, with only the goalkeeper, Oliver Baumann, to beat and under pressure from the recovering Vogt, he shot wide from the edge of the penalty area.

Pavel Kaderabek sliced over from one of several inviting crosses from the left foot of Kerem Demirbay. Lukas Rupp had a shot blocked and Mignolet saved crucially again when Gnabry escaped behind the Liverpool defence and volleyed from close range. Sandro Wagner put the rebound wide. It was another escape.

By that point Liverpool had a precious lead and away goal. The Hoffenheim central defender Ermin Bicakcic was booked for dragging down the outstanding Sadio Mané 25 yards out. Emre Can and Moreno lined up their options at the free-kick only for Alexander-Arnold to emerge through the pack and sweep a superb finish over the wall and into Baumann's bottom left-hand corner. The Hoffenheim keeper was rooted to the spot, stunned, along with everyone else. Mané was Liverpool's most potent forward throughout. He glided past Bicakcic twice at the start of the second half to set up an excellent chance for Firmino, who was given a rousing reception on his return to Hoffenheim, but the Brazilian was unable to beat Baumann at close range. Moments later Mané beat Bicakcic again and forced the home keeper into a low save. The Hoffenheim defender was then substituted.

In fairness to Liverpool's defenders – but not Moreno, who routinely failed to track his runner – they improved significantly after the break. Not even a series of well-taken Hoffenheim corners disrupted Liverpool's solidity and victory was sealed on account of quick-thinking and Hoffenheim inexperience. Amiri raged at the referee over the award of a free-kick, turning his back on Georginio Wijnaldum in the process. Wijnaldum played the free-kick unhindered to Firmino, who pierced the Hoffenheim defence with a superb ball out to Milner on the left. The Liverpool substitute crossed with his right foot and a slight deflection gave Baumann no chance as the ball sailed inside his far post.

Milner's importance exceeded the goal because he brought much-needed composure to the Liverpool performance. It was required when Uth, played outside by an appealing Alexander-Arnold and a sleeping Lovren, controlled a long ball from the right on his chest and finally ended Mignolet's resistance with an excellent low drive.

"I would have taken any win before the game," admitted Klopp. "Even 8-7." That might have been possible given the number of chances for both sides, something for the Liverpool manager to consider before next Wednesday's second leg. It is not over but Liverpool are close.

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The Mail

Alexander The Great lights up Liverpool

HOFFENHEIM 1 Uth 87 LIVERPOOL 2 Alexander-Arnold 35, Nordtveit 74 og TEENAGER Trent Alexander-Arnold was in dreamland after his stunning free-kick helped Liverpool leave Germany in charge of their Champions League destiny.

The 18-year-old curled Jurgen Klopp's side into the lead against Hoffenheim on what was only his ninth start as he continues to impress in Nathaniel Clyne's absence.

'It's a thing of dreams to make your European debut for your boyhood club, especially to mark it with a goal,' said Alexander-Arnold. 'I got egged on to take it. I never put my hand up, but I had the confidence to take it and it paid off.' Klopp praised the right-back's mentality but revealed he forced Alexander-Arnold to step up ahead of more senior team-mates. He also refused to criticise the defender for allowing Mark Uth to net late on.

'For an 18-year-old to have the guts to take a free-kick like that is more exciting for me than a little mistake he made,' said Klopp. 'It was a very intense game for him. He has a few things to learn but he's a great player.'

'I told him he has to do it. Maybe in a situation like this it helps if the manager says: "Trent takes it". A little bit lucky, the wall didn't jump, but a very good free-kick.

'If somebody would have told me that you will definitely win tonight, I would have taken 8-7. 'I'm happy. Hoffenheim deserved their goal. But I also thought we played really well defensively.' Liverpool's defensive effort was aided by Hoffenheim's profligacy, particularly in the early stages of the match.

With the score locked at 0-0, the Germans were awarded an 11th-minute penalty after Dejan Lovren upended Serge Gnabry.

But former Leicester City striker Andrej Kramaric made a mess of it and saw his spot-kick saved by Simon Mignolet.

That sparked Liverpool into life and they duly took the lead through Alexander-Arnold on 35 minutes, his superb free-kick nestling into the bottom corner.

James Milner's shot deflected off Havard Nordtveit to put Liverpool 2-0 ahead in the 74th minute, but Uth's late response will give the home side a lifeline in next Wednesday's second leg at Anfield.

Hoffenheim manager Julian Nagelsmann bemoaned his side's bad luck, with the 30-year-old also rejecting Klopp's claim that Liverpool allowed the hosts to play in unthreatening areas.

'Of course Jurgen has to say that,' said Nagelsmann. 'He won't say: "Hoffenheim are a great team and we were s****".

'We had the better chances.

We were unlucky. Home or away doesn't make a difference -- I don't care.'

HOFFENHEIM (5-3-2): Baumann; Bicakcic (Nordtveit 52), Vogt, Hubner, Kaderabek, Rupp (Amiri 53); Demirbay, Zuber, Gnabry (Uth 71); Kramaric, Wagner. Subs not used: Toljan, Szalai, Geiger, Kobel. Booked: Bicakcic, Hubner. LIVERPOOL (4-3-3): Mignolet; Alexander-Arnold, Matip, Lovren, Moreno; Can, Henderson (Milner 63), Wijnaldum; Salah, Firmino (Solanke 84), Mane (Grujic 89). Subs not used: Karius, Klavan, Origi, Gomez. Booked: Can, Alexander-Arnold. Man of the match

The Daily Telegraph

Alexander-Arnold's stunning hit tips balance

As a Liverpool prodigy from his early years, Trent Alexander-Arnold grew up at the club in the days when Steven Gerrard would rescue a European night with a swipe of his right boot, so when it came to doing it himself the 18-year-old at least knew what a great goal should look like.

That he could do it himself, with Liverpool's backs to the wall in the first leg of this Champions League qualifier, says a great deal about the quality of a teenager whom Gerrard has picked out for greatness.

The young right-back will also know that the club do not always make things easy for themselves and although they left Germany with a victory, it could have been so much better were it not for substitute Mark Uth's late goal.

Jurgen Klopp said he would have taken a win before the game on any terms, "even 8-7", especially against a Hoffenheim team that had not lost at home all last season. But it would be fair to say that Liverpool were confronted with enough of their own weaknesses over the course of the first leg that they cannot take for granted their place in the Champions League group stage at Anfield next Wednesday.

This first leg belonged in part to Alexander-Arnold, who scored a fine right-foot free-kick before the break, his first goal for the club and coming in the teeth of a fine Hoffenheim performance that had seen them dominate the first half. Over the course of the evening, Jamie Carragher tweeted a picture of him captaining Liverpool on a day when Alexander-Arnold was mascot alongside him, the baton passed from one local boy to another, although Carragher never got to take any free-kicks.

Yet Alexander-Arnold was also there with his hand in the air when Uth scored the goal, an appeal that Klopp had to concede was misguided, and there were times when his defence, under some pressure, was chaotic. Klopp said that they permitted Hoffenheim to have much of the possession with the proviso that they would defend when it came into dangerous areas.

When substitute James Milner put Liverpool two ahead, it looked like this Champions League qualifier was over, a story of the home team's profligacy and Liverpool's capacity to take their chances, but it remains alive when the Germans come to Anfield.

This Hoffenheim team led by their 30-year-old coach Julian Nagelsmann are impressive and if they had taken half their chances, they would have departed for Merseyside leading the tie. Instead they missed a penalty, hit the post and generally squandered much of the patient and intelligent build-up play of a first half that they dominated in many aspects, right up to Benjamin Hubner planting a header over the bar with seconds left.

Afterwards, Klopp and Nagelsmann were interviewed side by side in the studio of German broadcaster ZDF, and while they share the same agent there was a spikiness to the younger man's response to his opposite number's game plan. Asked about Klopp's assertion that Liverpool let their opponents have the ball at times, Nagelsmann said: "Well he would say that, he has to defend his team, he won't say "Hoffenheim played so well and we were s----".

As for Liverpool, Sadio Mane, their irrepresible attacking talent on the left wing, was superb, winning the free-kicks that led to both goals. His first-half marker Ermin Bicakcic was taken off well before the hour with a bad case of twisted blood, and you were left wondering what Mane will do when fully fit.

There is an echo in this Hoffenheim team of what you imagine Klopp would like Liverpool to be and in the first half there was no question that the home team were superior, but they missed every chance that came their way.

That included an 11th-minute penalty hit by the former Leicester City man Andrej Kramaric, a limp, waist-high effort slightly to the left of Simon Mignolet that the goalkeeper pushed away easily. At that point of the game, Klopp's team looked all at sea, unsure whether to press Hoffenheim's possession game and unable to cope with the speed of their passing through the middle.

It told you all you needed to know about Liverpool's shape - and Alberto Moreno's positional play - that the left-back was closing down goalkeeper Oliver Baumann when he cleared the ball upfield for the move that led to the penalty. Hoffenheim came down the left side of Liverpool's defence with Moreno absent and then a poor challenge from Dejan Lovren on Serge Gnabry, formerly of Arsenal, now on loan from Bayern Munich, conceded the spot-kick.

Mohamed Salah went clean through on 15 minutes on the end of Roberto Firmino's pass, although the Egyptian never got into his stride and was one step from being caught by Kevin Vogt, the Hoffenheim captain, before he launched an unconvincing shot wide.

Vogt was outstanding for his team, the playmaker in the middle of the back three and, as a former midfielder, extremely composed on the ball. He and Hubner directed the attacks left and then right and once they worked the ball into the middle, the likes of Kerem Demirbay and Lukas Rupp were sharp enough to move it quickly under pressure.

Bicakcic, the Bosnian right-sided centre-half, brought down Mane after he twisted past three tacklers on 34 minutes. Alexander-Arnold looked like the decoy for Emre Can until the 18-year-old stepped up himself and slotted a right-foot shot into the far corner.

By the end of the first half, Nagelsmann had his team locking Liverpool up in their own half with a full press that put the pressure on Klopp's team's passing. Yet the relentlessness of their approach had to yield at some point, and by midway in the second half it slipped.

Klopp said he wanted to give Jordan Henderson a breather after a tough pre-season back from injury and Milner, his replacement, had a notable effect. His goal went in with the help of a major deflection off the chest of substitute Havard Nordtveit, the Norwegian formerly of West Ham. Mane won a free-kick that was taken quickly and went out from Firmino to Milner on the left. It was a cross to the back post, but the contact with Nordtveit took it past the goalkeeper Baumann.

Then came the late push from Hoffenheim and Uth's well-taken strike while Alexander-Arnold appealed for offside, which was one moment of exuberant youthful optimism that Liverpool could have done without.

New star Youngster's rise from mascot to Kop hero What you need to know Liverpool-born Alexander-Arnold has been on the club's books since the age of six.

His uncle is John Alexander, the Manchester United club secretary. Steven Gerrard has tipped him for the top, saying: "Trent's going to be a beauty."

Player ratings Hoffenheim Liverpool 5-2-3 6 Baumann 5 Kaderabek 4 Bicakcic 8 Vogt 8 Hubner 6 St Zuber 7 Rupp 6 Demirbay 5 Kramaric 6 Wagner 6 Gnabry 4-3-3 7 Mignolet 6 Alex'r-Arnold 7 Matip 5 Lovren 4 Moreno 6 Can 6 Henderson 6 Wijnaldum 6 Salah 6 Firmino 8 Mane Substitutes Nordtveit (Bicakcic 52) Amiri (Rupp 53) Uth (Gnabry 71) Subs not used Kobel (gk), Nordtveit, Toljan, Szalai, Geiger Milner (Henderson 63) Solanke (Firmino 84) Grujic (Mane 89) Subs not used Karius (gk), Gomez, Klavan, Origi Referee Bjorn Kuipers (Holland)

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THE INDEPENDENT

Liverpool beat Hoffenheim but late strike sours their assured performance

If Liverpool have a problem with set-pieces, nobody appears to have told Trent Alexander-Arnold. Players with more seniority at Anfield stood over the decisive first-half free-kick with him, but it was the 18-year-old academy product who swept the dead ball into Hoffenheim's goal, silenced the Rhein-Neckar-Arena's rowdy Sudkurve and handed his boyhood club an early advantage in this Champions League play-off.

The youngster's sublime strike and deflected second away goal from substitute James Milner mean Jurgen Klopp's side will start next week's second leg confident of progression, but an assured performance was spoiled by a late Mark Uth goal that means Hoffenheim could yet cause an upset.

The Bundesliga outfit will be aggrieved that they did not end the night level, having seen Simon Mignolet deny Andrej Kramaric from the penalty spot early on with a save that could yet prove just as important as the two away goals.

This was never going to be easy for Liverpool. The quiet, hilly Kraichgau region of south-western Germany does not appear to be the most intimidating of trips on first glance, but everything about its flagship football club suggested they would cause Liverpool problems. Hoffenheim were unbeaten here last season on their way to a fourth-place finish in the Bundesliga, only champions Bayern Munich had a better defensive record and, ominously, no team in Germany's top-flight scored more from set-pieces.

The club's rise from relegation candidates two seasons ago to the brink of Champions League football can be attributed to their 30-year-old Julian Nagelsmann, not a player but the head coach regularly compared with Klopp and younger than two members of Liverpool's travelling squad. If there was to be an upset, he would need every last ounce of his prodigious talent to pull it off. It was an open game from the first whistle, with both sides boasting players strong on the counter. There was an early moment of danger for the hosts when Mignolet failed to win possession after rushing out to the touchline. Hoffenheim, however, could not capitalise and Mignolet would more than atone for his error just minutes later.

Dejan Lovren's foul that brought the penalty was a clumsy one but still referee Bjorn Kuipers took a moment to gather his thoughts before correctly awarding it. The effort from Kramaric, once of Leicester City, was poor and Mignolet dived low to his left to beat it away conclusively with two hands.

The formidable noise around the Rhein-Neckar-Arena quietened suddenly, barring one small corner of red. Those travelling supporters almost had more to shout about shortly after when Mohamed Salah caught the hosts' skipper Kevin Vogt out and broke through a high Hoffenheim line to go through on goal. Vogt, like Mignolet, atoned and caught up with the Egyptian, forcing him to alter his run just enough so that the resulting effort glanced wide.

Despite that opening, Liverpool struggled to find more and Hoffenheim grew comfortable, enjoying the lion's share of possession and with it, momentum. One clean swipe from the boot of a teenager from West Derby would change all that.

Three more senior set-piece taker stood over the ball with Alexander-Arnold, but his inch-perfect effort glided past Oliver Baumann and into the corner of the net. Liverpool looked for another, but just before the break came a reminder that for the most part, it had been Hoffenheim's half. Joel Matip was beaten to a high ball, allowing former Arsenal prospect Serge Gnabry to test Mignolet. The Belgian parried and Sandro Wagner could only fire the rebound wide.

Liverpool should have been two-up shortly after re-emerging for the second half. Mane lost his marker out on the left flank, darted inside and cut towards the byline before sliding a low cross back to the feet of Firmino. The Brazilian, who scored 49 in 153 appearances for Hoffenheim before moving to Anfield two years ago, fired straight at Baumann and the rebound cannoned off a defender then flew wide.

Having survived that scare, Hoffenheim regained their rhythm. Gnabry saw a goal rightly ruled out for offside and Alberto Moreno should have been punished by Kramaric after a lapse in concentration. It was not the Spaniard's first of the night. Hoffenheim then tested Klopp's side with a succession of corners, each of them defended well but not decisively.

In an evenly-matched tie though, Liverpool still searched for more and the second eventually came through Milner, though with a big helping hand from Harvard Nordtveit. The Hoffenheim defender, signed this summer after an unremarkable season at West Ham United, deflected Milner's cross over the head of Baumann. Hoffenheim's early energy had now been zapped, but it was restored by Uth's late and easily preventable strike. A mix-up between Alexander-Arnold and Matip allowed the Hoffenheim substitute to drift in behind, collect the ball unchallenged and convert past Mignolet.

It dampened Liverpool's evening and reminded them of the threat Hoffenheim will bring to Merseyside, but Klopp could still look at the scoreboard and smile. His side had come through a significant test in the ascendancy.

DAILY MIRROR

REDS LOOK HEIM & DRY

A FAIRYTALE setting gave Trent Alexander-Arnold a dream debut in Europe and Liverpool a result to suggest the story will end happily against Hoffenheim.

In a stadium watched over by a medieval castle and surrounded by a chocolatebox German village, the youngster stepped up to set the Reds on their way to victory with a spectacular free-kick.

This was an incredible, blood-pumping game which could have ended in any score, but did so with one that leaves Liverpool in the ascendancy.

Sub James Milner added to the 18-year-old's opener, although a late response by the hosts set nerves jangling.

Alexander-Arnold got his chance because of injury to Nathaniel Clyne, and boy did he take it.

It took a brave performance from Simon Mignolet though, saving three times from close range and clawing out Andrej Kramaric's poor penalty, to give the Reds a priceless lead to take into the second leg.

It is one they may well need after the Germans fought back at the end with a fine goal from Mark Uth to hand the Germans a lifeline.

It was such a breathless opening, the crowd here in the Rhein-Neckar-Arena almost needed oxygen . . . and the breathing difficulties seemed to extend to players shocked into pained gulps of warm air.

No wonder. If there was a plan from either side - and it looked for all the world as though there was - it was drawn on the back of a fag packet and ripped up from the first whistle.

Instead of the usual cagey play-off chess game, we had a stunning contest of attack and counter.

Within minutes, it was clear Hoffenheim had watched the Reds enough to target the hapless Alberto Moreno, and twice within that crazy opening spell they carved out chances through the left channel.

It took a desperate intervention from Joel Matip to deny Serge Gnabry the first time, but the second - on 10 minutes as Moreno abandoned his post - saw Dejan Lovren penalised for a challenge on the same player.

The resulting spot-kick by Kramaric was woeful.

On eight minutes, Sadio Mane ghosted in on the left to test Oliver Baumann. Soon after, it was the turn of Mohamed Salah to turn on the afterburners, and he really should have scored.

The winger was sent dashing from halfway by Roberto Firmino, but shot wide. However, the tone was set and it never relented.

And when the first Liverpool goal arrived 10 minutes before the break it was from the most unlikely of sources.

Alexander-Arnold has a huge future at Anfield, his athleticism, desire and pace marking him out as a future England fullback. He may yet make next summer's World Cup.

But his ability to read the game leads many at Liverpool to believe he has a future in midfield too. His technique is up to it, as his free-kick (left) showed so wonderfully.

That the teenager took the dead-ball duty from the likes of Emre Can and Moreno to superbly curl past Baumann says much about his self-belief and the belief manager Jurgen Klopp has too.

There was still time before the interval for Sandro Wagner to hit a post for Hoffenheim and for Lovren to graze an upright at the other end.

And after the break Firmino really should have scored from six yards.

That prompted a Hoffenheim advance as the tension grew along with the rising number of chances to set up a grandstand finish, with the promise of the same at Anfield next week.

Milner broke down the left and his cross clipped off Havard Nordtveit and beyond Baumann.

Yet just when it seemed the Reds had done enough, they were stunned by Uth, who collected a long ball and fired home from just inside the box.

RATINGS by DAVID MADDOCK mirror.co.uk/sport/football LIVERPOOL Simon Mignolet 7 87 6 4 6 Crucial penalty save to settle ship when Reds looked seasick early on Trent Alexander-Arnold Booked. Solid down right, pace always a threat, great free-kick Joel Matip Brilliant early clearance was massive, and best of the Reds' defenders Dejan Lovren Harsh penalty award, but looked nervous and struggled to control Alberto Moreno Missing in action on too many occasions and time looks to be up Emre Can Booked. Not always in tune when the press came, strong in middle Jordan Henderson Important role in settling his side after terrible start. Calming Georginio Wijnaldum Looks a little lost deeper in midfield, but on the ball looked lively Mohamed Salah Should have scored when clean through early, pace real weapon Roberto Firmino As clever as ever and fans love him, should have scored after break Sadio Mane MOTM. Frightening pace and at times totally unplayable SUBS: Milner (Henderson 63, 6), Solanke (Firmino 84), Grujic (Mane 89 7 6 7 8 match stats 63% POSSESSION 37% 4 SHOTS ON TARGET 8 6 SHOTS OFF TARGET 4 6 CORNERS 5 3 OFFSIDE 13 FOULS 12 2 0 CARDS 2 0 REFEREE: Bjorn Kuipers HOFFENHEIM Baumann 7, Bicakcic 5 (Nordtveit 53, 5), Hubner 7, Vogt 6, Kaderabak 6, Rupp 6, Demirbay 7, Zuber 6, Kramaric 7, Wagner 6, Gnabry 6 (Uth 71, 6) g y

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Priceless lead puts riches within touching distance but room for improvement remains vast

Liverpool emerged triumphant from a breathless night laced with danger. The final whistle sparked an outpouring of relief both on the field and in the dugout. The Reds walked away from the Rhein-Neckar-Arena with a priceless lead to take back to Anfield next Wednesday night.

It proved to be another happy return to Germany for Jurgen Klopp as he inflicted Hoffenheim's first home defeat for 15 months and guided Liverpool to within touching distance of the prestige and riches of the Champions League group stage. But for Mark Uth's late strike the Reds' position of strength in the tie would have been even greater. However, Liverpool could have no complaints about the outcome after riding their luck throughout a frenetic contest in Sinsheim.

The night belonged to Trent Alexander-Arnold, who capped an outstanding European debut for the Reds with a stunning free-kick to open the scoring. This was the stuff dreams are made of as the teenager from West Derby, who used to peer through the holes in the walls of Melwood to watch his heroes train, bagged the first senior goal of his career in style.

When Liverpool were in need of inspiration, Alexander-Arnold stepped up and delivered. It was reminiscent of his mentor Steven Gerrard.

There's a way back for Philippe Coutinho once his tantrum stops and he accepts that he won't be going to Barcelona, but he's now got a serious rival when it comes to those set-pieces. Just as at Watford on Saturday, the Reds packed a punch going forward as they created a stack of opportunities, but defensively they looked just as vulnerable.

This victory will do little to appease fans concerned about a lack of squad depth both at the back and in midfield. Reinforcements are urgently required.

Nervy at Vicarage Road, Simon Mignolet was outstanding here. The Belgian keeper kept out Andrej Kramaric's early spot-kick and repeatedly saved the Reds' blushes with a succession of fine saves to thwart the hosts.

When substitute James Milner's cross was deflected in off substitute Havard Nordtveit, Liverpool's first European win on their travels since they beat Rubin Kazan in November 2015 was secure.

Uth gave the Bundesliga outfit a glimmer of hope but Klopp had got what he had come for. This was the biggest night in Hoffenheim's history with the sold-out Rhein-Neckar Arena a cauldron of noise. Young boss Julian Nagelsmann was bold, employing a front three of Serge Gnabry, Sandro Wagner and Kramaric and they made life uncomfortable for Liverpool early on. Once again the Reds, who were unchanged, were painfully slow starters and some slack defending enabled the hosts to seize the initiative. Dejan Lovren struggled throughout, spreading panic and uncertainty. But he wasn't helped by the amount of space in behind the erratic Alberto Moreno, which the Croatian found himself having to deal with as Hoffenheim targeted that area. The impressive Joel Matip got a vital touch to deny Gnabry before Lovren unconvincedly dealt with a free-kick swung into the box. The penalty was incredibly soft. Lovren, who had been nutmegged, stuck out a leg and Gnabry accepted the invitation to run into it.

Dutch referee Bjorn Kuipers pointed to the spot but justice was done. Kramaric's effort was weak and Mignolet dived to his left to make a comfortable save.

Liverpool belatedly settled and started to make Hoffenheim's backline look equally as flaky. Considering the prize at stake, the game was remarkably open and Mane and Salah started to impose themselves on proceedings.

Mane had already forced a save from a tight angle when Salah burst clear from halfway. It was a golden chance but strangely the club record signing opted to take it with his right foot and knocked it beyond Oliver Baumann and wide of the upright. With Emre Can shining in front of Germany boss Joachim Löw as he snapped into tackles and used the ball intelligently, Liverpool improved the longer the half went on. Alexander-Arnold had caught the eye long before he took centre stage. The 18-year-old wasn't exactly blessed with cover on his flank with Salah operating ahead of him but he dealt with everything Hoffenheim threw at him. Time and time again he was in the right place at the right place – sensing danger and dealing with it. Offensively, Alexander-Arnold was always an outlet and his work-rate was underlined by the manner in which he closed down an attempted clearance. The ball cannoned goalwards off his boot and into the arms of Baumann. His growing confidence was epitomised by the goal – surrounded by senior team-mates he took responsibility after Mane had been cynically chopped down by Ermin Bicakcic 25 yards out. It was a moment Alexander-Arnold will never forget as he whipped an unstoppable right-footer into the bottom corner.

The jubilant youngster darted off towards the corner flag in manic celebration before being mobbed by his team-mates. Liverpool had a lead they scarcely deserved and they were indebted to their keeper as it remained in tact. Mignolet was alert to thwart Gnabry and then grateful to see Wagner fire the rebound wide. Lovren almost atoned for his earlier errors with a header from Moreno's corner which dropped agonisingly wide. The second half brought more of the same with the Reds deadly on the counter but creaking at the other end. Liverpool looked destined to double their account when Mane put one on a plate for Firmino but he failed to beat Baumann from close range.

Hoffenheim cranked up the pressure and the Reds found their backs firmly

against the wall. Moreno inexplicably stood and watched as Pavel Kaderabek connected inside the box and was fortunate that the wing-back's touch let him down. But Matip really came to the fore as he won some pivotal aerial battles. Just as at Watford, Gini Wijnaldum was off the pace, but when Klopp opted for fresh legs it was Henderson who made way for Milner.

As Hoffenheim grew ever desperate, they left more gaps for Liverpool to exploit. Salah and Lovren went close before the Reds finally made Nagelsmann's side pay 16 minutes from time. Firmino cleverly picked out the run of Milner down the left. The vice-captain's cross was aimed towards Salah but it struck Nordtveit and looped inside the far post. "Bring on yer Internazionale," roared the 2,300-strong travelling Kop. Some may have crumbled at that stage but Hoffenheim dug deep and finished with a flourish. Mignolet beat away Nadiem Amiri's effort but was finally beaten when Uth drilled home.

It was the least Hoffenheim deserved and Kopites' hearts were in mouths when Benjamin Hubner nodded over at the death. Advantage Liverpool. But this tie isn't over. The room for improvement remains vast.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Trent Alexander-Arnold. Solid defensively on his European debut and celebrated the first senior goal of his career in style.

HOFFENHEIM: Baumann; Kaderabek, Hübner, Bicakcic (Nordtveit 52), Rupp (Amiri 53); Vogt, Gnabry (Uth 70), Demirbay, Zuber, Kramaric; Wagner. Subs: Kobel, Toljan, Szalai, Geiger. BOOKINGS: Bicakcic, Hubner. GOAL: Uth 87.

LIVERPOOL: Mignolet, Alexander-Arnold, Lovren, Matip, Moreno, Henderson (Milner 63), Can, Wijnaldum, Mane (Grujic 89), Firmino (Solanke 84), Salah. Subs: Karius, Klavan, Gomez, Origi. BOOKINGS: Can, Alexander-Arnold. GOALS: Alexander-Arnold 35, Milner 74.

REFEREE: Bjorn Kuipers.

RHEIN NECKAR ZEITUNG

Hoffenheims erste Niederlage schmerzt

Sinsheim. Das erste Mal ist immer am schönsten, sagt man. Das erste Rendezvous, der erste Kuss. "Das erste Mal", ließ die TSG Hoffenheim vorfreudig auf Fanshirts drucken, weiß auf blau, nachdem der Dorfklub in der letzten Bundesliga-Runde als stolzer Vierter über die Ziellinie gestürzt war. Euphorisiert durch die Europapokal-Premiere. Gestern der Feiertag. "Europapokal! Europapokal! Europapokal!", sangen hüpfende TSG-Fans in der ausverkauften Arena unmittelbar vor der historischen Balleröffnung. Dann entrollten sie ein riesiges Plakat: "Gemeinsam nach den Sternen greifen."

Jedoch, sie sind in weite Ferne gerückt, die Sterne. Durch die 1:2 (0:1)-Niederlage gegen den FC Liverpool aufgrund eines Freistoßtreffers von Trent Alexander-Arnold (35. Minute) und eines von TSG-Abwehrmann Havard Nordtveit abgefälschten Kunstschusses von James Milner (74.) sowie des späten Hoffenheimer Hoffingstores von Mark Uth (84.) ist die Aufgabe im Rückspiel am kommenden Mittwoch ungemein schwer geworden.

"Hoffe" müsste an der legendären Anfield Road mindestens 3:2 gewinnen, um die Gruppenphase der Champions League zu erreichen. Nicht unlösbar, im Fußball sind schon größere Wunder geschehen ...

Spektakelfußball war gestern im Playoffs-Hinspiel schon allein wegen der beiden Trainer zu erwarten. Julian Nagelsmann, 30, und Jürgen Klopp, 50, sind Verfechter eines vorwärtsgewandten, schnellen Spielstils. Und der junge Hoffenheim-Trainer bewies Mut, beorderte eine Dreierbande, Andrej Kramaric, Sandro Wagner und Serge Gnabry, in den Sturm. Gnabry, Leihspieler des FC Bayern, war einziger Neuzugang in der Startelf - und war gleich am ersten Aufreger des Abends beteiligt, als er im Strafraum von Dejan Lovren umgesäbelt wurde und Schiedsrichter Björn Kuipers auf Elfmeter entschied. Nervensache: Kramaric scheiterte an Liverpool-Keeper Simon Mignolet (12.). Wer weiß, wie bei Schussglück der prickelnde Kick ausgegangen wäre ...

"Wir können auch ein paar Instrumente spielen", hatte Nagelsmann vor dem Hit selbstbewusst verkündet und keinerlei Angstgefühle aufkommen lassen angesichts der ruhmreichen Reds, des 18-fachen englischen Meisters. "Wir wollen ins Konzert der Großen kommen - also müssen wir auch so einen Top-Gegner schlagen."

Und es war am Dienstagabend möglich. Nach dem Kramaric-Malheur vergaben auch Serge Gnabry und Sandro Wagner im Nachschuss (43.) sowie Nadiem Amiri (82.) vielversprechende Chancen. Die beherzten Hoffenheimer enttäuschten nicht.

Freilich hatten die starken Liverpoolians, angetreten ohne die hoch dotierten Offensivkräfte Philippe Coutinho, Adam Lallana und Daniel Sturridge, neben ihren beiden sehenswerten Treffern auch die besseren Einschussmöglichkeiten - durch Sadio Mané (8. und 51.), Mohamed Salah (15.), Lovren (45.) und den Ex-Hoffenheimer Roberto Firmino (47.).

Das erste Mal - schön war's und doch schmerzte es.

Hoffenheim: Baumann - Bicakcic (52. Nordtveit), Vogt, Hübner - Kaderabek, Rupp (53. Amiri), Demirbay, Zuber - Kramaric, Wagner, Gnabry (70).

Uth). Liverpool: Mignolet - Alexander-Arnold, Matip, Lovren, Alberto Moreno - Can, Henderson (63. Milner), Wijnaldum - Salah, Firmino (84. Solanke), Mane (89. Grujic). Schiedsrichter: Kuipers (Niederlande); Zuschauer: 25.568 (ausverkauft); Tore: 0:1 Alexander-Arnold (35.), 0:2 Nordtveit (74., Eigentor), 1:2 Uth (87.); Besonderes Vorkommnis: Mignolet hält Foulelfmeter von Kramaric (12.); Gelbe Karten: Bicakcic / Alexander-Arnold.

Date: 15 August 2017
 Opposition: TSG 1899 Hoffenheim
 Competition: Champions League

Times	Telegraph	BBC
Guardian	Mirror	RNZ
Independent	Mail	Echo

15 August 2017



Liverpool will take a one-goal advantage back to Anfield for the second leg of their Champions League play-off tie with Hoffenheim after Trent Alexander-Arnold's free-kick and an own goal earned them a hard-fought victory in Germany. Rookie full-back Alexander-Arnold demonstrated a cutting edge lacking in some of his more experienced team-mates with an expertly taken set-piece that found the bottom corner of the home net in the 35th minute to give him his first goal for the club.

James Milner took advantage of acres of space on the left to find the top corner via a significant deflection from the chest of Havard Nordtveit just 10 minutes after coming on as a second-half substitute.

But defensive frailties again hampered the Reds as Mark Uth was found by a long ball into the box and fired in largely unchallenged in the closing stages.

It could have been worse for Jurgen Klopp's side. In just the 11th minute, Simon Mignolet had prevented European debutants Hoffenheim taking the lead with a neat save to push away Andrej Kramaric's poor penalty after Dejan Lovren had upended Serge Gnabry in the box.

Having inflicted a first home defeat on Hoffenheim since the final day of the 2015-16 season, Liverpool will look to seal a return to the Champions League group stages for the first time since 2014 at Anfield next Wednesday.

Having picked the same starting XI that began the see-saw 3-3 draw at Watford in their opening Premier League fixture on Saturday, Liverpool played to type.

The Reds were superb going forward and should probably have scored more than twice, with Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino both failing to add goals to the ones they scored at the weekend.

Salah was sent running clear by Firmino's pass in the first half but shot tamely past both keeper and post, while the Brazilian saw a close-range shot blocked by Oliver Baumann after being found by a low cross from the excellent Sadio Mane in the second.

But they will be left to rue familiar defensive frailties, which almost saw them concede an early lead when Lovren clumsily fouled ex-Arsenal winger Gnabry for the penalty and then gave the German side a lifeline in the tie when some lax marking gave Uth all the time he needed to score with three minutes to go.

Between then, Mignolet was required to pull off two good saves, firstly to deny Gnabry from close range and secondly to push away a Nadiem Amiri drive from just inside the box.

The positives, though, outweigh the negatives for Klopp and his side.

In winning at the Rhein-Neckar-Arena they have achieved what no Bundesliga side - including Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund - was able to last season.

While clearly a stronger side with Philippe Coutinho in it, the Reds have shown over two matches that they can score goals without the Brazilian, who sat this game out with a back injury and remains on Barcelona's wanted list.

In Alexander-Arnold they have a home-grown solution for a right-back position many assumed Klopp would have to fill at notable expense during this transfer window.

And in eight days' time they will take to the field at Anfield as firm favourites to seal a lucrative spot in the group stage of Europe's premier club competition.

Man of the match - Sadio Mane (Liverpool)

Alexander-Arnold scored the free-kick but Sadio Mane was the more consistent performer, providing a constant threat to the Hoffenheim defence whenever he had the ball

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp, speaking to BT Sport: "Hoffenheim had a specific plan to play. We gambled a little too much on the wing, it was a little dangerous in the first half, but as always when we play football, we found spaces in-between and created wonderful chances.

"The result is OK. The first half is done and if you said before the game we would win, I would take the result.

"We need Anfield, what an intense game for both sides. I am looking forward to a European night at Anfield. Only the person who does not know about Hoffenheim can be surprised by this."

Hoffenheim coach Julian Nagelsmann: "We deserved to at least have had a draw.

"We were brave, but we were a bit too open in the second half and risked too much.

"The way the game went, with the missed penalty, was unfortunate for us."

Reds remain unbeaten away in qualifying - The stats you need to know
 The Reds remain unbeaten in their nine away Champions League qualifying matches, with seven wins and two draws.

Simon Mignolet's early penalty save was his fourth from his last seven penalties faced in all competitions - in total he's saved 35% of the penalties he's faced since joining Liverpool (7/20).

Trent Alexander-Arnold's goal was his first for Liverpool, in his ninth start in all competitions.

Liverpool scored more than once for the first time in their last nine European away games, since a 2-2 draw against Ludogorets Razgrad in the 2014-15 Champions League.

What next?

Liverpool play their first home Premier League game on Saturday, with Crystal Palace the visitors. The return leg against Hoffenheim is four days later.

The German side are at home against Werder Bremen on Saturday before the trip to Merseyside.

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Match ends, 1899 Hoffenheim 1, Liverpool 2.

90'+5' Second Half ends, 1899 Hoffenheim 1, Liverpool 2.

90'+4' Attempt saved. Marko Grujic (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top right corner. Assisted by James Milner.

90'+3' Attempt blocked. Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Zuber.

90'+3' Attempt blocked. Kerem Demirbay (1899 Hoffenheim left footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

90'+1' Attempt missed. Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim header from the centre of the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Kerem Demirbay with a cross following a set piece situation.

90'+1' Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the attacking half.

90'+1' Foul by Marko Grujic (Liverpool).

90' Håvard Nordtveit (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool).

90' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Trent Alexander-Arnold.

89' Substitution, Liverpool. Marko Grujic replaces Sadio Mané.

87' Goal! 1899 Hoffenheim 1, Liverpool 2. Mark Uth (1899 Hoffenheim left footed shot from the left side of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Håvard Nordtveit.

85' Foul by Kerem Demirbay (1899 Hoffenheim.

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

84' Substitution, Liverpool. Dominic Solanke replaces Roberto Firmino.

84' Attempt missed. Sadio Mané (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Mohamed Salah.

83' Attempt missed. Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim header from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Pavel Kaderábek with a cross.

82' Attempt saved. Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Pavel Kaderábek with a headed pass.

78' Foul by Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim.

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

77' Attempt blocked. Alberto Moreno (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

76' Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

76' Foul by Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim.

76' Roberto Firmino (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

74' Own Goal by Håvard Nordtveit, 1899 Hoffenheim. 1899 Hoffenheim 0, Liverpool 2.

74' Foul by Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim.

74' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

73' Attempt missed. Emre Can (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Alberto Moreno with a cross following a set piece situation.

72' Hand ball by Håvard Nordtveit (1899 Hoffenheim.

71' Attempt saved. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by James Milner with a cross.

70' Substitution, 1899 Hoffenheim. Mark Uth replaces Serge Gnabry.

70' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Oliver Baumann.

70' Attempt saved. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Emre Can.

67' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Håvard Nordtveit.

66' Attempt missed. Serge Gnabry (1899 Hoffenheim left footed shot from the centre of the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Andrej Kramaric with a cross.

65' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Joel Matip.

64' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Trent Alexander-Arnold.

64' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Joel Matip.

63' Substitution, Liverpool. James Milner replaces Jordan Henderson.

63' Kerem Demirbay (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the attacking half.

63' Foul by Sadio Mané (Liverpool).

56' Foul by Nadiem Amiri (1899 Hoffenheim.

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

55' Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.

54' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Dejan Lovren.

53' Substitution, 1899 Hoffenheim. Nadiem Amiri replaces Lukas Rupp.

52' Corner, 1899 Hoffenheim. Conceded by Joel Matip.

52' Substitution, 1899 Hoffenheim. Håvard Nordtveit replaces Ermin Bicakcic.

51' Emre Can (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

51' Kerem Demirbay (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the defensive half.

51' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool).

51' Attempt saved. Sadio Mané (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Trent Alexander-Arnold with a cross.

50' Foul by Serge Gnabry (1899 Hoffenheim.

50' Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

49' Offside, 1899 Hoffenheim. Lukas Rupp tries a through ball, but Serge Gnabry is caught offside.

47' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Steven Zuber.

47' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

46' Offside, 1899 Hoffenheim. Ermin Bicakcic tries a through ball, but Sandro Wagner is caught offside.

Second Half begins 1899 Hoffenheim 0, Liverpool 1.

45'+2' First Half ends, 1899 Hoffenheim 0, Liverpool 1.

45'+2' Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Alberto Moreno with a cross following a corner.

45'+1' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Kevin Vogt.

44' Attempt blocked. Sadio Mané (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino with a through ball.

43' Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim hits the left post with a right footed shot from the centre of the box.

43' Attempt saved. Serge Gnabry (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

42' Lukas Rupp (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick on the left wing.

42' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool).

38' Foul by Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim.

38' Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

37' Attempt saved. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Mohamed Salah.

35' Goal! 1899 Hoffenheim 0, Liverpool 1. Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool from a free kick with a right footed shot to the bottom right corner.

34' Ermin Bicakcic (1899 Hoffenheim is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

34' Foul by Ermin Bicakcic (1899 Hoffenheim.

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

31' Foul by Kevin Vogt (1899 Hoffenheim.

31' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

31' Attempt blocked. Lukas Rupp (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Sandro Wagner.

27' Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the attacking half.

27' Foul by Mohamed Salah (Liverpool).

26' Foul by Ermin Bicakcic (1899 Hoffenheim.

26' Sadio Mané (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

26' Attempt missed. Pavel Kaderábek (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from the right side of the box is too high. Assisted by Kerem Demirbay with a cross.

24' Attempt missed. Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim right footed shot from outside the box misses to the right. Assisted by Serge Gnabry.

23' Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the defensive half.

23' Foul by Mohamed Salah (Liverpool).

20' Pavel Kaderábek (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the defensive half.

20' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

17' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Steven Zuber.

17' Foul by Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim.

17' Joel Matip (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

16' Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick on the left wing.

16' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool).

15' Attempt missed. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Roberto Firmino with a through ball.

13' Foul by Kerem Demirbay (1899 Hoffenheim.

13' Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

12' Penalty saved! Andrej Kramaric (1899 Hoffenheim fails to capitalise on this great opportunity, right footed shot saved in the centre of the goal.

11' Penalty 1899 Hoffenheim. Serge Gnabry draws a foul in the penalty area.

11' Penalty conceded by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool after a foul in the penalty area.

9' Benjamin Hübner (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick in the defensive half.

9' Foul by Mohamed Salah (Liverpool).

8' Attempt saved. Sadio Mané (Liverpool left footed shot from a difficult angle on the left is saved in the bottom right corner.

7' Sandro Wagner (1899 Hoffenheim wins a free kick on the left wing.

7' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool).

5' Offside, 1899 Hoffenheim. Ermin Bicakcic tries a through ball, but Sandro Wagner is caught offside.

2' Offside, Liverpool. Trent Alexander-Arnold tries a through ball, but Mohamed Salah is caught offside.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.