

Date: 14 October 2017

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

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

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THE TIMES

Mourinho no natural heir to United's greats

Liverpool 0 Manchester United 0 Referee M Atkinson Attendance 52,912

John Terry used to say that the biggest matches away from home were where Jose Mourinho "really comes into his own". It was true as well. It is equally true to suggest that, in recent times, they have become the matches in which Mourinho goes into his shell. In his past nine games away to a "big six" rival in the Premier League, his team have not won. Far worse, over those nine games, the first two with Chelsea, the past seven with Manchester United, he has only seen his team score once. That miserable record was never under threat on Saturday afternoon, when United left Merseyside with the result that looked like the height of their ambitions: a 0-0 draw against a Liverpool team whose defensive and psychological frailties have been there for all to exploit. In time, it might be looked back upon as one of the points that wins United the Premier League title, but, with Manchester City in rampant form, having already beaten Liverpool and Chelsea as well as swatting aside most of the minnows, it looks as if Mourinho and his players are going to have to raise their game.

There is invariably some nonsense spoken after games like this. Jurgen Klopp was guilty of that when, playing to the gallery, he suggested "you could not play this way at Liverpool, but it's OK for Manchester United"; if he imagines the Anfield crowd's craving for free-flowing football comes close to their longing for trophies, he is mistaken. If anything, after the past few decades, the demand for winning in style is far greater at United, which is one reason why Mourinho never seemed the most natural heir to the traditions of Sir Matt Busby and Sir Alex Ferguson. Mourinho responded to Klopp's statement by suggesting that he was "waiting" for the Liverpool manager to take the initiative -- to twist rather than stick in the second half, to break up the midfield triumvirate of Georginio Wijnaldum, Jordan Henderson and Emre Can and send on another forward, with Philippe Coutinho dropping deeper. Mourinho said that in such a situation, which never came, United would have found opportunities on the counterattack. "We were waiting for the game to be broken, but the game wasn't broken," he said.

It might have been intended to draw attention to Klopp's caution on Saturday -- it was certainly not the hell-for-leather approach we have seen from Liverpool at their most confident -- but it also said more about Mourinho's outlook than he may have wished. "My opponent didn't open the door for me to win the game," the United manager said. Alternatively, Mourinho and his players did not open the door. They barely even acknowledged there was a door. Rather than exploit the opposition's weaknesses, which he has been so good at down the years, Mourinho seemed unduly fixated on Liverpool's strengths. Liverpool were restricted to a handful of real chances -- Joel Matip was denied brilliantly by David De Gea and there were bad close-range misses from Mohamed Salah and Emre Can -- but United's threat was non-existent. Against a Liverpool defence that has creaked under even the slightest pressure, Ander Herrera, Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Anthony Martial were given little creative licence and Romelu Lukaku was terribly isolated. United barely even produced a counterattack of note. There is an obvious, unavoidable comparison to be made with Pep Guardiola here. The Manchester City head coach's approach to these big games is very different: dominate possession, force the opposition back and create chances. When City beat Chelsea 1-0 at Stamford Bridge a fortnight earlier, they did so playing bold, confident, adventurous, expansive football -- 62 per cent possession, 17 shots, six of them on target. On Saturday, United had 38 per cent possession and just six shots, of which one was on target and the other five were not easy to recall. Not a like-for-like comparison, obviously, but it is at least a reminder that there is an alternative to sitting deep and waiting, hoping the opposition will play into your hands by allowing the game to "break". It is not about pleasing the so-called purists. It is about getting results. Mourinho might invariably be acclaimed for a tactical masterclass any time it comes off -- United's 2-0 win at home to Chelsea in April was certainly an excellent, intelligent, disciplined performance -- but he has taken just three wins from his past 15 "big six" matches in the Premier League. His record in those fixtures last season was identical to Guardiola's (two wins, four draws, four defeats), but City look far more assured this term, far more confident. If United are to build on a strong start to this season, they too will need to find another dimension. As for Liverpool, they played well in spells, but not well enough to punish United's lack of ambition. The truth is that there are times when Klopp and indeed Guardiola suffer for their lack of safety-first pragmatism. Both men acknowledge that risk. Mourinho must recognise that there can also be such a thing as too much caution. When the big games come up over the weeks ahead -- Tottenham Hotspur at home and away to Chelsea and Arsenal before they entertain City on December 9 -- Mourinho and United will need to come out of their shell.

RATINGS

Liverpool (4-3-3): S Mignolet 6 -- J Gomez 7, J Matip 7, D Lovren 7, A Moreno 6 -- G Wijnaldum 6, J Henderson 6, E Can 7 -- M Salah 7 (sub: A Oxlade-Chamberlain 79min), R Firmino 6 (sub: D Solanke 87), P Coutinho 7 (sub: D Sturridge 79).

Substitutes not used L Karius, T Alexander-Arnold, R Klavan, J Milner.

Manchester United (4-2-3-1): D De Gea 8 -- A Valencia 7, C Smalling 7, P Jones 6, M Darmian 6 -- A Herrera 6, N Matic 7 -- A Young 4 (sub: V Lindelof 90), H Mkhitaryan 4 (sub: J Lingard 64, 4), A Martial 5 (sub: M Rashford 65, 4) -- R Lukaku 5. Substitutes not used S Romero, A Tuanzebe, D Blind, J Mata. Booked Smalling, Young.

the guardian

Liverpool left frustrated again by David de Gea and Manchester United. If nothing else, Liverpool should probably take it as a compliment that [Manchester United](#) would choose to approach the game this way. It was the second successive season this fixture has ended goalless and it did not need a suspicious mind to deduce that José Mourinho had decided that would be enough to make it a satisfying day -- and to hell with anyone who might question his lack of adventure.

His team had averaged three goals a game from their previous seven [Premier League](#) fixtures but this was the first time they had faced a side in the top-12 places. Mourinho altered his tactics accordingly and the second half, in particular, was an exercise in defensive parsimony directly in front of the Kop. Liverpool were unable to break them down and Mourinho has already made it clear what he thinks about the people who might blame him for ruining games as a spectacle. For the story of this match, refer to what he said after last season's Europa League final against Ajax: "There are lots of poets in football, but poets don't win many titles."

He tends to know what he is doing but it was a risky strategy and it would have been intriguing to see Mourinho's back-up plan if one of those [Liverpool](#) attacks had found a way behind United's defence.

Instead, the home side did not have the wit or creativity in decisive areas and, unfortunately for Jürgen Klopp, three points have never been awarded for moral victories. Liverpool have won only one of their last eight games in the various competitions and it all seemed rather flat at the end. "What did José Mourinho say?" Klopp wanted to know. "That we were the more defensive side? That would have been funny."

Mourinho has heard it all before and will reflect on a job well done, no matter how much it grates with him when he is accused of putting together teams that do not play the classic United way. They did not manage a single noteworthy attack in the second half but the most extraordinary statistic of the afternoon was that it was not until the 17th minute that Romelu Lukaku managed a touch of the ball.

Lukaku is often accused of lacking his best work in the more challenging assignments but his failure to score here owed more to the circumstances. The Belgian striker had one chance in the first-half when he aimed his shot too close to the Liverpool goalkeeper, Simon Mignolet, but he was isolated for most of the game and perhaps there was a measure of frustration in the challenge that sent Joe Gomez flying close to the touchline.

Instead this was an afternoon where Phil Jones and Chris Smalling demonstrated their improvement under Mourinho, Lukaku could be seen helping out in defence, Anthony Martial spent most of the game inside his own half and in the one moment of old-fashioned excitement there was another reminder about David de Gea's extraordinary ability to prevent the ball from going into his net.

Anfield was already rising to its feet when Roberto Firmino deceived Nemanja Matic inside the penalty area and Joël Matip reached the cross first. The Liverpool defender made a solid connection, eight yards out, but in that split second De Gea was already adjusting his body, jutting out his left foot to block the shot on the goal-line. It was an exceptional piece of improvisational goalkeeping and when De Gea rose to his feet he still did not have a hair out of place. What an incredible keeper he has become.

That apart, there was not a great amount of penalty-area activity during a first half that was far too hectic to expect either side to pass the ball with their normal accuracy. Mohamed Salah showed, in flashes, some lovely, deft touches but there was so little time on the ball, with a challenge never too far away, it was difficult to build possession. Both sides were guilty of not taking enough care of the ball and perhaps that was inevitable when everything was so fast and furious.

The second half was a more controlled affair, with Liverpool pressing forward, forcing a succession of corners but without ever giving the impression they were wearing down their opponents. Klopp's men played many passes, but never the killer one. Gomez came the closest with a clipped pass into Emre Can's path but the German's shot went into the Kop and, after that, there were only sporadic moments when De Gea was threatened again.

Mourinho brought on another centre-half, Victor Lindelof, in the final exchanges for Ashley Young, a converted defender playing here as a right winger, and the game huffed and puffed to its end under the glare of the autumnal sun. It was the first time ever there have been back-to-back 0-0 draws in this fixture and Klopp was asked afterwards if he would ever set up a team in the way that Mourinho had. "You could not play this way at Liverpool," he replied, "but it's OK for Manchester United."

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The Mail

IT'S NOT A GOOD POINT, JOSE! United must WIN games like this to take the title ...City won't settle for a draw all season

LIVERPOOL 0 MAN UTD 0 HA! HA! HA! HA! Jurgen Klopp, perched on a table next to the photocopier in an ante-room, unleashed his famously manic laugh. He had just been asked if Liverpool had a plan to stop Manchester United, as Jose Mourinho had intimidated. It is fair to say this German does do irony.

Watching Liverpool's manager handle his post-match inquest was much like studying him on the touchline. All his anger, tension and frustration hidden in outbreaks of crazily forced good humour. We know what he wanted to say, after this -- but where would it get him? Some 29 years on nobody has forgotten the feud between Kenny Dalglish and Alex Ferguson. Klopp knew better than to pick a fight with Mourinho. So he threw it back to his inquisitors, time and again. We saw the game. We have seen many Klopp teams over the years. What did we think? Who did we feel was trying to stop who? He knew the answer. And he knew we did, too. 'They got the point they wanted and we didn't get the win we wanted,' was Klopp's succinct appraisal. 'People around the stadium saw a game they wanted to see -- but they all had Liverpool shirts on. They wanted a goal, too, and we didn't score so that's not perfect. But the rest? They saw that we threw all we had on the pitch.' Did Manchester United? In terms of collective effort, yes, but in ambition, no. Mourinho tried to share the blame, even shift it towards Liverpool for keeping a tight midfield unit, denying him the chance to counter-attack with creative substitutions, but few neutrals were buying that. He said he had no midfielders in reserve, but what he meant was he had no physically imposing ones like Paul Pogba or Marouane Fellaini. He had Juan Mata, who most consider a fine midfielder option, but chose not to use him. He said Klopp had made like-for-like substitutions that were no risk, yet what is Marcus Rashford for Anthony Martial, or Jesse Lingard for Henrik Mkhitaryan? The only variation Mourinho offered was when he brought on a centre half for a wide midfielder, in added time. There is an old Jewish joke about Morty, whose business is failing. Each week he goes to the synagogue and prays. 'Lord,' he says, 'I am running out of money fast. Please find it in your heart -- let me win the lottery.' This continues for weeks. The pleas grow more desperate, until one day, light fills the room and voice booms from the heavens. 'Morty,' says God, 'meet me halfway -- buy a ticket.' And that's what United didn't do. They didn't buy a ticket. Mourinho has his detractors and many claims against him are overstated, but it was hard to defend this. It wasn't Inter Milan with 10 men against Barcelona at the Nou Camp. It wasn't a game where he is accused of parking a bus, when his only crime is to set up a team to win. Mourinho isn't as negative as is made out. Largely, his teams play very good, exciting, ambitious football. Yet not here. United are a better team than Liverpool, with a stronger squad. They could have played them at least as equals and, more feasibly, as superiors. Instead, they waited for Liverpool to make the game, they left Romelu Lukaku in isolation for long periods and they settled for a point. And that may prove their undoing this season because a point at Anfield may not be the prize it was. Manchester City raised the bar with the way they played Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. They made no compromises, did not lower their ambition by even the tiniest degree -- and they will not when they visit Liverpool in January. That doesn't mean they win. They may draw, or even lose, but the aim will be victory by a margin, as happened when the teams met in Manchester on September 9. There will be no game in which City arrive happy with a draw. United looked as if they would have taken that from 15 minutes in.

This is what Klopp meant when he spoke of United coming for a point. It will not have started that way -- but ambition was replaced by pragmatism very quickly. 'If you want to judge our two match plans then do it,' Klopp added. 'Most things they did today were completely clear. Jose obviously did what he thinks is right, or what he wants to do, and that is OK. I won't moan and say, "Come on, open up a little bit" because that's not how it is. 'They want to win the league and I'm sure we couldn't play like this at Liverpool after a hundred years without the title. We start trying it, we sit back, we say, "Let's wait" -- that is not possible. The challenger has to do more, has to do whatever is necessary.' Yet are United -- without a league title since 2013 when Ferguson stepped down -- immune to that pressure, too? Mourinho would argue not. Maybe the locals will take a first one post-Ferguson that doesn't come with bells and whistles, but after that? Ferguson delivered the odd masterclass, too, but few ended goalless. Hearing Lukaku defend his record against the biggest teams after a rare blank in a United shirt, made one wonder how often he will have to deliver that speech if United take this same game plan to London, or deploy it in December against Manchester City. 'Hard work and being solid is the nature of any team,' said United's Phil Jones, 'and whether you play Liverpool or Burnley away you don't want to get beat. If you can't win, make sure you don't lose and that is the mentality in our dressing room. People may criticise but let them -- we'll see where we are at the end of the season.' Indeed, there is a long way to go. But one thing is almost certain: United will not be ahead of Manchester City on goal difference or goals scored in this campaign. Meaning they have to lead on points. Meaning they have to risk in the biggest matches. Meaning they cannot afford many more afternoons like this -- or convince themselves that a goalless draw at Anfield is the same decent, steady, gutsy point it always was. This title will need more.

SUPER STAT: Jose Mourinho's record against Jurgen Klopp now stands at one win in eight matches -- and four draws.

LIVERPOOL (4-2-1-2-1): Mignolet 7; Gomez 7.5, Matip 7.5, Lovren 7, Moreno 7; Henderson 7, Can 7.5; WIJNALDUM 8; Salah 7 (Oxlade-Chamberlain 7.8), Coutinho 7.5 (Sturridge 7.8); Firmino 6 (Solanke 8.7). Subs not used: Karius, Milner, Klavan, Alexander-Arnold. Booked: None.

Manager: Jurgen Klopp 7.5. MANCHESTER UNITED (4-2-3-1): De Gea 8; Valencia 6, Smalling 6, Jones 7, Darmian 7; Herrera 6.5, Matic 6.5; Young 7 (Lindelof 9.0), Mkhitaryan 5 (Lingard 6.5, 4.5), Martial 5.5 (Rashford 6.5, 5); Lukaku 6. Subs not used: Mata, Blind, Romero, Tuanzebe. Booked: Smalling, Young. Manager: Jose Mourinho 5.5. Referee: Martin Atkinson 6. Attendance: 52,912.

The Daily Telegraph

I'm not just a flat-track bully, insists out-of-touch Lukaku

There was a stark admission from Romelu Lukaku as another big fixture passed him by. "Sometimes it is difficult when you play against the top teams and you play not to win and don't really create chances," he said.

In the interests of clarity, the Belgian was referring to his Everton career. Cynics will feel the observation is equally applicable to Manchester United's ultra-vigilance after this lifeless draw.

Lukaku was unable to banish 'flat-track bully' jibes - his isolation typified as he made fewer passes than Liverpool goalkeeper Simon Mignolet - but the PS75million man believes goals will flow against esteemed opponents.

"Every time I played for Everton we had a different mindset coming into the game," he said.

"I had a good time. I learnt my trade over there. I am really grateful to the club no matter what happened. But now I am in a team where we want to win against the big teams and we want to win every game, so I think the situation will change.

"I don't put pressure on myself. I think the biggest pressure game for me was the Super Cup against Real Madrid. That was the game where everybody was looking at me and thinking will he do it there. I think it freed me from everything."

Lukaku had United's one chance, shooting at Mignolet on 43 minutes. In fairness, such was the distance between him and supporting midfielders communication was possible only via homing pigeon.

"A lot of strikers in the league miss bigger chances than me and they score two goals - but with me it's always, 'Rom did this, Rom did that.' I don't know why. It's the standard people set," he said.

"People will always say this and that, but my record in the Premier League is pretty good and I'm in a situation where the team is performing really well. It's all about winning and trying to play as attractive football as we can, win all the time at all costs."

There was no such ambition here. Such is the genius of Jose Mourinho that he not only improves the defence of every side he coaches, he is now the first manager in years to make Liverpool's back four appear impenetrable.

For a second consecutive season a sense of spectacle eluded English football's most scrutinised game, although the only thing more boring than boring football is the debate about whether boring football is acceptable.

Managers are entitled to plan as they wish. Equally, please grant those of us subjected to such dreariness the courtesy of reporting what we see.

This is not entertaining, nor thrilling. There was one meaningful shot for each side. It was football to slow the pulse. "A game of chess," said Mourinho.

Not quite. Bobby Fischer versus Boris Spassky was an edge-of-the-seat thriller in comparison. Validation can be measured in May. If this point wins United the title, they can make it the centrepiece of the DVD. Mourinho maps out a title win and cares little for scenic routes.

Manchester is hosting two theatre troupes, one preferring the flamboyance of the cheeriest West End musical; the other effectively indulging in the collected works of Samuel Beckett. You can admire both, but only one will get you skipping home. For now, sniping serves only to assist Mourinho as he settles his players into their bunker.

"Let them [criticise]. We'll see where we are at the end of the season," said defender Phil Jones, balking at the idea United's restraint was inappropriate.

"What approach was that?" he quizzed. "Hard work and being solid is the nature of any team - whether you play Liverpool or Burnley away, you don't want to get beat. And if you can't win the game, you make sure you don't lose. That is the mentality we have in the dressing room. But ultimately we want to win every game.

Jurgen Klopp, with one win in eight games in all competitions, claimed he would not be allowed to play as cautiously as United.

"I am sure we couldn't play like this at Liverpool. We cannot sit back and say, 'Let's wait' - that is not possible," he said.

Evidently, he has never been shown footage of the 2001 cup treble and run to the 2005 Champions League final. United's obstinacy would be welcome when Liverpool need to protect slender leads.

Both teams lack balance. If Liverpool acquire a little more of Mourinho's defensive choreography - and United adopt a little of Klopp's attacking idealism - this fixture might start living up to its billing.

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THE INDEPENDENT

Mourinho's quotes reveal more than he wanted

Jose Mourinho, rather predictably, wasn't going to accept much responsibility for the nature of the match at Anfield. He wasn't even going to accept that Manchester United's 0-0 draw with Liverpool was not an entertaining game.

"Depends what for you is an entertaining game," Mourinho snapped back. "One thing is an entertaining game for fans, another thing is entertaining game for the people who read football in a different way. That's different. For me, the second half was a game of chess but my opponent didn't open the door for me to win the game." As much as the Portuguese was inevitably trying to influence what was going to be said about his team, he actually said a lot himself, that could well foretell even more about United's season - and why they may not be champions. For a start, as should by no come as a surprise to nobody, Mourinho has no issue whatsoever with the kind of match that was seen at Anfield. You get the sense that there was actually no extra edge to what he was saying in terms of entertainment. Mourinho does find that kind of game thoroughly entertaining, particularly if it ultimately involves his side frustrating a rival in a big game. He could watch that all day, and we've seen that through all of his career. What was more interesting was the next line, though... "my opponent didn't open the door for me to win the game".

He later elaborated a bit more, when trying to make out that it was Liverpool who were more defensive - or more responsible for the game not opening up.

"I was waiting for Jurgen to change, I was waiting for him to go more attacking but he kept the three strong midfielders all the time where he was having control because I only had [Ander] Herrera and [Nemanja] Matic.

"Well, you [Liverpool] were at home and you didn't move anything? I don't know. I was waiting for that. He didn't. I think he did well, honestly. He didn't let the game break. [Jesse] Lingard and [Marcus] Rashford were waiting for the game to be broken but the game wasn't broken."

In looking to sum up the game like that, Mourinho actually summed up his entire football philosophy, his fundamental view on how to score and attack. The United manager essentially revealed just how reactive he really is. The use of the word "break" here was particularly noteworthy.

It indicated how his teams don't look to play matches on their own terms, they don't look to impose their own game in order to score. They instead primarily look for opposition errors, for the "breaks" in play, for the transitions that you can then counter against. This might sound quite elementary but it has been elevated to a principle of Mourinho teams. His entire attacking game is based on it. It is also why so many of his acolytes and those close to his circle have been so willing to press home the idea that Chelsea, say, were an entirely counter-attacking side last season; to reinforce the idea that this remains cutting edge, as relevantly successful as ever. Whether it is a bigger debate that we'll get to but, for the moment, many might fairly dispute the idea that he really is that reactive.

This was a match away to a top-six side, after all, and it was also their first blank of the season. From the previous seven matches, against bottom-14 clubs, they have an average of three goals a game. Some reaction, so. Some of these have also involved ruthlessly rampaging attacking displays, it must be said.

Even with that, though, there was a reveal from Mourinho's post-Liverpool comments. "If you score a goal in the first half then the second half is different because then he risks, he changes structure. When I brought on Lingard and Rashford I was waiting for him to give me more space to counter but he didn't give me that." This is essentially what happened in United's four 4-0 wins against West Ham United, Swansea City, Everton and Crystal Palace that so boosted those goal stats. They essentially just scored first against somewhat supine opponents, and then fully capitalised on their subsequent collapses. Or, if you like, they reacted to the break in the game that came from those teams breaking. It was all so much more open because those sides had to open up.

It was not like Manchester City - who already look like champions elect - just taking their game to teams and taking them apart.

It is also why, impressive as they've been, it has been a little difficult to get carried away with United so far. The question remains over what will happen if opponents don't crumble, or if they don't get that key early first goal that causes a manager to "change structure" and the entire game to change.

That question has still not been answered, and it is a very pertinent one.

Mourinho of course naturally persists with this style of play because it has led to staggering success throughout the majority of his career, but this is where that issue of relevance comes in.

As has been so widely discussed over the past few years, the game has greatly evolved since Mourinho's peak as a manager in 2010. Possession football took control of the ball and the sport again with the rise of Spain and Barcelona around 2008, and was greatly powered by pressing, with Guardiola and Klopp as actually high priests of both. Both of those are also fundamentally proactive qualities, with their effects for top sides further enhanced by the economic disparities that have grown in the game. Bigger and better squads have been assembled by big clubs to better navigate the physical needs of a season, and ensure such qualities remain so effective, that pressing can remain as frenetic.

The key is not just that this has changed the sport, but changed how you win titles - especially in the Premier League.

Given that such economics have led to the growth of the big six and thereby that

10 of your 38 games are now titanic, it is no longer enough to just pick off the weaker sides and be content with mere points against the rest, given how the top six are getting more points than ever against the rest. It feels like any champions now have to get a certain number of wins against their main rivals to really make the difference, to really tilt a title race.

This is why it may no longer be sufficient to just sit back and try and react in such away games. You have to do what Chelsea did to City last season, and City did to Chelsea this season. You have to go and try and win them.

It said just as much that Mourinho seemed to take it as a given that Liverpool should be the ones to attack because they "are at home", that it should be accepted United would wait for the break - even though this match represented an opportunity for the Portuguese against a fragile home side. Liverpool were there for the taking, but United did not take that opportunity because it never occurred to them to take the game to them.

It is why, even though they remain in a very promising position just two points off the top, it is fair to wonder whether they can take that next step.



Jose Mourinho's men move to the top of the Premier League with goalless draw

Liverpool versus Manchester United again failed to live up to the hype as Jose Mourinho's safety-first policy saw him once more frustrate the hosts at Anfield. United goalkeeper David de Gea made one brilliant reaction save from Joel Matip in the first half but Jurgen Klopp's side failed to break down well-organised opponents.

It is a criticism which has been regularly levelled at the Reds this season but was perhaps excusable on this occasion considering the rivalry and the quality - United began the day joint top - they faced.

While United were not as dour as in last season's game here, there was no doubt Mourinho had reined in the attacking intent of a side which had previously scored 33 goals in 11 matches.

Ander Herrera was tasked with taking care of Liverpool's creative fulcrum Philippe Coutinho, with the Brazilian restricted to one really dangerous defence-splitting through-ball in the first half which overlapping full-back Alberto Moreno wasted with an overhit cross.

Mohamed Salah, on the right wing, was more of a threat and gave Matteo Darmian a testing time with the defender lucky not to concede a free-kick - or worse - right on the edge of the penalty area.

De Gea, who saved brilliantly with an outstretched foot at close range from Matip, could only watch as Firmino's deflected cross off Darmian rolled wide of his far post but for all Liverpool's dominance the goalkeeper was hardly tested.

At the other end of the field in-form striker Romelu Lukaku cut an isolated figure and his frustration boiled over as he took out Joe Gomez but escaped with only a warning from Mike Atkinson, who also decided no action was required against Lukaku with Dejan Lovren rolling around on the floor suggesting he had been caught in the face by a stray boot.

United's one chance came just before the break when Lukaku exchanged passes with Anthony Martial but was denied by Simon Mignolet, with Moreno throwing himself at Ashley Young's shot from the rebound.

A similar pattern developed in the second half, with Coutinho frequently dropping deeper and more central to try to change the angle of attack.

It was to no avail, however, as - despite three attacking changes late on from Klopp with Daniel Sturridge, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and Dominic Solanke introduced - their best chance came when Emre Can volleyed over Gomez's teasing cross.

United, by contrast, failed to have a shot on target after the break. Lukaku, with 16 goals in 13 appearances for club and country, was virtually anonymous as his quest to become the first United player to score in his first eight Premier League matches ended with a whimper.

But Mourinho is always looking at the bigger picture and his mantra has always been not to lose the big games.

With that he got what he came for. Again

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Klopp progress at Anfield demonstrated by Mourinho's wall of steel

There were two minutes left on the clock when the Kop burst into song.

The target of their ire was Jose Mourinho, who was told in not so many words to sling his hook. Liverpool's nemesis had done it again. Frustration reigned at Anfield. After all the hype, the occasion fell decidedly flat. This turned out to be another instantly forgettable damp squib.

"They will not be as passive this time. They are a different team in a different way," said Jurgen Klopp on the eve of this contest. The Reds boss was wrong. Mourinho didn't just park the bus, he built a wall of steel around it. Despite their flying start to the new campaign, Manchester United showed even less ambition than they did at Anfield a year ago. Despite the £300million Mourinho has splashed out, their game plan rarely involved venturing past the halfway line. Once again he was too scared to go toe to toe with Klopp's side. United were set up simply to stifle and contain. Mourinho's claim that they had "good control" in the first half was nonsensical. It was one-way traffic. Liverpool were well and truly in the driving seat but chances went begging. David de Gea pulled off a fine save to thwart Joel Matip. The second half brought more of the same. It was attack against defence but the influence of Philippe Coutinho and Mohamed Salah waned. The Reds ran out of both energy and ideas. The hosts enjoyed 62% possession and had 19 attempts on goal to United's six but the winner they craved eluded them. The doom and gloom merchants will tell you that Liverpool only have one more point after eight Premier League matches this season than they did two years ago when Brendan Rodgers got the sack.

Klopp's men fly to Slovenia on Monday for a key Champions League clash with Maribor on the back of just one win in eight games in all competitions.

Yet the warm applause at the final whistle illustrated that Klopp retains the unwavering backing of the Kop. They still believe and rightly so.

A dour stalemate wasn't the anniversary present the German wanted but the signs of progress are undeniable. Just look at how delighted United were with their point. The problem this season has been that Liverpool simply haven't got the results their dominance has merited because of familiar issues at both ends of the field. Against United it was the lack of a potent goalscorer which cost them – someone capable of turning a scrappy draw into a priceless win. Imagine this Liverpool side with a Kane, an Aguero or a Morata?

Roberto Firmino couldn't grasp his chance after being recalled in place of Daniel Sturridge. It was the fifth successive game in which the Reds' No 9 has fired blanks. Fatigue was bound to be an issue after his 12,000-mile round trip to South America but his form had dipped prior to the international break. How Klopp needs him back firing again, especially with Sadio Mane facing six weeks on the sidelines. Unlike at Newcastle a fortnight ago, no accusing fingers could be pointed at Liverpool's much maligned backline. This was their first clean sheet since August. Dejan Lovren produced the perfect riposte to his critics as he kept Romelu Lukaku under wraps. United's 11-goal top scorer barely got a kick.

Joe Gomez enhanced his growing reputation with a rock-solid display at right-back and on the opposite flank Alberto Moreno maintained his unlikely revival.

Liverpool bossed the midfield area with the much improved Jordan Henderson leading by example as Gini Wijnaldum and Emre Can helped provide drive and invention. But, ultimately, a lack of punch in the final third denied the Reds the victory which would have ignited their stuttering campaign.

Kenny Dalglish accepted the acclaim of Anfield before kick-off after the Centenary Stand was renamed in his honour. The outpouring of emotion helped charge the atmosphere and Klopp's men looked energised early on. As United sat back, Liverpool seized the initiative. Space was at a premium with Nemanja Matic and Ander Herrera sitting in front of the defence, while wingers Ashley Young and Anthony Martial tucked in. Mourinho effectively played with a back eight.

Liverpool were lively and creative with Coutinho drifting in off the left and pulling the strings. Wijnaldum's curler was comfortably kept out by De Gea before Salah was unable to convert Firmino's cross.

Matteo Darmian struggled to contain Salah, whose quick feet caused United plenty of problems. At the other end Matic went close with a 20-yarder but there was little cause for concern as Lovren, who got a boot in his face at one point, simply refused to be bullied by Lukaku. Alberto Moreno epitomised the Reds' show of fight, racing back into his own half to dispossess Lukaku after giving it away. Ten minutes before the break Liverpool should have broken the deadlock. It was a fine move with Firmino's cut back diverted goalwards by Matip but United were saved by De Gea's out-stretched boot.

Phil Jones' clearance was weak and Coutinho was ideally placed to bury it but Salah, who had his back to goal, turned and fired wide.

When Lukaku did have a rare sight of goal, Simon Mignolet was in the right place to push it to safety. It was United's only shot on target all afternoon.

In the second half Liverpool continued to huff and puff. Gomez whipped in a beauty of a cross but Can hooked it high and wide from six yards out.

There were pleas for a penalty after Herrera clumsily upended Coutinho but Martin Atkinson wasn't interested. Klopp has been accused of allowing games to drift this season and being too slow to ring the changes. But this time his

reluctance to make subs was understandable. Liverpool were still in the box seat and being too gung-ho could have left them exposed to a United counter-attack. The problem was that the one piece of real quality the Reds desperately required simply didn't materialise. Eventually, he put on Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Daniel Sturridge and Dominic Solanke but to no avail. Mourinho described it as a game of chess. In truth it was more like watching paint dry.

MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho needs new approach to beat the top teams

This weekend was another example of that, with much of the debate centred on a bore draw at Anfield on the day that [Manchester City](#) put seven past Stoke.

[Jose Mourinho](#) won't care. It is points, not aesthetics, that win prizes.

But on this occasion, an overly-defensive approach denied United the win to keep pace with City at the top of the [Premier League](#) table.

Victory for the visitors would also have left Jurgen Klopp needing more than some well-placed post-match soundbites to distract from a record that is now resembling predecessor Brendan Rodgers'.

And that is the problem with Mourinho's approach at Anfield. Liverpool are not serious challengers for the title, and if United claim to be City's main rivals for the Premier League crown come May, they have to be winning these matches.

United fans are split on the relative merits or otherwise of Mourinho's approach from an entertainment point of view. But it is impossible to argue it has been a success from a mathematical perspective.

Mourinho is yet to beat a top six side away from home as United manager, and only one goal has been scored in six attempts.

United now have two more chances to change that, with fixtures against Tottenham and Chelsea before the next international break amid City soon after it.

If he won't change for a team that currently lie in eighth and have shipped more goals than Burnley, Swansea and Huddersfield this season, it's hardly likely United will return to the swashbuckling style that was more familiar in the 1990s when they go to Stamford Bridge.

But Mourinho does not have the excuses of last season any more. He wants to win the league and return United to the pinnacle of English football, and he is better placed to do that after two extremely successful summers.

Some fans won't mind one shot on target in 90 minutes at Anfield, others will brand it 'embarrassing' and 'cowardly'.

It's a pub debate that has raged for years and will continue to do so.

But with two months of the season gone, it is looking increasingly like an approach that will deliver a second place finish at best.

United have fared far better against the league's 'lesser lights' at Old Trafford this season, but with City also steamrolling those same teams, the results against the top six take on increased importance.

Albeit with a man advantage and against a Liverpool side that crumbled in truly embarrassing fashion, City saw off Klopp's men 5-0 and then went and beat Chelsea in London.

United have to match those results if they are serious about lifting the trophy at the season's end.

Nine men camped in their own half aren't likely to achieve that.

Sir Alex Ferguson's attacking legacy has been rewritten and enhanced since his retirement, and he was an expert at getting a point away in big European ties.

Mourinho is another who is a master of that craft.

But the very nature of the two-legged European tie dictates that a draw and a win gets the job done. The Premier League is a different beast entirely.

If United are to claim a 21st domestic title, it will require a greater element of risk. That has to start against Spurs in 12 days' time.

Date: 14 October 2017

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

MEN	Sunday Times	Times	Guardian
BBC	Sun Independent	Independent	Mirror
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2017



THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

United have Mourinho and De Gea to thank for lifeless Liverpool draw
Yet another bad Liverpool-Manchester United game, that doesn't do anyone all that much good, even if Jose Mourinho will be the happier manager. The Portuguese once again put out the type of negative gameplan at Anfield - and, it must be said, a general top-six away game - that has a lifeless 0-0 draw as its most logical consequence.

From Red Monday to dead Saturday. That game-plan did duly frustrate Liverpool, who once again proved themselves wasteful and lacking in confidence in what has been a concerning drop-off in form, but this should be somewhat frustrating for United too.

If there was ever to be a top-six away game where they could finally come out and play and assert themselves, it was this, when they were supposedly on such fine attacking form and against a Liverpool team who have been so uncertain and so porous at the back.

This could and probably should have been a title statement of a performance, that also totally killed Liverpool's title challenge.

It instead just killed the game, and won't exactly frighten Manchester City.

There was absolutely none of the football from this possibly illusory start to the season that everyone has been talking about.

The only talking points were instead how typically dreadful the game was, how typically excellent one David De Gea save was - from Joel Matip on 34 minutes - and how referee Martin Atkinson didn't issue more bookings, if not a red card.

There can be questions about Romelu Lukaku, Alberto Moreno and Matteo Darmian in that regard, but those questions alone say an awful lot of the match.

It certainly wasn't a game that was in-keeping with the pre-match tribute to Kenny Dalglish, who had a stand named after him, and who once so illuminated this fixture and this stadium. There was here only irritation, not least from Lukaku. He snapped at Joe Gomez and snatched at the one chance he got, this time not benefitting from a rebound.

You could somewhat understand the Belgian's agitation meanwhile, given that he was so isolated for so much of the match. There was usually a gap of 30 yards between him and the next United player, who was generally sat so deep. Many might see that as a consequence of Mourinho missing his preferred midfield three, but then Jurgen Klopp was missing Sadio Mane - the type of player who demands you stay back so space isn't left in behind for him to exploit.

That responsibility was instead left to Mohamed Salah, but he instead provided justification as to why Mourinho sold him when Chelsea manager, why the Egyptian feels just short of the standard required to be a starter for a properly title-challenging team. He isn't the finished article, and that is so evident in his finishing. Salah can just be so frustrating in that regard, as if he isn't confident enough how he strikes the ball so doesn't really strike it at all.

The very imperfect follow-up from De Gea's supreme save on 34 minutes did perfectly display this. Rather than let the ball run to Coutinho, Salah insisted on taking it only to suddenly not be so sure, and play it rather feebly wide.

It happens so often, and is all the more conspicuous because it offers such a contrast to the ruthlessness and incision of his initial running with the ball. One touch to humiliate Matteo Darmian was devastating... but he couldn't really develop from that.

It said much that Klopp was left with no option but to take him off, but the greater issue is that Salah himself personify wider problems with this Liverpool team; how they can't make the leap.

Mourinho's gameplan shouldn't take responsibility away from Klopp. Liverpool again worked the angles and did occasionally look threatening, but once again struggled against a side that stands off.

It is the main challenge confronting Klopp, and one he looks no closer to solving; why they look destined to be little more than the United of the 1980s - a side that entertains and dazzles, and does well in cups, but won't win a league.

But then what of United's league changes?

This might superficially seem one of those stable away results that keeps you ticking over, but there is something deeper here that warrants discussion.

The power balance of the current Premier League and strength of the big six dictate that results between those top teams are more important than ever. They are now what really swing the title race, given the big clubs sweep away the rest of the division with greater regularity.

So, while Mourinho's tactics in last season's 0-0 here were more understandable because it wasn't his team, these were not.

Well, they were understandable from one perspective. It's just Mourinho's nature.

It is just one other reason, mind, why the nature of this once great fixture is to be so grim as a contest.

The Sunday Telegraph

De Gea the hero for United as Mourinho parks bus again
Liverpool 0 Manchester United 0 Att: 52,912

If you feel that the old English Clasicos should be played with a bit more ambition by Manchester United at Anfield, then Jose Mourinho has a clear message for you, and the message is that the problem lies with you, not the nine men he has massed on the edge of his own team's area. Mourinho has a fair bit of a history at this stadium, not all of it good for him but none more poignant than the 2014 game featuring the famous Steven Gerrard slip, a fork in the road of English football when the home team were arguably denied the league title for which they have waited so long. On that occasion he is reputed to have shouted in triumph in the tunnel that Brendan Rodgers' team had mistakenly expected his Chelsea side to be the "clowns" of the piece. In short, they had expected Chelsea, then in the first season of Mourinho's second spell there, to turn up and play the open football that Liverpool needed them to in order that the home team might win. Mourinho, as if anyone needed reminding, never willingly wears the oversize shoes and squirrel bow-tie, and on this occasion, too, he came determined to do exactly what Jurgen Klopp's team, with only one win in seven before kick-off, did not want United to do. Asked afterwards if the game had delivered the requisite entertainment for this famous fixture, Mourinho raised an eyebrow. "It depends what for you is entertaining game," he said. "One thing is an entertaining game for fans, another thing is entertaining game for the people who read football in a different way. That's different." In other words, if you don't like this then, regrettably, that is your fault. A United team on a high having scored an average of three goals a game were not about to lose their heads at Anfield and risk defeat when a goalless draw was well within their grasp. Mourinho was without the injured Eric Bailly and Marouane Fellaini, both the result of knocks during the international break. Paul Pogba was also missing and Marcus Rashford was judged only fit enough for the bench. But even had they been available there could have been no guarantees Mourinho would have been any different. Their star of the show was David de Gea, who made a sensational leftfooted save from Joel Matip, an unlikely recipient of Liverpool's best chance of the match when Roberto Firmino recycled the ball and crossed after a corner. Klopp thought there should have been a penalty for Liverpool, although the incident in question was not obvious. He also claimed a potential red card, which would have been hard on Romelu Lukaku when Dejan Lovren caught a stray boot. It was worse for Klopp, who unleashed every one of his six first-choice attackers on United at different times in search of his first league win since August. Mohamed Salah, Firmino, Philippe Coutinho, Daniel Sturridge, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and Dominic Solanke all played some part, and the Liverpool manager maintained afterwards that there was still much to be positive about in his team's general dominance of the ball and their ambition to go forward. The absent Sadio Mane, out with that hamstring tear picked up playing for Senegal, is the big miss for this team, who passed the ball well at times but just could not break down a United back four shielded by Nemanja Matic. As for United, they kept it simple and when Lukaku took his first touch on 17 minutes you already knew from which section of the playbook Mourinho had lifted this game plan. Mourinho's complaint was that for the three attacking players that Klopp brought on, the Liverpool manager never adjusted the shape of his team. Mourinho compared it to a game of chess, "but my opponent didn't open the door for me to win the game".

He seemed to be anticipating that the risk in the final part of the game would be taken by the home manager, and in turn present his side with an opening, but in the end Liverpool pressed in vain until the end without ever creating a serious chance. Their best was still the shot by Matip from close range that De Gea somehow saved when it felt inevitable that the net in front of the Anfield Road end was about to bulge. De Gea has the habit of making even the best finishers look sloppy and inaccurate in front of goal, and for a defender it had to be the best finish of Matip's career to beat this remarkable goalkeeper.

The referee in charge of this tense, anxious game was Martin Atkinson, who overlooked what Liverpool claimed were trips on Coutinho in either half by Antonio Valencia and Ander Herrera. Atkinson controlled it well, waiting until deep into the second half to finally get a yellow out for Chris Smalling having made it clear in the early stages that it would have to be something pretty serious to convince him to use the cards early on. Liverpool had a plan to win the game, they just did not have the man who could do it for them. Come the second half, their territorial gains were massive and they played mostly in United's half, yet they never managed to pull Mourinho's team out of shape. Matic was an influential figure in front of United's back four, and while they were under pressure they never looked close to going to pieces. Coutinho, substituted with 12 minutes left, was always the greatest individual threat to whom the United rearguard gave due deference, standing off him as he twisted and turned and sought out space around the area. "I told the boys after the game, we decided to take the hard way when we joined Liverpool," Klopp said. "It's obvious we cannot win something in a holiday mood [ie with ease] but we are in a holiday [confident] mood, working hard. I really like how they handle the situation." What he was saying was that there would be no panic at the club, although he did acknowledge that United had fulfilled their ambition for the afternoon whilst Liverpool had not been able to. That is what Mourinho specialises in doing, and nowhere more so in recent years than at Anfield where he turns the occasion into the kind of game he wants - and could not care less what anyone thinks about it.

Date: 14 October 2017 Opposition: Manchester United Competition: League	MEN	Sunday Times	Times	Guardian	14 October 2017
	BBC	Sun Independent	Independent	Mirror	
	Echo	Sun Telegraph	Telegraph	Mail	



THE SUNDAY TIMES

Stalemate rules as Jose draws a blank

LIVERPOOL 0

MANCHESTER UNITED 0

Ten minutes before kick-off a lone figure paced a corridor outside the dressing rooms at Anfield. It was Jose Mourinho, lost in thought. Lines of poetry are on the walls and, intently, he read them one by one. But soon the lyricism stopped. Manchester United's was a performance very much in prose. Only Mourinho has the trick of persuading players from the biggest clubs to go out like little underdogs, to sweat, graft and spoil, to embrace doggedness. Jose came, he saw, he nullified. He got his point and clean sheet. He was happy, and so was Jurgen Klopp. It was an odd thing, a 0-0 that seemed like defeat for the millions across the planet tuning in for the return of the Premier League, but which to both managers felt like a win.

Klopp was buoyed because Liverpool were more like Liverpool, his Liverpool. Even without Sadio Mane they were the intense and relentlessly attacking side he has strived to create. In the week of his two-year Anfield anniversary, and in his 700th game as a manager, people are taking stock of Klopp and asking questions: against that backdrop, it was a welcome return to form. A couple of same old stories for Liverpool: but for David De Gea's virtuosity, and wasteful finishing, they could have had better. So often a United hero in this derby, De Gea improvised a brilliant save with his leg from Joel Matip 11 minutes from half-time and Mohamed Salah botched the rebound: Liverpool have had 162 shots in their past eight games and only eight goals.

Soon after, Romelu Lukaku went through on Anthony Martial's fine pass but his shot was too close to Simon Mignolet and the keeper saved. Neither side came closer to scoring and such a flurry of chances was atypical. The rest of the game involved Liverpool pushing, United nullifying, and neither side cracking. Klopp said he didn't want to judge his counterpart but smiled "no comment" when asked whether his team would ever play like that. Naturally Mourinho felt that, even if neutrals were bored, the game was a tactical treat. "A point, in this long marathon? A point at Anfield is OK."

But is this the season to be calculating? With Manchester City churning points and goals, giving up points is risky, and of course City beat Liverpool 5-0 last month. Given Liverpool were depleted, and on a poor run, Mourinho will have few better opportunities to take the initiative at Anfield. But that's not how he rolls. His selection featured not Marcus Rashford or Juan Mata wide right but Ashley Young, to help Antonio Valencia handle Philippe Coutinho. Martial, for swathes, was an auxiliary left-back. Coutinho tried to roam but United always had someone with him. They brought physicality to bear, via the ruggedness of Chris Smalling and Phil Jones and the tackling of Ander Herrera. In this, Klopp felt Lukaku went too far when he trod on Dejan Lovren. A red card, for Klopp -- but Martin Atkinson deemed it accidental.

Liverpool were good enough to pierce United, even at their most disciplined and determined. The dribbling of Salah and Gini Wijnaldum was important in getting through United's press. Even policed, Coutinho found space and Roberto Firmino was at his best in weeks. In the first half, after Salah beat two men and found him, Coutinho was dispossessed by a lunging Valencia in the box, and in the second Herrera tackled him desperately there. Klopp wanted penalties but Atkinson seemed right to refuse.

Another Salah dribble put Coutinho into a dangerous position in the 33rd minute, but in flew United bodies and the shot was deflected. Just before half-time, Valencia dived to divert Coutinho's cross safely to De Gea. In resistance efforts, United have no one better than their goalkeeper. His Matip save was vintage. Firmino found Matip, who shot from six yards, but De Gea saved with a jutting leg. Remarkably, he's stopped his last 12 shots on target. Salah hit the rebound wide.

Lukaku's performance raised further questions about him in big games. He has scored once in eight matches against Liverpool and had five fewer touches, here, than Mignolet. Henrikh Mkhitaryan was involved in United's best move, chesting to Matic, who volleyed close from range, but it was not a day for Mkhitaryan's delicacy. Mourinho replaced him with Jesse Lingard in the second half, also sending Rashford on for Martial. Yet Emre Can, from six yards, skied a Gomez cross and when Firmino volleyed to Salah, it just evaded Salah at the far post. Liverpool's final complaint was Atkinson permitting Matteo Darmian's very high boot that almost caught Can's head, but another scoreless day for them. And 18 clean sheets for Mourinho's United in 2018.

Star man: David De Gea (Manchester United) Yellow cards: Man United: Smalling, Young Referee: M Atkinson Attendance: 52,912 Liverpool: Mignolet, Gomez, Matip, Lovren, Moreno, Wijnaldum, Henderson, Can, Salah (Oxlade-Chamberlain 78min), Firmino (Solanke 87min), Coutinho (Sturridge 79min) Substitutes: Karius, Milner, Klavan, Alexander-Arnold

Manchester United: De Gea, Valencia, Smalling, Jones, Darmian, Herrera, Matic, Young (Lindelof 90+3min), Mkhitaryan (Lingard 63min), Martial (Rashford 65min), Lukaku Substitutes: Romero, Blind, Tuanzebe, Mata

The Observer

Date: 14 October 2017

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

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

14 October
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Manchester United keeper David de Gea produced a world-class save to deny Joel Matip as Liverpool were frustrated by Jose Mourinho's stubborn side at Anfield for the second successive season. Jurgen Klopp's side peppered the United goal with 19 shots but a combination of outstanding goalkeeping by Spain keeper De Gea and the home team's poor finishing denied them a decisive moment. The German's men were in control of the game for long periods but their profligacy in front of goal means they have now won just once in eight games. The most noteworthy incident of an uneventful first half was De Gea denying Cameroon defender Matip from close range with a brilliant reflex save with his outstretched left boot, before Mohamed Salah fired the rebound wide. United offered very little quality in attack although De Gea's counterpart Simon Mignolet had to smartly parry Romelu Lukaku's fierce attempt before the interval. Liverpool dominated even more after half-time but Emre Can wasted their best chance when he volleyed over the bar from eight yards after being picked out by the impressive Joe Gomez. The point leaves United - with nine clean sheets in their past 10 league games - two points behind Manchester City, who [thrashed Stoke 7-2](#).

History repeats itself

It's almost a year to the day Liverpool and United played out a [goalless and drab stalemate](#) in the same stadium, with the hosts subdued by a vintage Mourinho masterclass in defensive organisation. Twelve months on, this game was only marginally better despite Liverpool taking the match to United with more urgency after the break than they mustered in 2016. A year ago, United were grateful for two fine second-half saves from goalkeeper De Gea to deny Can and Philippe Coutinho. This time the Spaniard produced a magnificent save with his foot to keep out Matip from close range on his way to his 18th Premier League clean sheet of 2017. This was only Liverpool's third clean sheet in 13 games this season but Mourinho will have been the happier manager at the final whistle. The visitors had just 38% of possession - a 3% improvement on their last visit - yet their dogged defensive display stopped Liverpool scoring for only the second time this season in the Premier League.

Lukaku fails big test

Lukaku started the day as the Premier League's leading scorer yet, not for the first time, he failed to deliver against Liverpool. The powerful Belgium striker registered a shot on target - something he had not done in five of his past seven meetings against the Reds - when his compatriot Mignolet beat away his stinging first-half shot in front of The Kop. But this was largely a game to forget for the former Everton striker, who lacked the sharpness that had helped him to seven goals in his first seven league games for United. Lukaku managed just one touch in the opening 23 minutes and his frustration seemed to take over when he clattered into Matip and then his left foot appeared to catch Dejan Lovren - although he escaped a yellow card on both occasions. He ended the match with 22 touches, which was reflective of his own subdued performance as well as the modest attacking ambition shown by his team-mates as United's six-match winning run came to an end.

Mane missed by Reds

Liverpool have now gone seven matches without beating United in the Premier League and were predictably hampered by the absence of Sadio Mane.

Mane watched on from the stands, nursing the hamstring injury that is likely to keep him out of action until next month. While Salah was impressive on the right wing - especially in the opening period - the Reds missed the Senegal forward's pace, directness and finishing. The game in general lacked real attacking fluency from either side, with neither managing a single shot on target in the second half. Indeed, BBC Radio 5 live summariser Danny Mills labelled a "typical contest" after the international break. "If you have seven days to work with your team you can work on creativity, fluidity and attacking intent," said the former Manchester City defender. "If you've got two days after an international break then it's simply a case of getting solid as a unit. "You're all weary, you've all been travelling, so you simply need to ensure you get defensively solid."

Man of the match - David de Gea (Manchester United)

'We don't score easy goals anymore'

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp:

"It was a good performance, I thought worthy of three points. We were unlucky in at least two, maybe three situations - of course the big chance when De Gea made the save. "There were a lot of good individual performances. Even when the last few games for us were not perfect, we were clear and concentrated.

"I felt the referee should have given us a penalty. Then, maybe, it was a red card with the Lukaku and Lovren situation. Two situations, with different outcomes producing maybe a different result.

"We need to be creative and brave in a situation like we are in. We don't score easy goals anymore so the biggest challenge is not to lose confidence and we haven't."

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho:

"A point, in this long marathon? A point at Anfield is OK.

"In the first half we had the ball and were always compact. We had a few shots in the second half."

Klopp bosses Mourinho - the stats

Jose Mourinho has won only one of his eight matches as a manager against Jurgen Klopp in all competitions (W1 D4 L3).

Since Mourinho took charge of Manchester United last summer, these two clubs have won exactly same number of points in the Premier League (89). Liverpool and United have drawn three consecutive league meetings for the first time since 1921.

United have equalled their best points tally after the first eight matches of a Premier League season (20 points), which they achieved in 2011/12 & 1999/00. Since Klopp took charge, Liverpool have won the most points in matches between the 'big six' in the Premier League (37 points).

What's next?

Liverpool turn their attentions to the Champions League, with a midweek Group E trip to Slovenia to face Maribor (19:45 BST) on Tuesday.

United are also on their travels for Europe's elite competition as Mourinho returns to Portugal on Wednesday for a Champions League Group A game against Benfica (19:45 BST).

Date: 14 October 2017

Opposition: Manchester United

Competition: League

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Match ends, Liverpool 0, Manchester United 0.

90'+4' Second Half ends, Liverpool 0, Manchester United 0.

90'+4' Attempt missed. Joel Matip (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain with a cross.

90'+3' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jesse Lingard.

90'+3' Substitution, Manchester United. Victor Lindelöf replaces Ashley Young.

90'+1' Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain with a cross following a corner.

90'+1' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ashley Young.

90' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Chris Smalling.

88' Foul by Dominic Solanke (Liverpool).

88' Phil Jones (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

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

87' Ashley Young (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

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

86' Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United).

82' Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

82' Foul by Nemanja Matic (Manchester United).

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

82' Foul by Matteo Darmian (Manchester United).

79' Substitution, Liverpool. Daniel Sturridge replaces Philippe Coutinho.

78' Substitution, Liverpool. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain replaces Mohamed Salah.

77' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool).

77' Ander Herrera (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

76' Joseph Gomez (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

76' Foul by Marcus Rashford (Manchester United).

76' Attempt missed. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

74' Chris Smalling (Manchester United is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

74' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

74' Foul by Chris Smalling (Manchester United).

73' Foul by Roberto Firmino (Liverpool).

73' Chris Smalling (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

69' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool).

69' Ander Herrera (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

67' Attempt missed. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

65' Substitution, Manchester United. Marcus Rashford replaces Anthony Martial.

64' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Matteo Darmian.

63' Substitution, Manchester United. Jesse Lingard replaces Henrikh Mkhitaryan.

60' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Matteo Darmian.

56' Attempt missed. Emre Can (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Joseph Gomez.

55' Attempt missed. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is high and wide to the right.

55' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

52' Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.

50' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Jordan Henderson with a headed pass.

49' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

49' Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United).

49' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Chris Smalling.

49' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Georginio Wijnaldum.

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

48' Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United).

47' Attempt blocked. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the six yard box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho with a cross.

47' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool).

47' Ander Herrera (Manchester United wins a free kick in the defensive half.

Second Half begins Liverpool 0, Manchester United 0.

45'+2' First Half ends, Liverpool 0, Manchester United 0.

43' Attempt blocked. Ashley Young (Manchester United right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.

43' Attempt saved. Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Anthony Martial.

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

42' Foul by Ander Herrera (Manchester United).

41' Attempt saved. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

40' Offside, Manchester United. Matteo Darmian tries a through ball, but Ander Herrera is caught offside.

39' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Jordan Henderson.

38' Foul by Mohamed Salah (Liverpool).

38' Anthony Martial (Manchester United wins a free kick on the left wing.

36' Joseph Gomez (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

36' Foul by Romelu Lukaku (Manchester United).

34' Attempt missed. Mohamed Salah (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the left following a corner.

34' Attempt saved. Joel Matip (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

34' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ander Herrera.

34' Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the

box is blocked. Assisted by Mohamed Salah.

32' Attempt blocked. Henrikh Mkhitaryan (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

30' Attempt missed. Nemanja Matic (Manchester United left footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses the top left corner. Assisted by Henrikh Mkhitaryan.

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

27' Foul by Antonio Valencia (Manchester United).

26' Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Mohamed Salah is caught offside.

23' Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Mohamed Salah is caught offside.

22' Foul by Joel Matip (Liverpool).

22' Anthony Martial (Manchester United wins a free kick in the attacking half.

19' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Joseph Gomez.

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

17' Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United).

16' Attempt blocked. Joseph Gomez (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Roberto Firmino.

14' Attempt saved. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Mohamed Salah.

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

13' Foul by Ashley Young (Manchester United).

10' Attempt missed. Joel Matip (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

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

6' Attempt blocked. Anthony Martial (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

5' Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

5' Foul by Ander Herrera (Manchester United).

2' Attempt missed. Matteo Darmian (Manchester United right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left following a corner.

2' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Georginio Wijnaldum.

1' Corner, Manchester United. Conceded by Dejan Lovren.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up.