

Date: 22 April 1992  
 Opposition: Nottingham Forest  
 Competition: League

Times	Guardian	
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22 April 1992

## THE TIMES

### Rush earns reward for defiant display

Nottingham Forest 1 Liverpool 1

LIVERPOOL are in danger of finishing in their lowest position in the first division for 27 years, but they still have the opportunity of having a say in the destination of the championship this weekend.

With Ian Rush recovering his goalscoring knack with a dynamic 44th-minute equaliser at the City Ground last night, they are ready to meet Manchester United at Anfield in a defiant mood. Rush has never scored against Manchester United, a warning perhaps to an Old Trafford side struggling to sustain its title challenge. In holding Nottingham Forest to a draw after Teddy Sheringham scored from the penalty spot to put Forest ahead in the 29th minute, Liverpool would admit to having been slightly flattered by the score.

There was only one prolonged period, early in the second half, when they were a consistent match for Brian Clough's rampaging attackers. Yet, with a team once again without several key players, they defended doggedly, passed the ball with style and accuracy and refused to be traumatised by their four-goal defeat at Highbury.

Another defeat appeared likely when Sheringham's 22nd goal of the season nosed Forest in front. Mike Hooper, who had a fine night deputising for Bruce Grobbelaar, had to dash off his line and upended the impressive Keane, who was in pursuit of a misplaced back-pass from Houghton. Hooper managed to get a touch to Sheringham's penalty kick, but was never going to keep it out. Forest, pushing forward with increasing pace and aggression, looked capable of building a substantial lead. It was a test of character for Liverpool, and they came through it with honour. On the stroke of half-time Rush, in possession during the most innocuous of attacks, fired a shot from 25 yards which beat Crossley before the Forest goalkeeper had realised the danger. The game's accent on fluid, football, with passes kept on the ground, was a tribute to both teams near the end of such an arduous season. Forest were playing their tenth game in 24 days, but you would not have guessed it from their appetite for the ball. Nigel Clough, alongside Des Walker, proved a competent central defender once again, dealing confidently with the threat of Barnes and Rush, apart from the moment when Rush scored.

Filling Clough's normal role between midfield and attack, Crossley was a fine distributor of the ball, providing Forest with a new formation. Much of Forest's approach-play revolved around him. Barnes was the merest fraction off setting up a 2-1 lead as Liverpool enjoyed more possession and an angled ball in by Harkness from the left skimmed the far post. In a late siege of the Liverpool goal, Gemmill missed from eight yards while Hooper saved from Keane and Woan.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST: M Crossley; B Laws, B Williams, D Walker, G Crosby, R Keane, T Orlygsson, S Gemmill, N Clough, E Sheringham, I Woan.

LIVERPOOL: M Hooper; S Harkness, N Tanner, S Nicol, J Molby, B Venison, M Marsh, R Houghton, I Rush, J Barnes, M Walters.

Referee: A Flood.

## the guardian

### Rush helps salvage Liverpool pride

NOTTINGHAM FOREST and Liverpool, who between them have played more than 120 competitive matches this season, might have been forgiven for soft-peddalling this one at the City Ground last night, considering nothing very much was at stake save a little local pride.

Not a bit of it. Forest did their level best to run Liverpool ragged in the first half and then Liverpool returned the compliment. Sheringham put Forest ahead from the penalty spot, the culmination of a whole series of fluent attacking moves, and Rush equalised with virtually his side's only chance of an otherwise one-sided first half.

Ronnie Moran's enforced caretaker spell has not been one of unlimited success and no doubt both he and his players were thoroughly chastened by Monday's 4-0 defeat against Arsenal. Here, after the interval, a little of the old Liverpool fighting spirit was on show, Walker thwarting Rush and Houghton twice missing.

Forest by now were thoroughly fired up again themselves and might easily have won the match on several occasions. Hooper made notable saves from Keane and Woan, and Gemmill shot hopelessly high from virtually underneath the bar. It was that sort of night, always exciting but often just a little bit too frenetic.

Forest broke through in the first half when Crosby forced an error in the Liverpool defence. Hooper brought down Keane, who had looked by no means certain to score. Sheringham converted the penalty, Hooper getting a hand to it.

Liverpool equalised just before half-time when Barnes and Rush, both yet to sign new contracts, combined with devastatingly simple effect. Barnes, playing well forward, released Rush into space and the latter had time to shoot precisely past Crossley.

Liverpool may have Wembley on their minds but it is internal matters that are occupying the thoughts of the board. The cold-war days of worrying about Reds under the bed may be over but what Anfield is concerned about now is a Red on the bed, namely their manager. And his health is not the only concern.

The grapevine on Merseyside has it that Souness is determined not only to prune the playing staff this summer but to dismantle the boot room. Apparently he wants a new No. 2 - Steve Coppell's name has been mentioned - which would effectively mean no place for Moran, who has support among the board.

Nottingham Forest: Crossley; Laws, Williams, Walker, Crosby, Keane, Orlygsson, Gemmill, Clough, Sheringham, Woan.

Liverpool: Hooper; Harkness, Tanner, Nicol, Molby, Venison, Marsh, Houghton, Rush, Barnes, Walters.

Referee: A Flood (Stockport).

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## BRITISH SOCCER WEEK

### Reds fightback delight

Liverpool regained some dignity against Nottingham Forest but the FA Cup finalists are still looking for their first league win under caretaker boss Ronnie Moran.

Liverpool's fifth league outing since manager Graeme Souness was admitted to hospital for major heart surgery, ended in stalemate - taking their points tally in that time to a meagre two.

Liverpool, beaten 4-0 at Arsenal on Monday, had Ian Rush to thank for their point with a goal shortly before half time, but in the second half they rode their luck against in-form Forest.

Leading scorer Teddy Sheringham gave Forest the lead with his 22nd goal of the season after 27 minutes.

It came from the penalty spot after goalkeeper Mike Hooper, played into trouble by a weak Ray Houghton back pass, brought down Roy Keane. Forest had already squandered two clear cut chances in quick succession, Ian Woan screwing a shot wide after being sent clear and makeshift striker Gary Crosby heading over from seven yards.

Rush punished Forest for those misses when, after 40 minutes, he played a neat one-two with John Barnes and dispatched a sweet shot past Mark Crossley from 20 yards.

Undaunted by that setback, Forest took the initiative early in the second period. Keane - a transfer target for Liverpool earlier this season - sprung the offside trap but Nicky Tanner produced an outstanding covering tackle. Hooper twice rescued Liverpool later in the half, denying Keane with his legs and Woan with a brilliant reflex save.

At the other end, Houghton missed a glorious chance to give Liverpool maximum points, blasting a right-footed drive high and wide after Barnes had found him in space in the Forest area. Liverpool caretaker boss Ronnie Moran praised his side for their application, 48 hours after their bank holiday debacle at Arsenal. Moran said: "What pleased me most was the way the lads stuck at it and didn't make any silly mistakes. That's what we were guilty of at Arsenal on Monday and we were severely punished, but it was a different story against Forest - it had to be. Not many teams come from a goal behind at Forest. We did and that pleased me immensely"