THE TIMES

Klopp fury after Mane hits s late winner

Southampton 3 Mane 64, 86, Pelle 83 Liverpool 2 Coutinho 17, Sturridge 22
Referee: R East Attendance: 31,596

Asked to assess his side's prospects for the remainder of the season, Jurgen Klopp could be forgiven for the inconclusive response that reflected the bewildering nature of his Liverpool side's display. While Ronald Koeman had marked Southampton's late comeback with a high-speed dash down the touchline to join in his players' celebrations, Klopp was left to contemplate how his team had managed to finish the game empty-handed. Utterly in control after goals from Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge had established a commanding half-time lead, Liverpool were overwhelmed by Southampton's second-half performance that eventually delivered a winning goal from Sadio Mane four minutes from time. Had Klopp's side held on to see out the win they would have been celebrating a fourth successive Barclays Premier League victory on the back of the Europa League triumph over Manchester United on Thursday. Confidence would have been soaring at Anfield and the prospect of Liverpool staging a late challenge for the top four not appeared fanciful.

As it was, a chastening second half meant that instead of eyeing Champions League qualification,Liverpool must fight tooth and nail to return to the Europa League, unless of course they can overcome Borussia Dortmund and go to win this year's competition. That seems less likely given the way they had found themselves unable to cope with a Southampton side rejuvenated by the half-time introduction of Mane and Victor Wanyama. The home side may have spurned one opportunity to work their way back into the game when Mane had a 49th-minute penalty saved but when the forward scored in the 64th minute, the momentum was with the home side who levelled through Graziano Pelle in the 84th minute, shortly before Mane completed the comeback.

Little wonder Klopp was left frustrated, although he refused to draw a line under his side's prospects of making life uncomfortable for the top four, however remote. "There are 27 points still to play for," he said. "We can get all of them, there's a chance. We don't have to dream of things like this we have to play football and win games. If we played like the first half we can win games. If we play like we did in the second half it will be more difficult.

"There were a lot of good things from my side. It was a perfect first half and we could have scored more. We played really good. In the second half Southampton deserved it. We could have done better but that's how it is in football."

For both managers, half-time substitutions proved crucial. While Koeman's introduction of Wanyama and Mane brought stability to a rudderless midfield and injected more urgency to the attack, Klopp's decision to replace Dejan Lovren with Martin Skrtel weakened his defence. The German's explanation was that Lovren was vulnerable to further punishment after a first-half booking, particularly after gaining the benefit of the doubt from Roger East, the referee, when the defender escaped unpunished after an early collision with Shane Long, the Southampton forward, that could easily have led to a penalty.

With Southampton targeting Pelle's height and physical presence, Klopp decided he needed a centre-back unburdened by a yellow card. Skrtel, however, proved even less able to cope and it was significant Pelle could count two assists to go alongside his goal. "I took Lovren off because of his yellow card," Klopp said. "I thought at the end of the first half it looked like the ref was not completely free of the emotion in the stadium any more. OK, maybe it was a penalty, I don't know. I thought we had to change this because it was clear that they will play a lot of long balls to Pelle and it's not easy for a centre-half to challenge for these without a yellow card." It seemed hard to imagine Liverpool would be overly concerned with defensive matters when they took advantage of Southampton's first-half display. Time and again the visitors were allowed to break in numbers and it was Coutinho's ability to expose the space behind Cuco Martina, the home right-back, that led to the 17th-minute opening goal. Coutinho cut in from the flanks and curled a long-range shot beyond the unsighted Fraser Forster.

That should have been warning enough for Koeman's side but five minutes later they were caught out again, with Divock Origi this time leading the break before playing in Sturridge on the right-hand side of the Southampton area. Confronted by two defenders, the England striker was still able to place his shot inside Forster's right-hand post. It could have been worse for Southampton had Joe Allen not missed a one-on-one chance before seeing a second effort ruled out for offside. They survived although when Mane failed to convert a penalty after Skrtel pulled down Pelle four minutes after the restart their chance appeared to have gone. Mane, though, maintained his belief, giving his side hope after turning Mamadou Sakho in the 64th minute. Still Liverpool had the chance to put the game beyond reach when Christian Benteke missed a good chance and that proved costly with Pelle equalising with an excellent leftfoot finish in the 84th minute. Southampton sensed victory and, two minutes later, Pelle turned provider after a poor clearance from Simon Mignolet and Mane completed the comeback.

RATINGS Southampton (4-4-2): F Forster 6 -- C Martina 5, J Fonte 6, V van Dijk 6, R Bertrand 6 -- S Davis 7, O Romeu 6 (sub: J Ward-Prowse, 69min 6), J Clasie 5 (sub: V Wanyama, 46 8), D Tadic 4 (sub: S Mane, 46 8) -- G Pelle 9, S Long 7. Substitutes not used: M Stekelenberg, C Soares, M Yoshida, Juanmi. Booked: Mane.
Liverpool (4-2-3-1): S Mignolet 5 -- J Flanagan 6, D Lovren 6 (sub: M Skrtel, 46 4), M Sakho 5, N Clyne 6 -- A Lallana 7, E Can 7, J Allen 6 (sub: S Ojo, 86), P Coutinho 8 -- D Origi 7, D Sturridge 6 (sub: C Benteke, 69 5). Substitutes not used: D Ward, K Toure, J Henderson, B Smith. Booked: Lovren, Skrtel, Can.

the guardian

Southampton stage incredible comeback to beat Liverpool 3-2

For a while it looked as if Liverpool were going to prolong their recent resurgence but by the end Jürgen Klopp could only congratulate the hosts for a thrilling comeback and lament his team's relapse into unreliability. The visitors were two goals up at the break but so slapdash and inferior in the second period that Klopp admitted: "Southampton deserved it for sure."

Ronald Koeman's side merit praise for their transformation and the fact that they never relented, not even after Sadio Mané had a penalty saved by Simon Mignolet in the 50th minute. Mané had been introduced as one of two substitutions made by Koeman during the interval and the Senegalese shrugged off the miss to play a key part, along with Victor Wanyama, in his team's recovery, scoring twice and generally harassing Liverpool's defence.

That defence never looked comfortable and will need to be strengthened if this team are to achieve sustainable progress. Dejan Lovren's improved performances had been one of the features of Liverpool's strong form going into this match but on his return to the club where he began his Premier League career the Croat fell back into the haplessness of his early Liverpool days.

He was fortunate to avoid giving away a penalty in the eighth minute after misjudging the flight of the ball and then making contact with Shane Long, who fell in the box. Southampton demanded a penalty but the referee, Roger East, disagreed. Long continued harassing Lovren for the remainder of the half, the Croat eventually earning a yellow card for chopping down his tormentor.

At least Liverpool were enjoying themselves at the other end. They took the lead in the 17th minute with a wonderful 25-yard curler by Philippe Coutinho. Divock Origi set up a second goal five minutes later, loping 40 yards forward and passing to Daniel Sturridge, who used Cuco Martina as a shield as he fired a low shot beyond Forster.

Joe Allen was guilty of allowing Forster to make a good save after a superb Liverpool move in the 26th minute, and the Welshman was then unlucky to have a goal disallowed on the grounds that the offside Mamadou Sakho had obscured Forster's view. Koeman had spoken beforehand of his determination to avenge December's 6-1 defeat here in the Capital One Cup but was beginning to fear a repeat. "But Liverpool left us alive after 45 minutes and we punished them for that," he said.

Half-time changes by the managers had a major bearing on the result. While the Dutchman introduced Wanyama and Mané, Klopp replaced Lovren with Martin Skrtel because he feared that Lovren, barracked by the home fans, was in danger of giving the hosts a route back into the game, especially as, in the German's words, "it looked like the referee was not completely free any more of the emotion in the stadium".

Skrtel had not played for three months following hamstring injury and it soon became clear that he was not going to help Liverpool navigate their way serenely to victory. Within five minutes he conceding a penalty for tugging Graziano Pellè's shirt. Mignolet reprieved the defender by saving Mané's spot-kick.

But Southampton were encouraged, nonetheless, and Liverpool's defence remained rickety, Skrtel's woes raising the question as to why Kolo Touré was not deployed in his stead. Mignolet, meanwhile, was exacerbating the problems despite his penalty save, his attempts to clear crosses anything but convincing. "We lost our formation and could not avoid their long balls to Pellè any more," said Klopp.

In the 64th minute, after Southampton won possession in midfield, Mané received the ball, skipped past Sakho and planted it into the net from eight yards. Christian Benteke should have restored the two-goal gap shortly after replacing Sturridge in the 70th minute but dragged badly wide after being put through by Adam Lallana. For Liverpool that attempted finish contrasted painfully with the one produced by Pellè seven minutes from full-time, the Italian lashing the ball in from 20 yards.

Liverpool could not even hold on for a point. Three minutes after conceding the equaliser, Mignolet triggered renewed panic with a weak kick. Skrtel and Allen completed the farce by colliding with each other as they attempted to tidy up, and Mané made the most of the mess by firing in the winning goal. "Tomorrow is my birthday and this is the best present I could get," said Koeman. "This was a must-win game for European qualification. Now it is good to be fighting for something until the end of the season."

Klopp insisted that Liverpool could still make the top four if they win all nine of their remaining matches, but the fact that his post-match diagnosis was barely audible spoke volumes.

Man of match Sadio Mané (Southampton)

The Mail

MANE ATTRACTION; Supersub Sadio at double in fightback

3 SOUTHAMPTON 2 LIVERPOOL

IT was 30 minutes after the final whistle when Ronald Koeman arrived, complete with glowing cheeks, to give his appraisal of a remarkable afternoon. Before he could continue, though, he wanted to make a promise.

'That was the first time and I think the last time I do that,' said Koeman, with a self-deprecating smile. 'I am still tired!'

Caught up in the moment after Sadio Mane had completed a stunning Southampton comeback, Koeman engulfed his brother Erwin and assistant Sammy Lee in a bear hug then sprinted down the touchline to celebrate with his players. Out of character it may have been, but it was understandable. Having trailed 2-0 at half-time, Koeman -- 53 today -- galvanised Southampton to such an extent they pounded Liverpool into submission and gave him 'the best birthday present I could get'. If it took time for Koeman to gather himself, the same was true for Jurgen Klopp, but his breathlessness stemmed from fury. In total control after first-half strikes from Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge, their collapse left the German bewildered.

Slick and polished in the first period, Liverpool were weak and confused after the break. Mane, who came off the bench at the interval, ran amok, while the imperious Graziano Pelle pounded the hapless Martin Skrtel and Mamadou Sakho into the ground.

This was the first time Liverpool had blown a two-goal half-time lead in the league since 1964 and they had no-one to blame but themselves. Traffic congestion had delayed their arrival but that did not disrupt their preparation and they began like an express train.

Southampton should have been awarded a penalty in the seventh minute when Dejan Lovren tripped Shane Long but referee Roger East waved all appeals away. 'That kind of decision can have a big impact on the game,' said Koeman. 'In my opinion it is 100 per cent penalty. It wasn't given and Liverpool were by far the better team in the first half.'

That point could not be argued. Inspired by Coutinho, Liverpool passed with purpose and soon the little No10 produced the latest evidence to show why his teammates call him 'The Magician', unleashing a 25-yard drive past Fraser Forster So Fraser Forster. Soon the lead was doubled and again Coutinho had an input. This time his pass with the outside of his left foot sent Divock Origi scampering forward. With Southampton's defence backpedalling, he showed awareness to tee up Sturridge, whose finish was whipped past Forster.

As Liverpool's players celebrated, the TV cameras cut to England head coach Roy Hodgson in the directors' box. He was smiling and with good reason: this was Sturridge's most assured performance since he returned from injury.

Two goals should have become three in the 25th minute when a move involving Coutinho, Adam Lallana and Emre Can ended at the feet of Joe Allen but the Welshman shot straight at Forster.

Clasping his hands to head, Allen knew he should have ended the game as a contest and his mood did not improve when his 33rdminute 'goal' was ruled out for offside. It proved to be decisive.

When Mane saw his penalty saved by Simon Mignolet in the 50th minute -- correctly awarded after Skrtel, on his first appearance since December 20, wrestled Pelle down -- Southampton could have been demoralised but it revived them.

In the 64th minute Jon Flanagan, captaining Liverpool for the first time, was caught in possession by Pelle and the Italian rolled a pass into his strike partner's path. Mane did the rest, thumping a left-footed drive past Mignolet.

Christian Benteke dragged wide in the 73rd minute but Liverpool were effectively dead as an attacking force and it became a question of whether they could hang on.

The answer was no. Parity arrived in the 83rd minute when Long teed up Pelle to score then, in the next attack, Mane capitalised on another defensive mix-up to spark pandemonium.

'Our performance in the second half was perfect,' said Koeman, whose side are within striking distance of the top six. Defeat, as Klopp conceded, effectively ends Liverpool's top-four hopes. 'There are still 27 points to get,' he said. 'If we play like we did in the first half we can do it. If we play like in the second half it's more difficult.'

SUPER STAT: Simon Mignolet has saved three of his last five Premier League penalties.

SOUTHAMPTON (4-4-2): Forster 7; Martina 6, Fonte 7, Van Dijk 7, Bertrand 7; S Davis 7, Romeu 6 (Ward-Prowse 69min, 7), Clasie 5 (Wanyama 46, 7), Tadic 5 (Mane 46, 8); Pelle 8.5, Long 8. Subs Not Used: Soares, Yoshida, Juanmi, Stekelenburg. Booked: Mane. Scorers: Mane 64, 86, Pelle 83.

LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): Mignolet 7; Flanagan 6, Lovren 6 (Skrtel 46, 4), Sakho 5, Clyne 6; Lallana 7, Can 7, Allen 5.5 (Ojo 87), Coutinho 7; Origi 7, Sturridge 6.5 (Benteke 70, 5). Subs not used: Toure, Henderson, Smith, Ward. Booked: Lovren, Can, Skrtel.

Scorers: Coutinho 17, Sturridge 22. Man of the match: Graziano Pelle. Referee: Roger East 7.

The Daily Telegraph

Koeman euphoric as Mane dents Liverpool's challenge

Southampton 3
Mane 64, 86, Pelle 83
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Att: 31,596

The most surprising sight at St Mary's was not Liverpool losing a two-goal lead at a ground where they'd won 6-1 three months earlier but Ronald Koeman racing down the touchline to join the collective embrace of his players after Sadio Mane's late winner.

The Dutchman, 53 today, is known for his placid demeanour in the Southampton technical area but he was unable to contain his glee after watching his players upset the odds. "It's the first time and I think it's the last time," he said of his celebration. "I'm still tired. Tomorrow it's my birthday and today I get the best present."

Mane joined the fray only at halftime but there was still time for him to miss a penalty and score twice to sweep away Liverpool's lead.

The Senegalese had not scored since that 6-1 League Cup defeat but was eligible to play here after having his red card at Stoke overturned, though Koeman chose instead to leave him on the bench.

"That was the Sadio we like," said Koeman of the former Red Bull Salzburg forward. "Sadio had a dif-ficult time the last few weeks so I hope it gives the boy a boost, his performance."

It's a defeat which leaves Jurgen Klopp's side seven points off the Champions League places, a competition they can surely now only qualify for by winning the Europa League. "Twenty-seven points still to get. If we get all of them, there's a chance," he smiled.

Liverpool had looked in complete control after a breathtaking five-minute spell put them two up at half-time.

Another moment of brilliance from Philippe Coutinho changed the momentum of the game as he cut in from the left to curl a wonderful strike past Fraser Forster. Five minutes later, Divok Origi tore past the bemused Jose Fonte to feed Daniel Sturridge who feigned to shoot and then clinically did so, low into the bottom left corner. It was his fourth goal in three starts against Southampton and seventh in total this season.

It ought to have been even better for Liverpool. Forster saved superbly at point-blank range from Joe Allen before Allen had a goal ruled out with Mamadou Sakho adjudged to have impeded Forster from an offside position.

Before that, Southampton had started well and were incensed when Roger East refused to award Shane Long a penalty after the Irishman appeared to be shoved over by former Saint Dejan Lovren, who was being booed with every touch on his return to St Mary's.

"In my opinion it's 100 per cent a penalty," said Koeman. The Croatian centre-back was booked soon afterwards for lunging at Long and, feeling he was in danger of a red card, Klopp replaced him with Martin Skrtel at the break.

The Slovakian endured a miserable second-half up against Graziano Pelle and conceded a penalty for pulling the Italian's shirt five minutes after the break. Mane struck the ball firmly to the left corner of Simon Mignolet but the Belgian saved superbly to seemingly extinguish any hope of points for Southampton. "We had a great spirit," said Koeman. "The whole performance in the second half was perfect." It was a spirit embodied by Pelle and Mane, with the Italian attempting a series of complicated and unnecessary flicks in a poor first half.

"I wasn't happy with his performance in the first half. He said 'yes, I need to be better in the second half.' He was, setting up both of Mane's goals and scoring an excellent one of his own."

The comeback started as Mane latched on to Pelle's pass, shrugged off Sakho and finished crisply past Mignolet. A clever touch from Long then prompted Pelle to unleash a wonderful left-foot drive from the edge of the area to make it 2-2. The Italy international looked close to tears. Following his two goals at Stoke, it was the first time Pelle has scored in consecutive games since September 2014.

There was still time for Pelle to again feed Mane who finished low into the right-hand corner to send Koeman into delirium.

Klopp described his over-riding emotion as "frustration" rather than "anger" but Liverpool have now lost the most points from winning positions in the Premier League this year. "I'm not that good a loser so I don't feel brilliant but it's football," said the German.

"I saw a very very good first half. Second half, Southampton deserved the points."

Times	Telegraph	BBC	
Guardian	Mirror	Daily Echo	
Independent	Mail	BBC	

Date: 20 March 2016
Opposition: Southampton
Competition: League

20 March 2016

THE INDEPENDENT

Mané double dashes hopes of top four for Liverpool

Liverpool's chances of reaching the Champions League effectively vanished yesterday in an astonishing match at St Mary's. After being 2-0 up at the interval and cruising, they collapsed as the Southampton manager Ronald Koeman's substitutions turned the game on its head.

Sadio Man[c] came off the bench to score twice, although the substitution did not look quite so clever when the Senegal forward had a penalty saved by Simon Mignolet three minutes after taking the field and with Liverpool still 2-0 up. But the unexpected three points have Saints fans and manager alike calculating the possibilities of a return to the Europa League. "That's good because you are fighting for something until the end of the season," Koeman said.

Liverpool had scored through Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge and could have had more. But Koeman's introduction of Man[c] - available for the match after Saints had appealed successfully against the red card he was shown in the victory away to Stoke City nine days ago - made an immediate difference.

The Liverpool manager Jrgen Klopp's own introduction at the break of Martin Skrtel in favour of former Saint Dejan Lovren, who had been booked, was less successful, as Graziano Pelle dominated the Slovakian defender in the air and on the ground throughout the second half.

"There are still 27 points to get, but we don't have to dream of things like this," Klopp said. "We have to play football and win games. If we play like we did in the first half we can win. If we play like in the second half it's more difficult.

"I'm not a good loser so I don't feel brilliant, as you can imagine, but I'm not angry, I am frustrated that we got nothing for a very good first half," he added, downplaying suggestions that Thursday's Europa League tie away to Manchester United had left his players weary in that second half.

"It's easy to count the games we had and the games Southampton had. Of course, there's a difference, but it's a football problem, nothing else - football mistakes and we can learn from them and we will. But for today it's too late because we lost."

Liverpool had a narrow escape early on when Roger East, the referee, ignored claims that Lovren had pushed Shane Long over in the penalty area. They took advantage after 17 minutes when Coutinho curled a low shot past Fraser Forster from 25 yards. Four minutes later, Liverpool broke quickly, Devock Origi found Sturridge, and the England striker sidestepped Ryan Bertrand and struck the ball past Forster.

By now, the home fans must have been fearing a repeat of Liverpool's 6-1 December victory here in the Capital One Cup, and more goals might have followed as Liverpool broke repeatedly, but Joe Allen hit one shot straight at Forster and had a goal ruled out for offside against Mamadou Sakho.

But after 48 minutes referee East did award a penalty to Southampton when Skrtel pulled Pelle's shirt. Mignolet dived to his right to save Man[c]'s kick, but if that was a blow to either Man[c] or the home side, it did not show, and after 64 minutes, Man[c], played in by Pelle, twisted past Sakho and shot past Mignolet's left hand.

Even then, Liverpool continued to make openings, but Christian Benteke scuffed the best one wide, and instead of 3-1 it was 2-2 after 83 minutes when Pelle won a long high ball against Skrtel, took a return pass from Long and smacked it past Mignolet's right hand.

Three minutes later and the comeback was complete. Skrtel missed a header and Pelle played the ball through for Man[c] to hold off Sakho and roll a shot into the corner of the net as Koeman sprinted joyfully along the touchline, showing more pace than he had in his playing days.

"It is the first time and I think the last time, I am still tired," he said. "Normally you don't get this chance, they will kill you more than they did. It is fantastic, from 2-0 down and with the importance of the game. Tomorrow is my birthday and this is the best present I could get."

DAILY Mirror

REDS SAD DEMISE; Liverpool's defensive frailties exposed by Saints and their miracle Mane

SOUTHAMPTON 3
Mane 64, 86, Pelle 83
LIVERPOOL 2
Coutinho 17, Sturridge 22

ON the spring equinox, when the days become longer and nights grow shorter, Liverpool unfurled their own tribute to the seasons.

As they lost for the first time in the Premier League after leading 2-0 at half-time, their Champions League hopes grew fainter and their defensive nightmares turned more vivid.

For 45 minutes, Jurgen Klopp's side were slick, inventive and far too good for Southampton.

But as sure as night follows day, they took careful aim and shot themselves in the foot - Klopp, stock and two smoking barrels.

Saints manager Ronald Koeman rushed 40 yards along the touchline to join in the celebrations as two-goal substitute Sadio Mane - who had not scored for four months - virtually ended Liverpool's hopes of a late surge into the top four.

Koeman, 53 today, has not moved so fast since he fled the scene of the crime after his professional foul on David Platt denied England a place at the 1994 World Cup finals.

And as he surveyed the wreckage of a ruinous defeat at St Mary's, Klopp became a fully paid-up member of the do-we-not-like-orange club.

For Saints, another top-six finish is possible and Koeman said: "It's the first time I've run along the touchline to celebrate a goal like that - and the last time because I'm still tired.

"But it's my birthday tomorrow and that was the best present I could have hoped for as it was a must-win game if we want to qualify for Europe.

"It's also the sweetest comeback I've had as a coach - normally you don't get the chance to do that from 2-0 down against Liverpool, they will kill you more than they did.

"That's what makes it special and emotional. All the goals were fantastic and I'm proud of the team - we showed great spirit after half-time."

Mane, who missed a penalty four minutes after coming on (below), was only available to wreak havoc because his ridiculous red card at Stoke seven days earlier had been overturned.

In a showcase for the best and worst of Liverpool, the visitors should have been out of sight after 45 minutes.

Philippe Coutinho's 25-yard opener and England striker Daniel Sturridge's clinical finish, after a purposeful break from midfield by Divock Origi, put them in charge. Twice Joe Allen should have made it 3-0, but was thwarted by England keeper Fraser Forster's sprawling save and then a linesman's flag as Mamadou Sakho was adjudged to be active as he hurdled the Welshman's low shot through a crowded box.

But Klopp's removal of PS20million St Mary's refugee Dejan Lovren at the break, and Koeman sending on Mane, proved critical.

Lovren had been lucky to stay on the pitch when his clumsy challenge on Shane Long after eight minutes warranted a red card and penalty. But Klopp sensed referee Roger East, hounded by home fans for reprieving Lovren, might be eager to atone for his error of judgement.

"I thought, at the end of the first half, it looked like the ref wasn't completely free of emotion in the stadium any more," he said.

"OK, maybe it was a penalty - I don't know, but I thought we had to change because it was clear Southampton would play a lot of long balls up to Pelle and it's not easy for a centre-half to challenge for these without a yellow card. The ref changed a bit the mood."

Klopp's suspicions proved founded. Graziano Pelle gave Lovren's replacement Martin Skrtel a torrid time. Simon Mignolet went full length to divert Mane's penalty after the hapless Skrtel, making his first appearance for three months, fouled Pelle, but Liverpool knew the kitchen sink was coming and they had no plumbers on emergency call.

Once Mane had halved the deficit and Christian Benteke squandered a chance to restore Liverpool's two-goal advantage, the tide turned.

Pelle levelled with seven minutes to go and there was enough time for Mane to deliver the final flourish.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

Second half capitulation as Reds surrender two goal lead

Liverpool threw away a 2-0 lead as they slumped to a miserable 3-2 defeat at the hands of Southampton at St Mary's.

Goals from Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge had put the Reds firmly in control at the interval.

However, Jurgen Klopp's men imploded in the second half. Sadio Mane missed a penalty before the substitute reduced the deficit.

Liverpool had chances to wrap up the points but didn't take them and Saints took full advantage.

Graziano Pelle equalised and Mane got the winner with four minutes to go as Klopp raged on the touchline.

The Reds, who had won their previous three league matches, started slowly with Virgil Van Dijk nodding wide from a corner before the visitors enjoyed a major let-off.

Dejan Lovren misjudged a punt forward and Shane Long burst clear. Lovren raced back to cover but sent Long sprawling in the penalty area. It looked like a nailed on spot-kick but to the Saints' disgust Roger East waved play on.

Pelle then volleyed over before Lovren made a fair last-ditch challenge on Long.

Liverpool were in need of inspiration and Coutinho provided it in the 18th minute.

Adam Lallana won the ball back on halfway and fed the Brazilian down the left. Coutinho cut inside before whipping a low 25-yarder across Fraser Forster and into the far corner.

Four minutes later it was 2-0 courtesy of a blistering counter-attack. Coutinho picked out Divock Origi who surged forward and unselfishly teed up Sturridge. The Reds striker finished emphatically.

Liverpool were dominant and should have added to their account.

Joe Allen was denied by Forster before Sturridge was also thwarted.

Eleven minutes before the break the Reds thought they had added a third. Allen rifled home after Saints failed to clear a corner but celebrations were curtailed by an offside flag against Mamadou Sakho.

Martin Skrtel came on for Lovren at the start of the second half, while Saints made a double change with Victor Wanyama and Mane on for Jordy Clasie and Dusan Tadic.

Skrtel endured a nightmare start as he was penalised for tugging Pelle's shirt in the box. However, Mane's penalty was brilliantly kept out by Mignolet.

Liverpool got sloppy and Saints cranked up the pressure.

Oriol Romeu's 25-yarder was tipped over by Mignolet before the hosts reduced the deficit on 64 minutes.

Mane turned into space and smashed a shot into the corner.

Klopp brought on for Christian Benteke for Sturridge as the Reds boss to regain the initiative.

As Southampton took risks in search of an equaliser they left space for Liverpool to exploit.

Lallana put Benteke through on the counter but the big frontman dragged wide.

Liverpool were made to pay as with six minutes to go Pelle fired home from the edge of the box.

It soon went from bad to worse as Mignolet sliced a clearance, Skrtel and Allen got in each other's way and Mane punished them.

Southampton come back from two goals down to beat Liverpool 3-2 at St Mary's

Sadio Mane scored twice as Saints came from two goals behind to beat Liverpool at St Mary's and increase their chances of qualifying for Europe.

Going into the game tied on points in the table, Liverpool outclassed their hosts in the first half and were deservedly two goals to the good at the break, having been lucky to escape conceding an early penalty.

Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge scored within five minutes of one another as Liverpool dominated the first half but Mane, available after seeing his red card against Stoke rescinded, hit a brace either side of a fine Graziano Pelle strike to seal a memorable 3-2 win for Ronald Koeman's side.

Mane could have had an instant impact but missed a 49th-minute penalty, only to then become the hero of the piece as Jurgen Klopp saw Liverpool lose for the first time in nine.

Southampton had started well and had strong calls for a penalty turned down by referee Roger East as Shane Long turned former Saints defender Dejan Lovren before bursting into the box and went down in the box as the Croatian looked to close him down.

Pelle then fired over from Steven Davis' pass before Liverpool started to create chances, Sturridge stinging the palms of Fraser Forster before accidentally blocking Divock Origi's strike.

But no-one could get in the way of Coutinho's opening goal just seconds later as the Brazil international curled a shot past Forster from 25 yards with 17 minutes on the clock.

Liverpool won here 6-1 in the Capital One Cup back in December and for large periods of the first half they threatened to run riot once again.

They were soon two ahead as a lightening counter-attack left Origi and Sturridge against two Saints' defenders - and it was the latter who tucked away Liverpool's second having been picked out by Origi.

Joe Allen should have added to Koeman's woes as he burst into the box but his shot was too close to Forster, who kept the effort out with his foot.

Southampton could not get themselves together at the back and, after Jordy Clasie surrendered possession, they were lucky Liverpool wasted a three-on-two counter-attack which ended with Sturridge shooting tamely at Forster.

Coutinho drifted in a corner just after the half-hour mark and, as it dropped to Allen, the Wales international finished into the corner but his celebrations were short-lived as Mamadou Sakho was deemed to be interfering with play while stood in an offside position.

Koeman reacted at the interval, making a double change as Mane and Victor Wanyama replaced Dusan Tadic and Clasie - while Martin Skrtel came on in place of Lovren for the visitors.

Two of those substitutes were involved immediately, Skrtel conceding a penalty as he tugged down Pelle, with Mane stepping up only to see his tame spot-kick pushed out my Simon Mignolet.

Mane and Oriol Romeu both came close before the former made up for his earlier penalty miss by turning Sakho in the box and firing home.

And, with the pressure continuing to build on Liverpool's back-four, Pelle thrashed home his third goal in two games (83) to bring the game level before setting Mane away to convert the 86th-minute winner as Saints go seventh.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

Date: 20 March 2016
Opposition: Southampton
Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	BBC
Guardian	Mirror	Daily Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

BBC

Liverpool's hopes of a top-four spot were dented as Southampton dramatically snatched victory at St Mary's.

Liverpool had looked in command after Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge scored in a five-minute period.

Sadio Mane missed a penalty just after the break following Martin Skrtel's foul on Graziano Pelle, but made amends soon after with a smart finish.

Pelle's curling shot restored parity in the 83rd minute, before Mane pounced to seize all three points for his side.

Liverpool pressed forward to try to force a final twist, but a speculative penalty shout for a push on Christian Benteke was all they could muster.

Southampton remain seventh, with Liverpool two places lower and still seven points off the top four.

As the Reds departed the south coast, manager Jurgen Klopp was left to try to comprehend how they had contrived to lose from 2-0 up at half-time for the first time in the Premier League.

After Shane Long was denied an early penalty in a tussle with Dejan Lovren, the Reds took control of the first half with Coutinho's low curling effort followed in short order by Sturridge's cleverly-crafted second.

As Southampton searched for an immediate response, Liverpool exploited the space left behind with Joe Allen shooting into the shins of Fraser Forster from eight yards before seeing a goal chalked off for offside.

However, whether it was Thursday's Europa League exploits or the 10 games more they have played than Saints this season, Liverpool's slick passing and swift movement dried up markedly after the break.

Saints' resurgence

Mane's introduction helped Southampton make inroads behind Liverpool's defence in the second half (image on right) after they were largely kept out of the penalty area in the first half (left).

When Mane's penalty - awarded after Skrtel's tug on Pelle - was pushed aside by goalkeeper Simon Mignolet early in the second half, it seemed that it was set to be the visitors' day.

But Ronald Koeman's introduction of Mane and Victor Wanyama at half-time throttled the supply to Liverpool's front men while adding a more clinical edge to his own attack.

After the electric Mane had escaped Mamadou Sakho to cut the deficit, the hosts kept believing as Liverpool kept retreating and the pressure finally told late on.

Sturridge - who played 68 minutes as his side completed a 3-1 aggregate Europa League win over Manchester United in midweek - had already been withdrawn wincing by that point, with full match fitness still some way away.

Man of the match - Sadio Mane

Sadio Mane was free to play after his red card against Stoke last weekend was overturned and turned around the match after arriving as a half-time substitute.

He registered three shots on targets, more than any other Saints player

What they said

Southampton manager Ronald Koeman: "I was so happy for the players. It was a must-win game, the same as last week. We are still fighting for a European place, that is what we want.

"I'm proud of the team. We had a great spirit after half time and it was hard to manage it after 45 minutes."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp: "The first half we played brilliant football, we have to close the game out. You have to accept in the second half they controlled the game.

"They scored three goals, we didn't, that is how football is."

Stats you need to know

Liverpool lost a game in which they were leading by two or more goals at half-time for the first time in Premier League history, having previously won 112 and drawn three of 115 games.

There were just two minutes and 24 seconds between Southampton's second and third goals.

Southampton have lost just one of their past seven Premier League games at St Mary's , winning five, drawing one and losing one.

Philippe Coutinho has scored more goals in all competitions for Liverpool in 2015-16 than in any other previous campaign with nine.

Simon Mignolet has saved three of the last five penalties that he has faced in the Premier League for Liverpool, after saving one of the previous five.

Graziano Pelle has scored in consecutive Premier League games for the first time since September 2014. Pelle also provided two assists in a Premier League game for just the second time in his career.

What's next?

The international break means a pause to the Premier League action.

Southampton travel to leaders Leicester on Sunday 3 April after it gets back under way, with Liverpool entertaining second-placed Tottenham the day before.

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0:00 Match ends, Southampton 3, Liverpool 2.

90'+5' Second Half ends, Southampton 3, Liverpool 2.

90'+2' Attempt missed. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high.

90'+1' Foul by Sadio Mané (Southampton.

90'+1' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

90' Attempt saved. Graziano Pellè (Southampton right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top right corner. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

87' Substitution, Liverpool. Sheyi Ojo replaces Joe Allen.

86' Sadio Mané (Southampton is shown the yellow card for excessive celebration.

86' Goal! Southampton 3, Liverpool 2. Sadio Mané (Southampton left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Graziano Pellè.

83' Goal! Southampton 2, Liverpool 2. Graziano Pellè (Southampton left footed shot from outside the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Shane Long.

82' Victor Wanyama (Southampton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

82' Foul by Joe Allen (Liverpool.

82' Attempt blocked. Joe Allen (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

80' Foul by Cuco Martina (Southampton.

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

78' Foul by James Ward-Prowse (Southampton.

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

76' Foul by James Ward-Prowse (Southampton.

76' Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

75' Foul by Graziano Pellè (Southampton.

75' Martin Skrtel (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

74' Attempt missed. Christian Benteke (Liverpool right footed shot from the right side of the box is close, but misses to the left. Assisted by Adam Lallana with a through ball following a fast break.

70' Substitution, Liverpool. Christian Benteke replaces Daniel Sturridge.

69' Substitution, Southampton. James Ward-Prowse replaces Oriol Romeu.

68' Attempt saved. Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Emre Can.

64' Goal! Southampton 1, Liverpool 2. Sadio Mané (Southampton left footed shot from the left side of the box to the centre of the goal. Assisted by Graziano Pellè.

64' Attempt missed. Oriol Romeu (Southampton right footed shot from outside the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Victor Wanyama.

61' Steven Davis (Southampton wins a free kick in the attacking half.

61' Foul by Joe Allen (Liverpool.

60' Corner, Southampton. Conceded by Jon Flanagan.

60' Attempt blocked. Graziano Pellè (Southampton header from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Cuco Martina with a cross.

59' Attempt blocked. Virgil van Dijk (Southampton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Victor Wanyama.

59' Attempt saved. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

58' Offside, Liverpool. Joe Allen tries a through ball, but Adam Lallana is caught offside.

55' Foul by Oriol Romeu (Southampton.

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

51' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Victor Wanyama.

51' Attempt saved. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Nathaniel Clyne.

50' Attempt missed. Shane Long (Southampton left footed shot from a difficult angle on the left is close, but misses to the left following a set piece situation.

49' Penalty saved! Sadio Mané (Southampton fails to capitalise on this great opportunity, right footed shot saved in the bottom left corner.

49' Martin Skrtel (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

49' Penalty Southampton. Graziano Pellè draws a foul in the penalty area.

49' Penalty conceded by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool after a foul in the penalty area.

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

48' Ryan Bertrand (Southampton wins a free kick on the left wing.

48' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

48' Attempt blocked. Steven Davis (Southampton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

47' Graziano Pellè (Southampton wins a free kick in the attacking half.

47' Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

Second Half begins Southampton 0, Liverpool 2.

45' Substitution, Southampton. Sadio Mané replaces Dusan Tadic.

45' Substitution, Liverpool. Martin Skrtel replaces Dejan Lovren.

45' Substitution, Southampton. Victor Wanyama replaces Jordy Clasie.

45'+3' First Half ends, Southampton 0, Liverpool 2.

45'+2' Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

45'+2' Foul by Jordy Clasie (Southampton.

45'+1' Cuco Martina (Southampton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

45'+1' Foul by Divock Origi (Liverpool.

44' Offside, Southampton. Virgil van Dijk tries a through ball, but Dusan Tadic is caught offside.

43' Attempt missed. Ryan Bertrand (Southampton left footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right from a direct free kick.

42' Dusan Tadic (Southampton wins a free kick in the attacking half.

25' Foul by Divock Origi (Liverpool.

25' Ryan Bertrand (Southampton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

22' Goal! Southampton 0, Liverpool 2. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Divock Origi following a fast break.

20' Dangerous play by Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool.

20' Cuco Martina (Southampton wins a free kick in the defensive half.

20' Attempt blocked. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked.

20' Attempt blocked. Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Adam Lallana.

19' Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

19' Foul by Virgil van Dijk (Southampton.

19' Attempt blocked. Jordy Clasie (Southampton right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Dusan Tadic.

17' Goal! Southampton 0, Liverpool 1. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Joe Allen.

17' Attempt blocked. Divock Origi (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Joe Allen.

16' Attempt saved. Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Jon Flanagan.

14' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ryan Bertrand.

12' Corner, Southampton. Conceded by Dejan Lovren.

12' Attempt blocked. Shane Long (Southampton right footed shot from the right side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Cuco Martina.

11' Attempt missed. Graziano Pellè (Southampton right footed shot from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Steven Davis.

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

9' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jose Fonte.

6' Attempt missed. Virgil van Dijk (Southampton header from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Steven Davis with a cross following a corner.

5' Corner, Southampton. Conceded by Jon Flanagan.

3' Offside, Southampton. Steven Davis tries a through ball, but Virgil van Dijk is caught offside.

3' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

3' Graziano Pellè (Southampton wins a free kick on the left wing.

3' Attempt missed. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the right.

2' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Cuco Martina.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up. Foul by Jon Flanagan (Liverpool.

Compiled by Graeme Riley