

Match points: Liverpool v Cardiff



Key battles

Roberto Firmino v Sol Bamba

With his elusiveness, closing down of opponents and willingness to drop deep, Firmino may present the worst possible opponent for a big, slow, old-fashioned centre-back like Bamba, who is outstanding in the air but may not face long balls. The Brazilian had gone six Liverpool games without a goal before striking against Red Star Belgrade on Wednesday.



Trent Alexander-Arnold v Josh Murphy

Alexander-Arnold lost his right-back place to the more defensive Joe Gomez in recent games. Yet he was back in the side against Red Star and may retain his place against Cardiff. Murphy, who cost Cardiff £11 million (\$\$19.5 million) in the summer, is a skilful opponent who shone in the 4-2 win over Fulham last week – their first Premier League win since 2014.



Mohamed Salah v Joe Bennett

With three goals in two games, Salah looks like he has rediscovered his form. He has a tendency to prey on weak opponents at Anfield and Bennett, a left-back who struggled in his previous Premier League stint with Aston Villa, looks a case in point. It bodes badly that Cardiff have conceded 10 goals in his last four appearances.



Key statistics

Defence rules

0.33

Average goals Liverpool have conceded – three in nine matches for their best defensive start to a season.



Clean sheets Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson has this season, the joint most with his fellow Brazilian, Ederson of Manchester City.

Who will break the drought?



Years since Liverpool won their last major trophy – the 2012 League Cup – after beating Cardiff on penalties.



Years since Cardiff last beat Liverpool, 4-0 at Anfield.

There'll be goals



Goals in their last meeting, a 6-3 Liverpool win in 2014.

0:0

No goal-less draws in the 32 times the clubs played each other.