

Crystal Palace v Liverpool: Iraolaâ??s Reds Need a Response at Selhurst Park

Description

default watermark

Crystal Palace v Liverpool at Selhurst Park on Sunday has the feel of a fixture that will tell us plenty about both clubs. The Reds arrive stinging from a 3-2 defeat in Istanbul. Palace arrive stinging from several things, not least a suspension to their main striker. Kick-off is 2pm GMT (10pm Singapore time).



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Liverpool arrive with questions to answer

Liverpool twice led at Fenerbahce on Wednesday night and twice watched Fenerbahce equalise almost at once. Vedat Muriqiâ??s header then settled it. Our full report on the Fenerbahce defeat picked apart the set-piece trouble, and the club captain was in no mood to dress it up afterwards.

â??Everyone looked disappointed and they have a reason to be,â?• Virgil van Dijk told the clubâ??s media team. â??We cannot lose in the manner we did.â?• He also warned that conceding three goals in each of the last three games is â??definitely not sustainableâ?•, a point that applies to the two league phase wins over LASK and Villarreal as much as to the defeat.

That is the real theme heading to south London. Andoni Iraolaâ??s side have been winning games while leaking goals, and Wednesday was the night the bill arrived. Iraola was due to face the press at 1.30pm GMT on Friday, and the tone of that briefing will say a lot about how he plans to tighten things up.



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Team news and officials

The official match officials have been confirmed. Tony Harrington is the referee, assisted by Mat Wilkes and Steve Meredith, with Tom Kirk as fourth official. Michael Salisbury is on VAR duty. Liverpool will wear their red home kit, because Palaceâ??s 2026-27 default strip is predominantly white.

On the injury front, preview reports list Ekitike, Leoni, Bradley and Frimpong among the absentees, with Dominik Szoboszlai a doubt. Treat that as provisional until Iraola speaks, as selection details tend to shift between Friday and kick-off.

Palace without Mateta and short on form

Pierre Sageâ??s side are in trouble. Reports place Palace 18th with seven points from nine games, and they have lost their last three. The sharpest blow is that Jean-Philippe Mateta is suspended after his red card in the defeat to Tottenham, with the clubâ??s appeal failing. That removes the focal point of their attack at the worst possible moment.

There is a little good news for the hosts. Quinten Timber and Jorgen Strand Larsen are expected to be available again, and Sage has said both will be back with the group. Strand Larsen in particular gives Palace a physical option to lead the line against Van Dijk, which is exactly the contest Liverpoolâ??s defence needs to win.

default watermark

Tactical angles that decide Crystal Palace v Liverpool

Set pieces and second balls

Liverpool were punished from dead balls in Istanbul, and Palace will have clocked it. Expect plenty of corners, long throws and physical battles around the six-yard box. If Liverpool defend those moments cleanly, Palaceâ??s creative supply looks thin.

Space in behind

Liverpoolâ??s attacking full-backs and high line have produced goals, but also the scares. A relegation-threatened Palace will fancy a quick transition, especially if they can spring Timber or Strand Larsen early. The Redsâ?? midfield has to screen that gap better than it did on Wednesday.



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

The midfield battle

The game may be decided in the middle of the park. Liverpoolâ??s midfield was stretched in Istanbul, with too much space between the lines whenever Fenerbahce won the ball. Against a Palace side who will happily sit deep and spring forward, the Reds must keep their shape after losing possession. If they can win the second balls, the home crowdâ??s nerves may do the rest. If they cannot, Selhurst Park, with its famously loud atmosphere, becomes a very uncomfortable place to spend a Sunday afternoon.

What to watch for

Keep an eye on the first 20 minutes. Liverpool conceded within moments of scoring twice in Turkey, so game management and concentration straight after a goal, for either side, will tell us a good deal. Also watch how Palace use the early set pieces, because that is the first place Sageâ??s coaches will have targeted.

Prediction

This is a dangerous game for Liverpool, because teams in Palaceâ??s position tend to play with a sharp edge at home. But the quality gap, Matetaâ??s absence and the manner of the Fenerbahce hurt all point towards a focused reaction from Iraolaâ??s players. Liverpool should have too much, though not without a nervy spell. **Prediction: Crystal Palace 1-2 Liverpool.**

It is also the final round of Premier League action before the November international break, which raises the stakes for everyone. For the rest of the weekendâ??s talking points, see our Premier League weekend preview, and keep up with every result in the Sports section.

Date Created
06/11/2026
Author
jadeyeo

default watermark