

Fenerbahce 3-2 Liverpool: Three Set-Pieces Undo the Reds in Istanbul

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Fenerbahce 3-2 Liverpool was the night Liverpoolâ??s perfect Champions League record ended in Istanbul. The Reds led twice at the Sukru Saracoglu Stadium on Wednesday 4 November 2026, through Trey Nyoni and Alexander Isak, but conceded from a free-kick, a corner routine and a throw-in to lose.

Fenerbahce 3-2 Liverpool: how the night unfolded

Andoni Iraola made five changes, with Joe Gomez, Kostas Tsimikas, Victor Munoz, Rio Ngumoha and Dominik Szoboszlai all coming into the side. It worked early. Munoz threatened inside the first five minutes, Bradley Barcolaâ??s follow-up was punched away by Ederson, and Ngumoha kept running at the home defence down the left.

The breakthrough arrived in the 25th minute and it belonged to a teenager. Szoboszlai floated a deep delivery towards Virgil van Dijk, the Fenerbahce defence only half cleared, and Nyoni ran onto the loose ball to hit a partially deflected finish into the net. It was the midfielderâ??s first senior professional goal, scored in the loudest stadium Liverpool will visit all season.



Trey Nyoni struck his first senior Liverpool goal in Istanbul. Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

The response was brutal. Irfan Can Kahveci slid in to hit the bar, and about four minutes after Nyoniâ??s strike Mason Greenwoodâ??s deflected free-kick from roughly 20 yards wrong-footed Alisson Becker. Iraola would later argue the wall was not set properly and that it was a long way out for a free-kick to hurt his side.

A second-half lead that did not last

Liverpool came out on the front foot after the break and dominated the ball. Alexis Mac Allisterâ??s header from a Tsimikas cross was saved, Barcolaâ??s drive from the left was pushed away by

Ederson, and Van Dijkâ??s header from another Tsimikas corner was comfortably held. At the other end Alisson had to stop an effort from Archie Brown.

Iraola then made a triple change in the 66th minute, bringing on Isak, Cody Gakpo and Florian Wirtz. It paid off at once. Gakpo broke down the left, stood up a cross, and Isak climbed highest inside the six-yard box to nod in with his first touch. It was his first Champions League goal for Liverpool.



Alexander Isak scored with his first touch but left Istanbul disappointed. Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

The lead lasted minutes. A short corner was not cleared, Nâ??Golo Kante crossed, and Brown sprinted in unmarked at the back post to equalise. Then came the knockout blow. A throw-in found its way into

the box, Vedat Muriqi won a header against three Liverpool defenders and found the bottom corner in the 79th minute. Gakpo and Isak both had half-chances to level, but nothing fell.

Set-pieces undo Liverpool in Istanbul

The frustration in Iraolaâ??s post-match words was about detail, not effort. Liverpool have been strong at defending set-plays in the league, and the head coach said the team had reinforced that area heavily in pre-season. Fenerbahce, with the aerial threat of Muriqi and Romelu Lukaku, were always going to test it. Three of the goals came from dead-ball situations or the phase straight after, and he called them cheap, messy goals.

There was also a communication issue. Iraola said the stadium was so loud that he struggled to give instructions from the touchline, and he believes confusion between Alisson and Gakpo contributed to the second equaliser, which came from a rebound.

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Andoni Iraola blamed set-piece lapses rather than rotation. Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Rotation was not the excuse

Iraola was asked about his five changes and rejected the idea that they cost Liverpool. He said he has changed between four and seven players in every midweek game this season, given the schedule, and that those who did not start at the weekend played well. Barcola was used through the middle, with Munoz and Ngumoha fresher on the flanks, and Isak was kept for a cameo of around 30 minutes.

Isak admitted the performance was sloppy. Having the lead twice and still losing, he said, was not good enough, and he stressed the squad has put itself in good positions so that one defeat is not a crisis. His

message was simple: win the next game and the picture looks very different. It was also back-to-back defeats, which will sharpen the mood around Anfield.

The Nyoni record and what comes next

There was a footnote worth celebrating. Nyoni was 19 years and 127 days old when he scored, making him the second-youngest Liverpool scorer in the Champions League proper, behind only Trent Alexander-Arnold, who was 19 years and 10 days when he netted against Maribor in October 2017. He is also the youngest player to score his first Liverpool goal in the European Cup, passing David Ngogâ??s mark of 19 years and 252 days.

Liverpoolâ??s story this autumn has been about squad depth and young talent stepping up, as we saw when they beat Chelsea on penalties in the Carabao Cup and when Isak and a Gross own goal secured a 2-0 win over Brighton. Istanbul showed the other side of that coin: a young, rotated side can be undone by the oldest tricks in football. For English clubs in Europe, our look at Manchester Unitedâ??s comeback against Roma from the same night shows how fine the margins are.

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The positives are real. Liverpool created enough to win, Nyoni and Isak are scoring, and the defensive weakness is a specific, fixable one. If the set-piece routines are tightened, this will look like a speed bump. If not, the Champions League table will start to tell a harder story. Follow all of it with more sports coverage on Little Big Red Dot.

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