

Liverpool Champions League Porto Test and Van Dijk Fitness Worry

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The **Liverpool Champions League** campaign is on hold for the November international break, but the Redsâ?? dressing room is anything but quiet. Virgil van Dijk has a fitness issue, Alisson is in award form and Alexis Mac Allister wants more. Here is what Anfield is watching before Porto arrive.



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Liverpool Champions League: Porto at Anfield on 9 December

Liverpool host FC Porto in the league phase on Wednesday 9 December, with an 8pm GMT kick-off at Anfield. That is a 4am start on Thursday morning in Singapore, so the early-risers among us will be setting alarms. The club has confirmed ticketing details for the tie, and Anfield will, as ever, be loud for a European night.

It is a date that matters. Liverpoolâ??s European form has had its wobbles, and the memory of the 3-2 defeat at Fenerbahce on 4 November is still fresh. Our Fenerbahce 3-2 Liverpool report covers a night

in which set-pieces proved costly, a theme Mac Allister has since raised himself.

Van Dijk fitness: the one worry



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

The headline from Monday was the news that Van Dijk will miss the Netherlandsâ?? matches against Greece and Germany. A statement from the Dutch national team said the Liverpool captain â??did not return fitâ?• from the 3-1 win at Crystal Palace on Sunday.

No timescale has been given, and it would be wrong to guess. What we can say is that the break gives Liverpoolâ??s medical staff the longest runway they will get before the next run of fixtures. Resting an

injured captain at home rather than risking him on international duty is hardly the worst outcome for Anfield.

Why Van Dijk matters so much

Mac Allister singled out the centre-backs after Selhurst Park, saying the defenders â??were really, really goodâ?• in protecting the box against a Palace side with plenty of quality. Remove the leader of that back line and the balance changes. The next few weeks will show how much depth Liverpool really have.

Mac Allister, set-pieces and the push to improve

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Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Mac Allister opened the scoring at Selhurst Park with a well-placed header, his first Premier League goal of the season, before Florian Wirtz and Alexander Isak added the others. Eddie Nketiahâ??s late penalty was a consolation for the hosts. Our Crystal Palace 1-3 Liverpool match report has the full story of how the Reds ended their slump.

The Argentine was candid afterwards. â??We know that this is far from perfect and we have to keep improving,â?• he said. He also pointed out that the team had lost a game by conceding three set-pieces, then won this one by scoring from one. That is the sort of self-awareness managers love to hear.

There was another number worth noting. Per Opta, Liverpool have taken 13 points from their first five away league matches, the most in the division this term and the joint-most from the first five away games of a league campaign in the clubâ??s history. Four wins on the road in 2026/27 shows where the strength lies.

Alisson in the spotlight



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Alisson Becker is on the shortlist for Premier League Player of the Matchweek after a performance Mac Allister called amazing. The Brazilianâ??s first-half save from Daichi Kamadaâ??s shot drew disbelief

from the Japanese midfielder himself. He is up against Thierno Barry of Everton, Liam Delap of Nottingham Forest, Pascal Gross of Brighton, Tarik Muharemovic of Leeds United and Nordi Mukiele of Sunderland.

Slump over, standards still high

Mac Allister was honest about the performance, too. â??Sometimes we tried to press and it was not perfect, so they could come out from it and they created chances,â?• he said. Palace did cause problems, and Alisson was needed. Still, winning ahead of a break matters, and Mac Allister called it â??really, really importantâ?• to go into the pause with three points. For a side that had been searching for rhythm, that is a useful reset.

What comes next for Liverpool

After Porto, there is the Carabao Cup. Liverpool face Bournemouth in the quarter-final at Anfield on Wednesday 16 December, again at 8pm GMT. Two big home nights in a week will test fitness, squad rotation and nerve in equal measure.

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So the questions for the rest of the break are simple. How quickly can Van Dijk return? Can Liverpool turn their away form into a Champions League push? And will Alisson get the award recognition he deserves? We will be tracking all three. For more football coverage, head to our Sports section.

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