Title: Man Utd hoping Van Persie can down Liverpool again

Robin van Persie has enjoyed personal success against Liverpool in the Barclays Premier League and Manchester United will be hoping he can continue that trend in Sunday's match at Old Trafford.

Liverpool did the double over United last term, but in the previous campaign Van Persie was on target in 2-1 home and away wins during Sir Alex Ferguson's final season in charge.

It was a similar story when the Dutchman was at Arsenal, with Van Persie getting both goals when the Gunners came from behind to win 2-1 at Anfield in March 2012, including a last-minute winner.

There was another late penalty strike in the previous season's 1-1 draw at Emirates Stadium, while he also hit the back of the net in an identical scoreline there back in December 2008 - making it six goals in his last eight starts against Liverpool in the Barclays Premier League.

The 31-year-old has come in for criticism from his manager, Louis van Gaal, this season, but a stunning strike in last month's 3-0 defeat of Hull City at Old Trafford hinted at an upturn in form.

Monday night's double in a 2-1 victory at Southampton provided further evidence that Van Persie is closing in on the clinical touch that made him the leading scorer in the Barclays Premier League in his first season at Old Trafford, when he got 26 goals in 2012/13.

"They were brilliant finishes from Robin," United team-mate Ashley Young told www.manutd.com. "The first one was obviously a gift [following a poor backpass from Jose Fonte] but he still had to finish it off.

"The second was one of those poacher's goals where he has worked on going around the back post and getting on the end of Wazza's [Wayne Rooney's] free-kicks. He managed to do that and we're just delighted to get the three points to take us into the next game."

Van Gaal still had critical words for his team's performance despite the success at St Mary's Stadium, but Young insists spirits are high within the dressing room after five straight league wins that have taken United up to third in the Barclays Premier League table, seven points clear of this weekend's opponents, who are in ninth.

"It was tough [against Southampton]," Young said. "We didn't play as well as we could have in the first half and were lucky to go a goal ahead.

"I'm not too sure why that was, but in the second half, we came out and played some good football. Obviously, we got the goal and had to defend well again. I'm glad we held on and got the points because they are three massive points for us. Like the manager has said, the momentum is building now.

"We wanted to get another win and knew it was going to be a tough place to come away from home after the last one against Arsenal.

"We said we wanted another win on the road and we managed to do that - even though it wasn't easy at all. We're delighted with the three points and look forward to the game at the weekend now."

United will search for their sixth successive victory when they face fierce rivals Liverpool at 1330 BST on Sunday.