

Times	Telegraph	Standard		27 January 2015
Guardian	Mirror	Echo		
Independent	Mail	BBC		

Date: 27 January 2015
Opposition: Chelsea
Competition: League Cup

Times	Telegraph	Standard	27 January 2015
Guardian	Mirror	Echo	
Independent	Mail	BBC	

The Mail

COSTA TURNS AIR BLUE; Striker escapes red card for stamp then Ivanovic seals win

CHELSEA 1 Ivanovic 94 LIVERPOOL 0 (after extra time: aggregate 2-1)
IN real terms, it did not make a whole heap of difference. Liverpool went into extra-time needing to score and, even after Branislav Ivanovic's goal, that remained the requirement. It had been a goal to win, now it was a goal to earn a penalty shootout. It wasn't the mathematics that mattered though, but the psychology. Liverpool had given it their best shot, a magnificent shot, a full-throttle, engines screaming, maximum G-force ride of a shot. And still it wasn't enough. Chelsea were first to the punch. As they had been at Anfield, as they were here. At no time in 210 minutes of cup football had Liverpool led the tie. They had done enough to win, they had the chances, they played some lovely stuff -- but Chelsea found a way and Liverpool did not. And that Ivanovic goal must have really hurt them.

Brendan Rodgers rallied his players in the extra-time break, he introduced Rickie Lambert from the vel, bench and was still giving Jordan Henderson instructions until seconds before the restart. It was all for nothing. Henderson had already missed the chance to level, a free header from a cross by Raheem Sterling who had bamboozled Ivanovic on the left. It went yards wide.

Ivanovic's chance, by contrast, had goal stamped on it from the moment Willian's freekick met his head. It helped that Mario Balotelli had assumed marking duties in the middle. He carried them lightly and Liverpool suffered the consequence. Steven Gerrard will have to find another route to Wembley, starting with a detour to Bolton next Wednesday. Still, this was an outstanding game, as good as the crazy Champions League tie between these teams in the days of Avram Grant.

That had goals, this had action. There were thrills, there were spills -- Cesc Fabregas off injured after 50 minutes, having collided in a tackle with his captain, John Terry -- and there were bellyaches, mostly around Diego Costa, who was twice accused of stamping on the foot on an opponent, although the first offence looked more nefariously motivated than his second, on Martin Skrtel in the second half. Henderson got lucky too. Already booked, he then committed a deliberate handball but referee Michael Oliver decided not to brandish a second yellow. Oliver's performance caused concern. It was as if the sheer ferocity of the game was too much for him and he quickly lost control

Referees' chief Mike Riley says the performances of his officials are better than ever and one has to wonder the name of the company he engages to compile such surveys. Rose Tinted Inc, perhaps? In the first quarter of this game, Oliver missed a likely sending-off and a certain penalty. That the person who should have got the penalty was also the player who was fortunate to avoid the card hardly compensated. We cannot look to karma to clean up the messes of referees. Two wrongs do not make a right.

This, and no doubt a few other points, were made by Mourinho at half-time when he waited for Oliver to come out of his room. This may get him into trouble with the FA, although the level of Oliver's performance may also have repercussions, unless Riley has his spectacles on again. Start with the decision that could have seen Costa off the field. The ball went out and Liverpool defender Emre Can with it. fo de soug attemp Lying on the floor, he sought to delay Costa's attempt to get the ball back into play. This was clearly mischievous but hardly the most despicable offence and certainly did not warrant what happened next. Costa, in attempting to clamber over him, stood on Can's leg -- in fact he made little attempt to avoid it -- and then appeared to use it as a springboard.

Whatever Can's initial provocation, Costa could easily have been dismissed and his action sparked what the Americans call a bench-clearer. Over came the Liverpool players to confront Costa -- Can appeared to recover quite quickly from writhing around once reinforcements arrived, too -- and up jumped the Chelsea coaching staff to defend their man.

The utter redundancy of the fourth official could be seen in that moment. Unless given the power to intervene directly -- this had all happened three feet in front of him, after all -- what is his purpose? Oliver had plainly missed Costa's stamp but it is hard to imagine Phil Dowd did, too, yet his only role was as the mediator between the warring sides. Worse was to come. Worse, because in the case of Costa's stamp there will always be those who claim it happened accidentally; in the case of his penalty claim, there is no grey area. Costa cut inside Skrtel and he tripped him over. No doubt this time, no mitigation. Oliver pointed and Mourinho wheeled around to face his coaches satisfied, at last, that Chelsea's run of poor treatment by referees in the penalty area had ended. He turned around to see that Oliver had not in fact awarded a penalty but a goal-kick -- his pointing as accurate as his judgments -- and it is fair to say the Chelsea manager was displeased. One might argue that justice was done. But it was a strange justice, a warped justice, justice that relied upon a pile-up of incompetence, each error somehow balancing the last. Don't try this at home, folks.

The wacky world of Michael Oliver aside, however, this was a fine first half -- frantic, feisty, fiery and open, even if the best chances fell largely to Liverpool. Chelsea had the bulk of possession, Liverpool looked likelier to score -- Raheem Sterling and Philippe Coutinho again causing Chelsea problems with their pace. Gary Cahill had paid the price for the capitulation against Bradford City at the weekend and was dropped to the bench, replaced by Kurt Zouma, but Liverpool remained dangerous. In the 17th minute, Zouma got too tight, missed his header and Sterling tore through on goal. He beat Terrv but the old

stager held him up sufficiently to allow Zouma to recover and make amends with a quite superb tackle. Ten minutes later -- and in the middle of the standard disparaging chorus about that slip and its consequences -- Gerrard played a simply wonderful pass into Alberto Moreno, whose low shot forced a fine save from Thibaut Courtois. Three minutes later, a great run by Coutinho split Chelsea's defence before Courtois saved again. By contrast, the penalty appeal aside, Chelsea's only chances came from range and from Oscar. In the 38th minute, he took a free-kick he had won from just over 20 yards out, but sent it narrowly wide of the far post. A minute later he had a shot from five yards farther out which lacked direction.

The Daily Telegraph

Ivanovic clinches it after Costa furore

Chelsea 1 Ivanovic 93 Liverpool 0 Att: 40,659

After extra time. Chelsea win 2-1 on aggregate An extraordinary game needed something extra. On a compelling, contentious night at the Bridge, Branislav Ivanovic headed home in the first half of extra time to send Chelsea to the Capital One Cup final at Wembley where they will face either Sheffield United or Tottenham Hotspur, who meet at Bramall Lane tonight.

Chelsea had enjoyed good chances through Diego Costa during normal time but found Simon Mignolet in imperious form. Liverpool also went close through Alberto Moreno and particularly Philippe Coutinho but Thibaut Courtois excelled. So it went to extra time. Yet the game will also be remembered for Michael Oliver's refereeing that certainly upset Jose Mourinho.

This was one of the quickest, most intense, controversy-strewn games of the season, with another exhibit for Mourinho's "campaign" arriving when Costa was denied a clear penalty in the first half when clearly fouled by Martin Skrtel.

Oliver overlooked the offence, just as he had ignored assorted others. Mourinho's concerns about a campaign against Chelsea began rolling earlier in the season when Oliver cautioned Costa for simulation at Turf Moor when it looked more like he had been brought down by Tom Heaton. "I hope he doesn't get any more unfair decisions," said Mourinho at the time. Oliver is a talented referee, respected in Europe, but this should have been a game for England's top official, Mark Clattenburg. Strangely, the authorities seemed to have turned against him. Once again an important game was laced with a debate about English refereeing standards. Mourinho became so annoyed that he talked to Oliver at the break and asked Liverpool's bench if they had seen what was going. Colin Pascoe, Brendan Rodgers' assistant, dismissively offered Mourinho his glasses. This was another night when relations between Chelsea and Liverpool declined.

The debating points began early when Chelsea's team-heet was handed in. After the "disgrace" against Bradford City, Mourinho had omitted two of his regulars who struggled in the FA Cup, Cesar Azpilicueta and Gary Cahill, despite the Englishman's goal. In defence with Ivanovic and John Terry were Filipe Luis, who played in the Anfield leg of this Capital One Cup semi-final, and Kurt Zouma, the 20-year-old who retained his place despite Saturday's embarrassment.

He stood firm early on, fending off attacks from Raheem Sterling and Coutinho. When Zouma misjudged a header, allowing Sterling to race down the inside-left channel, the young centre-half responded well, making amends for his mistake.

As Sterling flew into the box, eluding Terry, Zouma covered back to muscle theLiverpool attacker off the ball. If Liverpool looked for the pace of Sterling, Chelsea were focusing on Costa, who occupied the thoughts of the visitors' defence fully and should have been more closely watched by Oliver. Rodgers had continued with his three centre-halves, Emre Can, Skrtel and Mamadou Sakho.

Costa quickly engaged them in action, testing their physical and mental strength. After 11 minutes, Costa planted his right foot into Can's right ankle, incensing the German. Costa pleaded innocence, pointing out he had to put his foot somewhere. Can refused to calm down, railing at the Chelsea bench and at Costa. It was utterly predictable when Can chose the earliest opportunity to clatter Costa. Oliver was trying to play advantage, keeping a frenetic game flowing, but assorted incidents kept going unpunished. When Luis complained about a Lazar Markovic challenge, the Serb ran past him and grabbed him by the neck. Chelsea's bench was like a manic toaster, all popping up, all fuming. Oliver did not spot the offence. The fourth official, Phil Dowd, whose fitness had been questioned by Mourinho at the Lane, tried to calm tempers down.

Chelsea's bench went into meltdown after 22 minutes when Oscar angled a great ball through for Costa, whose right foot was caught by Skrtel. The ball bounced towards the Shed and the decision was either for a corner or penalty. Oliver decreed a goalkick, further antagonising Chelsea who were convinced it was a penalty. If controversy hung over one half, vapour trails floated over the other. Liverpool's pacier players were charging forward. Having been picked out by a glorious Steven Gerrard pass, Moreno cut in but was thwarted by Courtois. Then Coutinho raced through the middle, sending Zouma the wrong way, before letting fly with a left-footed strike.

Only Courtois' instant response, stretching out his left foot, diverted the danger. Oliver finally booked somebody, punishing Jordan Henderson for hounding Eden Hazard. As he walked towards the tunnel at the break, Oliver was greeted with caustic comments from Chelsea's fans. Mourinho also had a word at the break with the under-pressure referee. So much was going on, away from Oliver's gaze. Sakho gave the ball away early in the second half, passing crossfield, allowing Costa to nick the ball.

Date: 27 January 2015 Opposition: Chelsea Competition: League Cup	Times	Telegraph	Standard		27 January 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Echo		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

Oscar went tearing through, painfully brought down by Lucas. Oliver tried to allow some advantage which simply resulted in Costa again being careless with his feet, landing one on Skrtel, who responded with an attempted fly-kick before the routine squaring up. Costa began parading his more positive side, unleashing a shot that brought a good save from Mignolet. Liverpool's keeper has endured criticism this season but he rescued his defence here. Costa was gifted the ball, and ran towards goal, tried to go round Mignolet but was well tackled. Oliver's decision-making that had prompted Mourinho to seek him out at the break, requiring Dowd's intervention, was seen again when Henderson handled Hazard's ball forward. Henderson's arm was stretched out and it was a clear freekick, and seemed a straightforward caution which would have led to the Englishman's expulsion. Oliver did get a card out, punishing Terry for a foul on Sterling. Changes were being made, the game's frantic nature taking its toll. Glen Johnson replaced Sakho. Terry accidentally caught Fabregas, who had to limp from the fray, as Ramires sped on. Mario Balotelli came on for Markovic. As the game hurtled towards extra time, Gerrard and Sterling had wayward efforts at the Shed end, much to the chagrin of the 4,000 visiting fans congregated behind the goal. Balotelli was soon up to speed with the tenor of the game, pushing Nemanja Matic who was attempting to take a throw-in. Matic and Oscar attempted to break through but the four minutes of injury time soon expired. Rodgers gathered his players in a huddle, so did Mourinho, who dropped on his haunches as he addressed his players. They responded strongly, Hazard immediately going on another dribble, this one ended by Lucas. As Mourinho asked Dowd why another yellow card had not been waved at Lucas, Willian curled the ball over and Ivanovic headed powerfully home, exploiting terrible marking.



THE INDEPENDENT

Chelsea have the final say as Ivanovic seals classic

Jose Mourinho did not even see the winning goal that decided this towering inferno of a League Cup semi-final, he was too busy arguing with the fourth official Phil Dowd, and once he had been patted on the back by his staff, he went back to his argument. It just about summed up the tension on a night when the modern rivalry between these two clubs was born anew with a great snarling tear-up of open attacking football, and random acts of violence provided by Diego Costa. Not so much random as deftly calculated: two stamps on Emre Can and Martin Skrtel, executed with the precision of the assassin and out of the scope of referee Michael Oliver's vision. He should have been sent off for both of them, he should also have had a penalty between the two incidents when Skrtel blatantly tripped him in the box. A hardman in a pair of club-issue woolly gloves, Costa has the unerring ability to get under the skin of even the most experienced players. Steven Gerrard thrust a forehead in his direction as it got really tense in extra-time. Yet for all the bad feeling and animosity it was a wonderful cup tie that went to extra-time, the away-goals rule only applicable at 120 minutes. It was from a foul on Eden Hazard, and there were a few of them, that Chelsea won a free-kick that Willian struck for Branislav Ivanovic to head home. It is Chelsea who will go to Wembley on 1 March for what they hope will be the first trophy of Mourinho II. It was a breathless first half, one in which Liverpool made just about all the running. Darting, incisive and pressing Chelsea to within an inch of their lives in midfield, they looked a world away from the team that stumbled through the first few months of the season.

If they had a fit striker to finish the chances that were created then Chelsea might have been buried by half-time, yet as it was they were still alive at the break. There had been some moments of living dangerously, not least when Raheem Sterling exposed Kurt Zouma with his explosive running from deep. That first time, Zouma recovered to make the covering tackle. Then, on half an hour, Philippe Coutinho deceived the young Frenchman with a twist of the hips to the extent that the Chelsea man was heading in the direction of Fulham by the time he realised the Brazilian had plotted another course. Zouma was in for Gary Cahill, dropped by Mourinho after an indifferent few weeks and having struggled with the pace of Sterling in the first-leg draw at Anfield. Zouma is quick, but no one on the pitch was as quick as Sterling, and it took a change of direction by the Liverpool man in the 17th minute to allow Zouma the time to recover and make a good covering tackle.

The two big moments of the first half both revolved around Costa, who should have had a penalty on 22 minutes when he was clearly tripped by Martin Skrtel down by the byline. The frothing sense of injustice on the Chelsea bench was untempered by the fact that their assassin-faced centre-forward should have been sent off 11 minutes earlier. The stamp, or rather the vicious, sly tread on the right leg of Emre Can was, sadly, straight out the Costa playbook. A glance to locate his grounded opponent and then a boot thrust down on Can as he pushed off to chase the ball. It was a mean, dangerous thing to do and he should have been sent off. One wonders whether that realisation flashed through the mind of referee Oliver when he later denied Costa the penalty.

Around the half-hour, Thibaut Courtois twice came to the rescue of his defence, once when Alberto Moreno was played in by a superb curling ball to the left from Steven Gerrard, then again when Coutinho broke away from Zouma. In midfield, Liverpool swarmed all over their opponents, especially Gerrard on Nemanja Matic. Chelsea had fewer good moments in attack, although they are always just a heartbeat away from a goal. It was notable how little Cesc Fabregas

was on the ball before the break, and also how much Matic found himself forced to run with it - not the Serb's greatest strength.

Fabregas lasted less than five minutes of the new half before a collision with John Terry seemed to resolve in his mind his own fitness issues. He was replaced by Ramires. As per the first half, the pace of the game was unrelenting, so too the theatrical sense of injustice on the Chelsea bench, for whom conspiracy existed everywhere. There was even a moment after the hour when Mourinho found himself pushing Brendan Rodgers in an attempt to get to Colin Pascoe, the Liverpool assistant who, it seemed, had the temerity to do as much appealing as the Chelsea bench. All thoroughly entertaining stuff and then, just to calm things down, Rodgers sent on Mario Balotelli.

It was already pretty damn heated by then. Costa had carried out his second surreptitious stamping, this time on Skrtel as they chased a ball after the whistle had already been blown for a foul by Lucas Leiva on Oscar. It was that sort of game. The captains were called aside by Oliver to cool it down. How the referee kept missing Costa's studdings was testament to the Chelsea man's craftiness. And so to extra-time when Lucas' foul on Hazard gave Chelsea the free-kick that Willian crossed for Ivanovic to head in. Rodgers sent on Rickie Lambert for the second period of extra-time but, in truth, Liverpool ran out of ideas.

The stage was set for the enigmatic Balotelli but he looked miles off the pace. A decent centre-forward is the minimum requirement to beat Chelsea, who were too strong in the end.



DAILY Mirror

Jose rage at 'nuts' Costa campaign as striker faces suspension for lashing out in semi-final thriller; Mourinho fury at Redknapp 'stamp' claims

CHELSEA 1
LIVERPOOL 0

JOSE MOURINHO launched an astonishing attack on Sky Sports pundit Jamie Redknapp after Chelsea booked their place at Wembley.

The Blues boss was furious after the former Liverpool midfielder claimed Diego Costa should have been sent off for a first-half "stamp" on Emre Can.

The incident could see the Chelsea striker banned from Saturday's title crunch with ke Manchester City if the FA take retrospective action.

Having heard Redknapp's comments, Mourinho said: "I don't know what you understand by a stamp. Maybe you are already influenced by the campaign on the television with certain pundits saying that Costa has crimes - they must be nuts, the guy who says that.

"Sky calls it a crime, I have to say that Costa goes to the ball, he chases it, the opponent goes to the floor and he puts his foot there when he is looking at the ball.

"It is a great campaign. We know how much that pundit loves Chelsea so you are sitting there, you are very well paid and you are a manager putting their ass on the bench.

"These guys have a good seat, earning a lot of money, no pressure, they are never wrong, they have to be fair and they have to be honest."

Mourinho clearly meant Redknapp but refused to name him publicly and added: "I don't know his name because when I see it I switch off the television."

Rodgers, whose side were unlucky to lose after the pulsating two-legged semifinal, was angered by Costa's alleged stamp and also claimed the striker could have been punished for a similar challenge on defender Martin Skrtel.

Rodgers (above, during a heated exchange with Mourinho) said: "Costa's an outstanding player. But he obviously has this edge to him. We see the TV incidents, the two that he had. The one with Emre Can, that was poor I felt.

"He could easily hurdle over the young player. But he directs his studs right onto his ankle, which could have been nasty.

"And the one with Martin Skrtel, again, there's no need to do it. That's the sad thing. He's a top-class player.

"He's clever enough that the officials don't see it. But it's poor by him because he doesn't need to do it."

That led to Mourinho launching a counter-attack on Rodgers who used to work under him as a youth coach at Stamford Bridge.

Mourinho said: "We are very different persons. Maybe he learned from me, maybe he didn't. I could speak about Skrtel and I don't."

Rodgers praised the performance of Blues keeper Thibaut Courtois and Mourinho added: "He speaks about Courtois and forgets Simon Mignolet. He speaks only about my keeper.

"To say Courtois played fantastic, I could say the same about Mignolet. We have different profiles, he is a fantastic manager but we are different persons."

If the FA decide to take action, Chelsea could be without Costa for Saturday's clash with City.

They also face fitness worries over Cesc Fabregas, who limped off with a hamstring injury following a collision with John Terry (inset).

To make matters worse for the Capital One Cup finalists Filipe Luis picked up a calf injury and goal-hero Branislav Ivanovic has a cut foot.

Date: 27 January 2015
Opposition: Chelsea
Competition: League Cup

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC



Liverpool FC performance brimming with guts, spirit and resilience went unrewarded

There will be no mass exodus to Anfield South in March. No showpiece major final to hold up as tangible proof of this Liverpool side's development.

But amongst the heartache and devastation for Kopites in the aftermath of this heroic defeat at Stamford Bridge there was an abundance of hope.

Over 210 incident-packed minutes Brendan Rodgers' men went toe to toe with the Premier League leaders and were beaten by the narrowest of margins.

Branislav Ivanovic's extra-time header ultimately settled a thrilling Capital One Cup semi-final tie as Chelsea sneaked through 2-1 aggregate.

For Jose Mourinho's men Wembley awaits. For Liverpool it's simply a case of what might have been. What ultimately cost Rodgers' side dear over the two legs was painfully familiar. They had more than enough chances – both on Merseyside and in the capital – to get the job done but that lack of a ruthless streak proved their undoing.

If only Daniel Sturridge, who wasn't risked at Stamford Bridge, had been fully fit to face his former club the outcome would surely have been very different. A Liverpool performance brimming with guts, spirit and resilience went unrewarded because in the final third they were wasteful.

It was a night when crushing disappointment was mixed with pride and a burning sense of injustice. How Diego Costa remained on the field will remain a mystery. His evening should have been over before he had barely worked up a sweat after he clearly stamped on Emre Can. But the combative Spaniard, whose on-field antics make Luis Suarez seem like a choirboy in comparison, got away with it.

Referee Michael Oliver also turned a blind eye when he left his stud marks on Martin Skrtel. Despite Costa's best efforts, Liverpool simply refused to be bullied as they showcased the major strides they have taken since those dark days of November when Rodgers' reign had gone off the rails. Now they are a very different proposition. Lucas Leiva and Jordan Henderson were outstanding in midfield, while Can produced a defensive display of remarkable maturity. If only Philippe Coutinho could finish he would be a world-beater. This is a young team who must use this painful experience as a stepping stone for the rest of the campaign. With a Champions League spot to be secured and FA Cup and Europa League glory to be sought, there is little time to dwell on it. Wounds must be licked and Liverpool need to go again. Belief should have been enriched rather than dented by this tie. Rodgers retained the same XI who dominated so much of the first leg and his players answered his call to carry on where they had left off at Anfield. The Reds imposed themselves on the contest from the start. There was no hint of fear during an enthralling opening 45 minutes when the only negative was that they didn't have a lead to show for their efforts.

Predictably, Steven Gerrard set the tone, never giving Nemanja Matic a second's peace as he flourished in an attacking role behind Raheem Sterling.

Others followed the captain's lead as Liverpool pressed relentlessly and repeatedly forced Chelsea to cough up possession. Lucas, returning to the scene of his darkest hour when he was stretchered off with a cruciate injury in 2011, demonstrated how close he is to recapturing the heights he was at back then. The Brazilian midfielder made a crucial challenge on Willian early on and continued to offer protection for the Reds' backline. Liverpool should have had the luxury of a numerical advantage inside 12 minutes. Costa blatantly trod on Can's ankle as the young German lay on the turf between the two technical areas. It happened right under the nose of fourth official Phil Dowd but somehow the Spaniard's cowardly act went unpunished. Unperturbed, Liverpool continued to boss proceedings. Without the ball they were compact and disciplined, with it they surged forward with menacing intent. Henderson's long punt forward released Sterling, who got it behind Zouma. Gerrard was screaming out for a pass but Sterling dallied and allowed the defender to get back and make the block. Having cursed Oliver's failure to spot Costa's sly stamp, Liverpool were grateful to the blundering official midway through the half. Skrtel upended Costa with a rash lunge but to Chelsea's dismay their penalty appeals were waved away.

Considering that the 17-goal top scorer had thrown himself to the ground after a tussle with Sterling moments earlier it was a classic case of the boy crying wolf. It was a rare defensive error from the Reds with Can and Mamadou Sakho both rock solid – sensing danger and coolly dealing with it. The taunts from the home fans only served to further inspire Gerrard, who continued to pull the strings.

Just before the half hour mark his incisive pass released Alberto Moreno, whose low drive was forced behind by Thibaut Courtois. The chances kept on coming. Gerrard picked out Coutinho, who expertly turned away from both Eden Hazard and Zouma but the little Brazilian couldn't finish as Courtois denied him.

When Moreno shrugged off Ivanovic like he was an irritating fly it was another sign of Liverpool's control.

But for a Oscar free-kick, which was curled narrowly wide, Chelsea had barely threatened but in the second half it was a different story. With Ramires on for the injured Cesc Fabregas, the hosts began to turn the screw. Once again Costa left his studs on a Liverpool defender – with Skrtel this time the victim – and once again he got away scot-free. Liverpool weren't helped by an enforced change as Sakho limped off and Glen Johnson was preferred to Dejan Lovren. There was a major scare when Hazard left Can, Skrtel and Henderson trailing but the winger

blazed wide.

It took two fine saves from Simon Mignolet in quick succession to keep the Reds on level terms. First, the Belgian keeper did brilliantly to keep out Costa's deflected effort with his legs. Then when Henderson inadvertently put it on a plate for Costa, Mignolet came to the rescue by sticking out a boot.

With 20 minutes to go Rodgers took off the tiring Lazar Markovic and put on Mario Balotelli. Gerrard was dropped deeper with Henderson shunted to the right. Strangely, the claims of Adam Lallana were ignored. Bringing on Balotelli was a gamble which didn't pay off with the struggling Italian once again infuriatingly ineffective. Liverpool soaked up the pressure and then looked to deliver the killer blow on the counter. Gerrard and Sterling both could have provided it inside 90 minutes but neither was able to grasp the glory.

Four minutes into extra time Liverpool shot themselves in the foot as Ivanovic punished some non-existent marking by heading home Willian's free-kick. Chelsea celebrated as Balotelli and Johnson exchanged accusing glances.

The Reds should have quickly restored parity. Sterling's cross picked out Henderson but from six yards out he somehow nodded wide.

Rodgers played his final card – bringing on Rickie Lambert for Moreno - but there was no late twist in the tale. Once again Chelsea had wrecked Liverpool's party.

MATCH FACTS
Chelsea (4-2-3-1): Courtois, Ivanovic, Zouma, Terry, Felipe Luis (Azpilicueta 78), Matic, Fabregas (Ramires 50), Willian (Drogba 119), Oscar, Hazard, Costa.
Not used: Cech, Ake, Remy, Cahill
Liverpool (3-4-2-1): Mignolet, Can, Skrtel, Sakho (Johnson 57), Markovic (Balotelli 70), Lucas, Henderson, Moreno (Lambert 105), Gerrard, Coutinho, Sterling.
Not used: Ward, Lovren, Allen, Lallana.
Referee: Michael Oliver
Attendance: 40,659
Goals: Ivanovic 94.
Bookings: Henderson, Lucas, Terry, Ivanovic, Gerrard, Costa, Oscar, Can, Skrtel.
Man of the match : Lucas Leiva. Covered every blade of grass as the Brazilian midfielder ran himself into the ground.



Branislav Ivanovic heads extra-time winner as Blues edge into Wembley final

Reaching a Capital One Cup Final is usually enough cause for celebration, but Chelsea's 1-0 (2-1 agg) victory over Liverpool importantly proved they are not ready to let go of any more trophies without a fight.

Just over 72 hours after their woeful surrender against Bradford in the FA Cup, Chelsea scrapped, literally at times, their way into the Wembley showpiece on March 1.

It wasn't pretty, it wasn't convincing, but Chelsea stopped the rot when the pressure was on.

Had they lost this, the League game against title rivals on Manchester City on Saturday would have been played under the most intense scrutiny.

Instead, they can go into the encounter with confidence restored and the knowledge the team had stood up to a fierce challenge from Liverpool and emerged victorious.

Branislav Ivanovic's header in extra time though will be a footnote in a game riddled with controversy, poor refereeing and an inexhaustible amount of needle between the two sides.

Chelsea striker Diego Costa was incredibly fortunate not to be shown a red card on at least two occasions, while referee Michael Oliver let Jordan Henderson escape a second yellow and turned down two strong penalty appeals for the home side.

Liverpool will wonder how they lost this tie, having been the better team for large periods over both legs.

But not for the first time, pantomime villain Mario Balotelli was Liverpool's own worst enemy.

Woeful in attack, it was the Italian who lost Ivanovic from Willian's free kick just four minutes into extra time and the Serbian international took full advantage. These sides don't meet again until May 9th, when the title race could still be at stake for Chelsea.

If the game is anything like this one, it's something for all football fans to look forward to.

Date: 27 January 2015
Opposition: Chelsea
Competition: League Cup

Times

Guardian

Independent

Telegraph

Mirror

Mail

Standard

Echo

BBC

27 January 2015

B

B

C

Branislav Ivanovic's extra-time winner sent Chelsea into the Capital One Cup final at Wembley after a thrilling semi-final second leg against Liverpool at Stamford Bridge.

Ivanovic headed home three minutes into extra time to settle an enthralling encounter in which Liverpool made a full contribution but paid the price for missed opportunities.

Chelsea were favourites after a 1-1 draw at Anfield in the first leg - but Liverpool were true to the word of manager Brendan Rodgers and played without fear, seeking their first trophy since winning this competition in 2012.

And Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho, who missed Ivanovic's decisive goal as he was in a heated debate with fourth official Phil Dowd, showed how much another trip to Wembley meant to him by celebrating wildly with his staff at the final whistle.

It was a result that helped banish Chelsea's embarrassment of losing 4-2 at home to League One Bradford City in the FA Cup fourth round in their previous outing. Liverpool will leave Stamford Bridge with regrets, especially after a horrendous headed miss by Jordan Henderson in front of an open goal that could have taken the game to penalties.

There may also be a price to pay for Chelsea as striker Diego Costa may face retrospective punishment for two stamps on Emre Can and Martin Skrtel that were not seen by referee Michael Oliver.

Costa, as usual, was involved in all of the action and should have been awarded a penalty when he was brought down by Skrtel in the first half, while the Spain international's head-to-head clash with Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard earned both players yellow cards.

Mourinho will set that aside for now as he remains on course for his first piece of silverware since returning to Chelsea at the start of last season.

As expected, Liverpool did not risk striker Daniel Sturridge even though he is approaching full fitness after a series of injuries that have sidelined him since August, but Rodgers adopted a bold approach that should have brought dividends in the first half.

Keeper Thibaut Courtois was Chelsea's hero at Anfield and he twice came to the rescue here as Liverpool twice opened up Chelsea for the two best opportunities of the half, first when Gerrard picked out Alberto Moreno and then when Philippe Coutinho broke through after wrong-footing Kurt Zouma.

Chelsea, however, had a major grievance of their own as they seemed to be refused a clear penalty when Costa was brought down by Skrtel as he attempted to guide the ball into touch.

Mourinho was forced into a change early in the second half when Cesc Fabregas came off second best in a shuddering tackle with his own captain John Terry and was replaced by Ramires.

It then needed the outstretched leg of Liverpool keeper Simon Mignolet to turn away Costa's deflected shot before he dived at the feet of the striker as he tried to go around him.

Liverpool made their first change with 20 minutes left, sending on Mario Balotelli for Lazar Markovic, who had been quiet and ineffective.

It was three minutes into extra time when the deadlock was finally broken and Liverpool were undone by moments of sloppiness that led to their downfall. Lucas conceded a cheap free-kick with a foul on Eden Hazard and when Willian delivered the set piece, Ivanovic arrived unmarked to head in.

Liverpool should have responded immediately, only for Henderson to somehow head wide when Raheem Sterling's cross found him only six yards out.

It was to be their final opportunity.

B

B

C

120:00+1:06 Second Half Extra Time ends, Chelsea 1, Liverpool 0.

119:17 Attempt missed. Rickie Lambert (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Lucas Leiva.

118:59 Attempt saved. Ramires (Chelsea right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner.

118:37Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. Didier Drogba replaces Willian.

118:04 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the right wing.

118:04 Foul by Glen Johnson (Liverpool.

117:45 Attempt blocked. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Eden Hazard.

117:30 Diego Costa (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

117:30 Foul by Steven Gerrard (Liverpool.

115:55Booking Martin Skrtel (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

115:49 Diego Costa (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

115:49 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

114:49 Offside, Chelsea. Eden Hazard tries a through ball, but Diego Costa is caught offside.

113:03Booking Emre Can (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

112:54 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

112:54 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

110:34 Attempt missed. Ramires (Chelsea right footed shot from the right side of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Eden Hazard.

109:21 Attempt missed. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from a difficult angle and long range on the left is too high.

108:27 Thibaut Courtois (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

108:27 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.

107:52Booking Oscar (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

107:37 Foul by Oscar (Chelsea.

107:37 Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

105:00 Second Half Extra Time begins Chelsea 1, Liverpool 0.

105:00Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Rickie Lambert replaces Alberto Moreno.

106:02 First Half Extra Time ends, Chelsea 1, Liverpool 0.

104:55 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Glen Johnson.

104:15 Willian (Chelsea wins a free kick on the right wing.

104:15 Foul by Glen Johnson (Liverpool.

102:40 Attempt missed. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Mario Balotelli.

101:54Booking Steven Gerrard (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.

101:52Booking Diego Costa (Chelsea is shown the yellow card.

101:21 Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.

101:21 Steven Gerrard (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

99:16 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool header from the centre of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Raheem Sterling with a cross.

94:22 Ramires (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

94:22 Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.

93:12Goal scored Goal!Goal! Chelsea 1, Liverpool 0. Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea header from the centre of the box to the high centre of the goal. Assisted by Willian with a cross following a set piece situation.

92:40 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

92:40 Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.

91:10 Attempt missed. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.

90:00 First Half Extra Time begins Chelsea 0, Liverpool 0.

90:00+4:05Full time Second Half ends, Chelsea 0, Liverpool 0.

90:00+2:41 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.

90:00+2:39 Attempt blocked. Nemanja Matic (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Ramires.

89:40 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Eden Hazard.

88:46Booking Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

88:40 Foul by Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea.

88:40 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

87:43 Attempt missed. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Jordan Henderson.

86:47 Attempt missed. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from more than 35 yards misses to the left. Assisted by Oscar.

85:52 Attempt blocked. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Willian.

83:22 Attempt missed. Diego Costa (Chelsea left footed shot from the left side of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Eden Hazard.

83:08 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left following a set piece situation.

82:26 Foul by Ramires (Chelsea.

82:26 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

82:14 Foul by César Azpilicueta (Chelsea.

82:14 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

81:06 Attempt missed. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

79:47 Ramires (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

79:47 Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.

79:25 Offside, Liverpool. Jordan Henderson tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside.

77:47 Delay over. They are ready to continue.

77:43Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. César Azpilicueta replaces Filipe Luis because of an injury.

Date: 27 January 2015 Opposition: Chelsea Competition: League Cup	Times	Telegraph	Standard		27 January 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Echo		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

BBC

76:26 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

76:26 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

73:53Booking John Terry (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

73:25 Foul by John Terry (Chelsea.

73:25 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

72:09 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Glen Johnson.

71:51 Attempt saved. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

69:38Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Mario Balotelli replaces Lazar Markovic.

69:19 Nemanja Matic (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

69:19 Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.

67:38 Attempt missed. Ramires (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the left.

66:48 Attempt saved. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner.

65:44 Hand ball by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool.

64:50 Attempt saved. Oscar (Chelsea left footed shot from the right side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Willian.

61:31 Attempt blocked. Diego Costa (Chelsea left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Oscar with a cross.

61:07 Attempt saved. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.

60:44 Attempt saved. Diego Costa (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal.

59:50 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by John Terry.

59:10 Foul by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.

59:10 Steven Gerrard (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

58:26 Attempt missed. Eden Hazard (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Branislav Ivanovic with a headed pass.

56:51 Foul by Oscar (Chelsea.

56:51 Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

56:29 Delay over. They are ready to continue.

56:27Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Glen Johnson replaces Mamadou Sakho because of an injury.

56:08 Delay in match Mamadou Sakho (Liverpool because of an injury.

54:38 Attempt blocked. Filipe Luis (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is blocked.

52:35Booking Lucas Leiva (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

52:30 Oscar (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

52:30 Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.

51:57 Foul by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.

51:57 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.

49:47 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Mamadou Sakho.

49:14Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. Ramires replaces Cesc Fàbregas because of an injury.

47:55 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.

45:26 Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

45:26 Foul by Steven Gerrard (Liverpool.

45:00 Second Half begins Chelsea 0, Liverpool 0.

45:00+1:20Half time First Half ends, Chelsea 0, Liverpool 0.

43:20 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Kurt Zouma.

43:16 Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Alberto Moreno.

42:22 Foul by Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea.

42:22 Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

41:04Booking Jordan Henderson (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

40:56 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

40:56 Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool.

38:29 Attempt missed. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Willian.

37:48 Attempt missed. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the left from a direct free kick.

36:58 Oscar (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

36:58 Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.

35:39 Foul by Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea.

35:39 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

34:06 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the right. Assisted by Steven Gerrard.

31:32 Attempt missed. Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea header from the centre of the box misses to the right. Assisted by Cesc Fàbregas with a cross following a corner.

31:13 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Emre Can.

29:47 Attempt missed. Martin Skrtel (Liverpool header from the centre of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a cross following a corner.

29:12 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Thibaut Courtois.

29:09 Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Steven Gerrard.

27:15 Attempt missed. Nemanja Matic (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Oscar.

26:10 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Thibaut Courtois.

26:09 Attempt saved. Alberto Moreno (Liverpool left footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the top left corner. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a through ball.

23:05 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

23:05 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

16:35 Diego Costa (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

16:35 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

13:19 Offside, Chelsea. Thibaut Courtois tries a through ball, but Diego Costa is caught offside.

12:10 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Cesc Fàbregas.

10:58 Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.

10:58 Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

7:43 Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

7:43 Foul by Lucas Leiva (Liverpool.

5:33 Foul by Willian (Chelsea.

5:33 Mamadou Sakho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

4:54 Attempt blocked. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Alberto Moreno.

1:40 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

1:40 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

0:00 First Half begins.

0:00 Lineups are announced and players are warming up.