

Date: 29 November 2011  
 Opposition: Chelsea  
 Competition: League Cup

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29 November  
2011

## THE TIMES

Domination by Dalglish continues as Chelsea slip up once more

Chelsea 0 Liverpool 2

Some things never change. No Chelsea team have been able to outwit Kenny Dalglish in 13 attempts during his two stints as Liverpool manager. And Andre Villas-Boas continues a more recent tradition of managers at Stamford Bridge by finding himself under pressure from a demanding owner having now lost five of his past nine matches. The seven-times winners of the League Cup progressed to the semi-finals after a match littered with odd decisions, but, owing to their astonishingly high levels of pace and commitment, Liverpool deserved victory. Dalglish had warned Liverpool fans that they might want to think twice about travelling to London for a cup-tie that he could not afford to take too seriously. Annoyed by the proximity of last night's match to the 4pm kick-off on Sunday against Manchester City, the Barclays Premier League leaders, the Liverpool manager hinted strongly that he would need to rest first-choice players and the supporters had a right not to expect fireworks. Perhaps mindful that Dalglish was speaking while piqued, 5,500 fans gathered anyway and were rewarded by a hugely entertaining and controversial game, and a Liverpool line-up that smacked of ambition as well as a need to rest the energetic trio of Luis Suarez, Dirk Kuyt and Charlie Adam from the starting XI. Craig Bellamy, that other ball of energy, began the match after being withdrawn from the squad on Sunday by his manager in the wake of the death of Gary Speed, his close friend. As the minute's applause for Speed echoed around the stadium, Bellamy shed a tear and it became uncertain how would cope. After a quiet opening, though, he regularly ruffled the Chelsea back line.

Villas-Boas had also played down the importance of the Carling Cup, but cometh the hour he sent out a side with an adventurous mix of youth and experience. A cynic may argue the Chelsea manager had hedged his bets, but, unlike Liverpool, his team have also to juggle a European campaign. Furthermore, Roman Abramovich does not make up his mind about a manager based on League Cup results. Villas-Boas, in any case, needed a means to boost the confidence of Fernando Torres and last night's tie seemed the perfect opportunity, particularly as the Spaniard had been denied the chance to start against his former club when the sides met at Stamford Bridge nine days earlier in the league.

The parallels with Andy Carroll are obvious. Neither striker has borne the label of being an extravagant purchase lightly and the temptation last night was to compare and contrast their every move, shrug and shot. Both made mistakes, but Carroll caused more consternation for opposition defenders than did the man he replaced at Anfield. The suspension of John Terry gave Alex the opportunity to partner David Luiz at centre back. The latter was hailed an instant cult hero upon his arrival in West London from Benfica in January, but since then his positional awareness has been questioned, with many pundits wondering why Villas-Boas does not switch the Brazilian to full back or midfield. It was on his initial, early foray up the pitch that David Luiz provoked the first moment of controversy. As he exchanged passes with Josh McEachran and galloped into the Liverpool penalty area Sebastian Coates, the visiting team's Uruguay defender, slid across to dispossess him. David Luiz fell and Phil Dowd, the referee, cautioned the Brazilian for a dive. Replays showed that while Coates's stretched leg was nowhere near the ball, David Luiz could have stayed on his feet -- although few players might have done so in such a position. Three minutes later, Dowd decided a shove on Carroll was similarly not worthy of a spot-kick. It is fair to say, on another night, with a different official, there could have been two penalties awarded inside the first six minutes. Dowd had to contend with a third penalty decision in the 21st minute when a cross into the area aimed at Carroll from Jose Enrique was met by the raised arm of Alex. The agitated protests from the Liverpool players eventually held sway and, after long deliberation, Dowd awarded the penalty. Cue Carroll and a chance to prove the doubters wrong, but the former Newcastle United forward's penalty flew straight at Ross Turnbull in the Chelsea goal.

Dowd again took centre stage when a dangerous tackle by Romelu Lukaku on Jordan Henderson resulted in Ryan Bertrand being cautioned instead. The Belgium player proceeded to waste Chelsea's best chance of the first half when he rose adroitly to meet Jose Bosingwa's cross but headed wide. Energy levels were high at the start of the second half as if extra time would be an added insult. Bellamy was more involved and the roar when Torres won a free kick was almost as loud as it would have been had he scored a rare goal. From the free kick, Malouda hit the cross bar and David Luiz claimed his follow-up header was handled by Coates but Dowd was unmoved. In the 58th minute Liverpool took the lead. Henderson's ball out to Bellamy was collected by the former Cardiff City striker as if part of a training ground move so lacking in urgency were Chelsea in dealing with his presence. Bellamy crossed for Maxi Rodriguez to score his second goal at the stadium in as many games. Four minutes later Bellamy was again the provider, this time from a free kick which found the head of Martin Kelly all too easily and Liverpool were two goals to the good, prompting the travelling fans to sing the inevitable refrain of "You're getting sacked in the morning" at the Chelsea manager. The main blight on the evening for Liverpool came on 70 minutes when Lucas Leiva was carried off on a stretcher with a knee injury. Torres forced a save from Pepe Reina and Nicolas Anelka prompted the goalkeeper into more of the inspired tackling he demonstrated against Manchester City but Dalglish's team held firm.

Chelsea (4-1-3-2): R Turnbull - J Bosingwa, Alex, David Luiz, R Bertrand - O Romeu - J McEachran (sub: Ramires, 41min), F Lampard, F Malouda (sub: N Anelka, 64) - R Lukaku (sub: J Mata, 64), F Torres. Substitutes not used: Hilario, B Ivanovic, P Ferreira, S Kalou. Booked: David Luiz, Alex, Malouda, Bertrand, Ramires.

Liverpool (4-4-2): J Reina - M Kelly, S Coates, J Carragher, J Enrique - J Henderson, J Spearing, Lucas Leiva (sub: C Adam, 70), M Rodriguez (sub: M Skrtel, 89) - A Carroll, C Bellamy (sub: D Kuyt, 79). Substitutes not used: Doni, L Suarez, S Downing, J Flanagan. Booked: Coates. Referee: P Dowd.

## the guardian

Grieving Bellamy returns to drive Liverpool past the callow Blues

Those in the Shed End, a stand bedecked for the night in the visitors' red, were erupting in riotous celebration at their side's second goal when Craig Bellamy quietly turned away from his team-mates to walk alone back to the centre circle, a player lost in his own thoughts. The architect of Liverpool's progress into the last four of this competition had lost a close friend and mentor in Gary Speed on Sunday. Even in victory, football must still have felt trivial.

The forward had been too distraught to play any part in the visit of Manchester City to Anfield that day. This was a wonderful return to action in those desperate circumstances, with Bellamy setting up each of his side's goals to smooth their passage into the semi-finals at Chelsea's expense. When he was substituted 11 minutes from time there were handshakes of appreciation offered by team-mates, and a bear hug from his manager waiting on the touchline. "For someone to come back and play like that . . ." said Kenny Dalglish, his admiration clear as he drifted into a mumble. Speed would have approved.

Bellamy's poise and delivery had epitomised Liverpool's second-half dominance here, the more imposing of the two selections eventually stamping some authority on a scrappy contest. The home side might have opened the scoring and changed the complexion of the night but Florent Malouda's shot bounced up and off the crossbar, with Sebastian Coates stifling David Luiz's header from the rebound. Liverpool, so aggrieved at having to play just 48 hours after hosting the league leaders, duly snapped out of their slumbers to settle the tie.

Their breaks downfield cut swathes through Chelsea's back line. David Luiz and Ryan Bertrand were bypassed by Jordan Henderson's slide-rule pass that liberated Bellamy down the right, with the forward's delivery across the six-yard box unselfish and inviting. Maxi Rodriguez, a player who so relishes scoring significant goals in the capital and had scored here just nine days previously, converted with ease and the Londoners were floored. The second, a free header from Martin Kelly off Bellamy's free-kick, was softly shipped. These remain testing times for whatever back line is put out by Andre Villas-Boas.

The Portuguese has now overseen three defeats in four home matches, a troubling statistic with such a decisive Champions League group game to come here against Valencia on Tuesday. This selection had been youthful, maintaining a policy consistent through their three-match involvement in this competition, though the only real mark left by any of the juniors came courtesy of Romelu Lukaku's studs on Henderson's shin just before the interval. Mystifyingly, the referee, Phil Dowd, booked the 5ft 10in Ryan Bertrand for the challenge, as opposed to the 6ft 4in Belgian, with the full-back having dived in from the other side. That summed up the official's rather slapdash first-half display.

The game should have yielded three penalties in the opening quarter. Only 165 seconds had elapsed when a backheel from Josh McEachran, whose appearance had been eagerly anticipated only for the teenager to hobble from the fray before the interval, sent David Luiz into the area. Coates's lunge was horribly telegraphed, missing the ball and making clear contact with the Brazilian as he eased beyond him, only for Dowd to deem David Luiz guilty of a dive. The centre-half was booked and might still have been feeling aggrieved five minutes later when he blatantly shoved Andy Carroll in the back as the striker leapt to reach Jose Enrique's cross.

Yet, once again, the offence was ignored and even the subsequent decision to grant the game's solitary spot-kick was confused. Jose Enrique's cross was aimed again at Carroll, with Alex edging in front of the forward but jumping with his left arm raised. The ball deflected off the hand only for the officials to freeze while Liverpool players cried foul. Indecision reigned for fully five seconds before the offence was confirmed. Carroll, a player so eager to justify his pounds 35m worth, slapped the kick down the centre when he was permitted to proceed, with Ross Turnbull blocking smartly as he dived to his right. Carroll recovered his poise thereafter, his muscular presence putting the anaemic Fernando Torres to shame in the opposing ranks, as Liverpool steadily exposed the hosts' brittle confidence.

Dalglish described his striker as "brilliant". "He worked for the team and was fantastic," said the manager. "But every one of my players can look at his own performance and be delighted."

Chief among them would be Bellamy. These are difficult times, but there was pride to be had in this display.

Chelsea 4-1-2-1-2

Turnbull; Bosingwa, Alex\*, David Luiz\*, Bertrand\*; Romeu; Lampard, Malouda\* (Anelka, 64); McEachran (Ramires\*, 41); Lukaku (Mata, 64), Torres. Subs not used Hilario, Ivanovic, Ferreira, Kalou.

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**Liverpool** 4-4-2 Reina; Kelly, Carragher, Coates\*, Jose Enrique; Henderson, Spearing, Lucas (Adam, 70), Maxi Rodriguez (Skrtel, 89); Carroll, Bellamy (Kuyt, 79). Subs not used Doni, Suarez, Downing, Flanagan. Referee P Dowd.

## The Mail

KELLY'S HERO FOR REDS; Second-half salvo keeps the heat on hapless AVB  
Chelsea 0 Liverpool 2

NOT even Phil Dowd could spare Andre Villas-Boas the ignominy of another crushing defeat last night. The referee did his best, even if it was entirely unintentional. These are dark days for Chelsea's young manager and with Newcastle, Valencia and Manchester City to follow, it seems increasingly unlikely they will end happily. The weekend win against Wolves was nothing more than a brief break from the misery for Villas-Boas, Liverpool inflicting a second defeat in nine days thanks to second-half goals from Maxi Rodriguez and Martin Kelly. Does it matter when this is the Carling Cup? When Villas-Boas, much like Kenny Dalglish, chose a much-changed side? Well, yes it does, and not just because the Portuguese needs to arrest this appalling run of results and restore some confidence. Villas-Boas could do with landing a trophy as quickly as possible, and this competition represented the first opportunity. This was an extraordinary Cup tie, not least because of Dowd. There was drama, there was tension and in Fernando Torres and Andy Carroll there was also some seriously expensive hardware. But there was also a performance from the referee that threatened to t f ruin it as a contest, a performance worthy of the kind of criticism that has become Sir Alex Ferguson's forte in recent years. Dowd's contribution really was bizarre. There was his failure to spot two very obvious penalties inside the first 10 minutes -- one for each side -- and the strange delay in his decision to award the one he did give, the feeling being that he might have taken guidance from the fourth official. That Ross Turnbull saved Carroll's spotkick at least prevented a full-scale riot on the touchline but by the end of the first half it was Liverpool who had every right to feel the most aggrieved. Chelsea should have been down to 10 men by then but Dowd didn't just show a yellow card when it should have been a red -- he showed it to the wrong player. To blame it on fitness issues might be unfair but the thick-set official was not exactly gliding across the turf last night, so perhaps he was not as close to the action as he needed to be. But in the end Liverpool were the better team again last night and the two goals they scored were richly deserved, not least because the paucity of Chelsea's defending deserved to be punished. The opening 10 minutes were memorable for the astonishing leniency of Dowd. After executing a delightful one-two with Josh McEachran, the marauding David Luiz burst into the Liverpool box only to have his progress halted by a reckless challenge by Sebastian Coates. The Uruguayan took the man rather than the ball -- but not in Dowd's eyes, and Liverpool somehow escaped. Luiz was then guilty of blatantly shoving Carroll in the back as the Liverpool striker moved to meet a cross from Jose Enrique, but again Dowd missed the foul. It made what happened in the 21st minute all the more bizarre. Dowd was right to award a penalty to Liverpool, as Alex had diverted a cross from Enrique away from Carroll with his left arm. But there was a delay in the decision and Dowd only pointed to the spot after Carroll had sprinted to him to complain. There appeared to be no signal from the assistants but the reaction of the Chelsea bench seemed to point to the possible involvement of the fourth official. A running battle was developing between Carroll and Luiz. Some heavy tackles were being exchanged, with Carroll attempting to ride on Luiz's back at one point. It was certainly making for an entertaining game between these two makeshift teams. There were some good touches from McEachran and the young Spaniard, Oriol Romeu, who stood alongside Frank Lampard in the Chelsea midfield. Some of Liverpool's younger players, most notably Kelly and Jay Spearing, were also impressing. But nobody seemed more determined than Craig Bellamy. Visibly emotional when Stamford Bridge paid tribute to Gary Speed, the Welshman performed in a manner that suggested he was playing for two managers last night. There were yet more heavy challenges, and yet more strange decisions. Romelu Lukaku should have been sent off for his foul on Jordan Henderson. It was a shocking tackle, the Belgian striker planting his right boot on Henderson's ankle. But what did Dowd do? He booked Ryan Bertrand.

An injury to McEachran forced Villas-Boas to make a change, Ramires stepping off the bench to replace the teenager. That bit of experience did benefit Chelsea and the home side almost scored in the 55th minute when Florent Malouda diverted a Lampard freekick on to the bar before Coates cleared Luiz's effort from the rebound on the line. It proved all the more costly when Rodriguez scored three minutes later. A rapidly executed move started with a fine ball from Henderson, continued with a super delivery from Bellamy and ended with a simple finish made all the easier by the absence of Alex. Villas-Boas responded by ordering Nicolas Anelka and Juan Mata to warm up but before he could get them on Liverpool had scored a second. Again Bellamy was the provider, delivering the free-kick that Kelly headed home unopposed with Alex again AWOL. Delight for Dalglish. Disaster for Villas-Boas.

### MATCH FACTS

CHELSEA (4-3-3): Turnbull 7; Bosingwa 5, Alex 5, Luiz 5, Bertrand 5; McEachran 5 (Ramires 41min, 5), Lampard 5, Romeu 5; Lukaku 4 (Anelka 64, 5), Torres 4, Malouda 4 (Mata 64, 5). Subs not used: Hilario, Ivanovic, Ramires, Mata, Ferreira, Kalou, Anelka. Booked: Luiz, Malouda, Bertrand, Alex, Ramires.

LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): Reina 7; Kelly 8, Carragher 7, Coates 7, Enrique 7; Henderson 7, Lucas 8 (Adam, 70), Spearing 7, Maxi 8 (Skrtel, 89); Bellamy 9 (Kuyt, 79), Carroll 6. Subs not used: Doni, Suarez, Downing, Adam, Flanagan. Scorers: Maxi Rodriguez 58, Kelly 63. Booked: Coates. Man of the match: Craig Bellamy. Referee: Phil Dowd 5. Attendance: 40,511.

## The Daily Telegraph

Villas-Boas looks lost as Chelsea crumble once more  
Chelsea 0 Liverpool 2

Maxi 58, Kelly 63 Att: 40,511

The Carling Cup doesn't matter - as Roman Abramovich told Andre Villas-Boas - and the Chelsea manager is apparently not in danger of losing his job.

But he is losing too many matches and that can't continue. This was another defeat, another seeping of much-needed confidence, another questioning of the "new Chelsea" promised by the new man, another question mark over where the club is heading. It may well be the fourth competition in terms of Abramovich's priorities and, in truth, it doesn't really matter but it was a third home defeat in four - and another to **Liverpool**, who deservedly swept into the semi-finals, and whose manager Kenny Dalglish maintained his astonishing record of beating Chelsea. It's not just the defeats, it's the nature of them and Chelsea were well-beaten last night and rarely looked like scoring.

Dalglish's annoyance at the scheduling of this match, barely 48 hours after the Premier League encounter with Manchester City, had led him to urge supporters not to travel. A callow team would be fielded, he promised, but although seven changes were made to the side that faced City it was still a strong line-up.

While Chelsea also rang the changes, with Villas-Boas selecting the four younger players he had promised to promote, the Portuguese retained David Luiz and the Brazilian was, as ever, at the centre of controversy.

He was wrongly booked for a dive, after being challenged by Sebastian Coates, when referee Phil Dowd should have awarded a penalty and then escaped censure himself after appearing to push Andy Carroll in the back inside his own area.

It didn't end there. **Liverpool** were then awarded a penalty. It was clear that Alex's outstretched left arm had batted away Jose Enrique's cross, as Carroll attempted to meet it, but Dowd initially gave a goal-kick. The **Liverpool** players protested vehemently and there was a delay as Dowd appeared to seek help, via his earpiece before finally awarding the spot-kick. Carroll, rather than Craig Bellamy, stepped up and, nervously, drove the ball hard but straight and Ross Turnbull blocked.

Despite another possible penalty, when Romelu Lukaku was blocked by Coates as he attempted to run onto a through-ball inside the area, the game remained goalless. The pace was unrelenting, despite the unfamiliarity of the line-ups, and there was an eagerness to impose themselves from both sides although, perhaps inevitably, Fernando Torres struggled to make an impact on his first start in seven matches.

Unfortunately Chelsea lost Josh McEachran, afforded a rare opportunity at the tip of a midfield diamond, after he failed to shake off an early ankle injury but for all of the home side's dominance of possession they lacked a cutting edge with Torres and Lukaku both being dominated by the **Liverpool** defenders.

It meant fine build-up play by Frank Lampard, in particular, often broke down while **Liverpool's** failing was a desire to try to seek out Carroll too often with long balls, even if, at times, that ploy carried the greater threat.

The only mark Lukaku left was on Jordan Henderson with a nasty tackle catching the midfielder on his shin - and even then Dowd erred by wrongly cautioning Ryan Bertrand when he could have sent off the striker. It wasn't the finest of first-halves for the official. As the period ended, Lukaku met Jose Bosingwa's cross only to wastefully steer his header over the crossbar while **Liverpool** were once more left protesting after Luiz stepped into Carroll who appeared to be caught but also made the most of it.

The commitment was unquestionable, the quality more doubtful, and as Lampard lost possession Maxi Rodriguez scampered into the Chelsea area only to dither and be dispossessed while Bellamy over-hit a pass to Carroll as **Liverpool** again threatened and, soon after, blazed over after another counter-attack.

There was then a slice of fortune for **Liverpool** with Florent Malouda meeting Lampard's free-kick only for his header to skim off the crossbar.

Coates made a hash of the clearance, presenting it to Luiz but then chested away the Brazilian's goalbound header. If anything the pace increased - and **Liverpool** struck through Maxi. Again. His goal, however, owed much to the Chelsea's defensive failings with Bertrand caught out as Henderson played in Bellamy and then both Alex and Luiz at fault as the striker crossed for Maxi to turn the ball beyond Turnbull. The marking was loose, chaotic.

Villas-Boas had seen enough and quickly prepared to make changes. But, before he could, his defence crumbled again. Bellamy, again, was the provider, swinging in a free-kick which was all too easily met by Martin Kelly who headed into the net to spark more Chelsea recriminations as he was left unmarked by the hapless Lukaku. Pepe Reina saved Torres's header and substitute Nicolas Anelka was denied after rounding the keeper but Chelsea simply had no reply.

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## THE INDEPENDENT

### Chelsea's callow surrender leaves Villas-Boas exposed

It was supposed to be about Fernando Torres and Andy Carroll; for a moment, it threatened to be about the referee Phil Dowd. In the end, though, as it always seems to be these days, it will be about Andre Villas-Boas. Another defeat, another callow, anodyne performance, beaten by **Liverpool** for the second time in nine days and out of the Carling Cup: it could not be about anything else.

If the bare facts are not sufficient damnation - five defeats in nine games, only counted by the most defiantly optimistic as enduring Premier League title contenders, definitively eliminated from the Carling Cup - then the raw noise should be: Chelsea were jeered from their own ground after goals from Maxi Rodriguez and Martin Kelly kept Kenny Dalglish's team on course for a first Wembley appearance in 16 years and shuffled Villas-Boas towards the brink. Newcastle, Valencia and Manchester City loom large in the 34-year-old's future; only with a substantial improvement on this will the Portuguese be able to keep the faintest flicker of hope alive in Chelsea's disintegrating season. "This standard will not be enough in the Champions League," admitted Villas-Boas. "We need to up the tempo and play that game with the [utmost] desire."

It was not just desire that was absent. To a list now encompassing composure, coherence, precision and planning can be added Torres, a mere shadow from the moment Jamie Carragher, never his closest companion while at Anfield, caught him - accidentally - as the two tangled for the ball. Torres shrank and shrivelled from view.

Carroll, too, had an evening he will wish to forget, though both will take some solace in the fact that compared to Dowd, their performances were unadulterated triumphs. The referee, clearly, did not fancy penalties: in that respect, he was probably no different to both sides, players and managers alike. How he went about implementing his aversion, though, lent the first half a surreal air.

Twice in the space of 120 seconds Dowd waved away concerted appeals for a spot-kick; first, most convincingly, from the hosts, when Sebastian Coates appeared to trip David Luiz as the Brazilian careered into the **Liverpool** box, and then when the Chelsea defender seemed to nudge Carroll as he leaped to meet a Jose Enrique cross.

To Villas-Boas's credit, he restricted his complaint to detailing that Dowd is "the official who gives most penalties, just not for us." His discretion was advisable: **Liverpool** might have had three, Carroll denied another on the cusp of half-time, after being granted one, for a clear handball against Alex. Carroll did not make the most of the opportunity, his effort saved comfortably enough by Ross Turnbull.

Perhaps Dowd felt a pang of sympathy for the 22-year-old, who must feel as though whatever black magic has afflicted Torres since his move has somehow lingered on the No 9 shirt he left behind. Maybe that explains his decision to book Ryan Bertrand for a wild lunge on Jordan Henderson on the cusp of half-time, rather than Romelu Lukaku, who committed the foul; or his ability to ignore Luiz's push on Carroll in the area just before the break.

Amid such uncertainty, neither side found it within themselves to mount much in the way of attacks. The best, perhaps only, chance fell to Lukaku, denied by a wonderfully timed tackle from Coates as he shaped to shoot.

The Uruguayan defender, the putative weak link in an otherwise strong **Liverpool** line-up, certainly did not seem to be unnerved by his brush with the law; he denied Luiz on the line after the break, blocking the Brazilian's header after Jose Bosingwa hit the bar, and in doing so turned the game. A moment later, Dalglish's side were ahead, Maxi tapping home after Henderson had split the hosts apart with a sumptuous through-ball to Craig Bellamy.

The Welshman was a torment to Chelsea's back-line all night, on his first appearance since the death of his mentor and national team coach, Gary Speed. It seems trite to say the emotion brought the best from Bellamy, in tears during a minute's applause held for his friend before the game; less so to suggest that Speed, in his pomp, would have been proud of his application, his energy, his effervescence. He created the second, too, swinging in a free-kick for Kelly, unmarked, to head home his first goal for the club just five minutes later.

Chelsea could offer little in response. Nicolas Anelka was foiled, more by accident than design, by Pepe Reina; the goalkeeper then denied Torres, his close friend, clasping a goal-bound header. It was the only occasion the striker emerged from his fragile shell all evening. It was not, it turned out, about him at all. It was not about Carroll, either, or Dowd. It was about Villas-Boas, alone.

Chelsea (4-1-2-1-2): Turnbull; Bosingwa, Alex, David Luiz, Bertrand; Romeu; Lampard, Malouda (Mata, 64), McEachran (Ramires, 41); Lukaku (Anelka, 64), Torres. Substitutes not used Hilario (gk), Ivanovic, Ferreira, Kalou.

**Liverpool** (4-4-1-1): Reina; Kelly, Carragher, Coates, Jose Enrique; Henderson, Lucas (Adam, 70), Spearing, Maxi Rodriguez (Skrテル, 89); Bellamy (Kuyt, 79); Carroll. Substitutes not used Doni (gk), Suarez, Downing, Flanagan.

Referee P Dowd (Staffs).

## DAILY MIRROR

### KOPS AND ROBBERS I

Kenny storms Bridge again as Reds cruise into last four IF there is one thing Kenny Dalglish loves more than playing Chelsea, it is the Carling Cup.

And last night his enduring affair with both the competition and his favourite opponents continued as Liverpool moved to within 180 minutes of their first Wembley appearance since 1996.

While blunder ref Phil Dowd stole the show with a comedy performance that overshadowed the Battle of the Flops between Fernando Torres and Andy Carroll, it was Liverpool who emerged triumphant to hand Andre Villas-Boas a third home defeat in four games.

Second-half goals from Maxi Rodriguez and Martin Kelly, set up by the impish skills of Craig Bellamy as the travelling Kop sang loud in honour of Gary Speed, proved the difference as Dalglish made it 13 unbeaten as Reds boss against the Blues.

For Torres and Carroll, whose atrocious penalty miss - one of three that should have been awarded by Dowd who could also have sent off Romelu Lukaku - it was a night to forget.

The England man, though, was far more involved than the peripheral Spaniard, baited by the Liverpool fans throughout and whose nightmare continues with no sign of improving.

All eyes were on pounds 85million-worth of misfiring strikers but, in truth, the first half was all about Dowd.

Not only did the official fail to give two nailed-on spot kicks - one at each end - inside the first seven minutes but when he did get one right it was only after being harangued by four Liverpool players.

Dowd was hardly unsighted either, being less than 10 yards away when David Luiz burst into the Liverpoolbox after a smart exchange with Josh McEachran playing behind McEachran, playing behind Torres - who looked utterly shorn of confidence - and the powerful Lukaku.

Sebastian Coates needlessly dived in, ensuring there was contact with man but not with the ball.

And while Luiz was undoubtedly looking for the foul, it was still a penalty.

Insult was added to injury when Luiz was booked although he had a escape himself within four minutes, clumsily barging into Carroll's back when Jose Enrique swung the ball across.

Only Luiz and Oriol Romeu had started against Wolves on Saturday, Dalglish fielding just four of the men who had drawn with Manchester City.

Yet Liverpool, with Carroll winning his battle with Luiz and Bellamy full of thrust, were more purposeful and when Alex crazily raised his hands as Carroll met another Enrique centre, the only surprise was how long it took the referee - now surrounded - to give the penalty.

He did so, eventually, but Carroll smashed his shot straight down the middle, the ball pinging away off Ross Turnbull's left knee.

A shocker from the ponytail although surpassed when Dowd booked Ryan Bertrand when Lukaku - who could have been ordered off for the foul - lunged in horribly late on Jordan Henderson.

Henderson was to get his revenge in the way he wanted with his part in the opener.

Before that though, Chelsea had a chance.

Stand-in skipper Frank Lampard's free-kick saw the unmarked Florent Malouda volley down and off the bar, with Coates's chest thwarting Luiz on the line from the follow-up.

And within three minutes, Liverpool struck.

Henderson found Bellamy in a huge amount of space behind Bertrand and with the home defence all over the place, Maxi could not miss when, just as 10 days ago, the Welshman rolled the ball to him in front of goal.

Before Villas-Boas could react, one goal became two.

Bellamy drew a foul from substitute Ramires on the left, delivered with pace and conviction and Kelly, incredibly left unmarked as Luiz and Lukaku looked at each other, glanced home from six yards out.

su le an in Lu ea fr Game over? Yes, as was confirmed when Chelsea replacement Nicolas Anelka could not squeeze his shot away after rounding Reds keeper Pepe Reina.

co re co aw k The only sour note for DwLu st Dalglish would have been witnessing inspirational Lucas Leiva carried off on a stretcher after a clash of knees with Juan Mata.

For Villas-Boas, though, it just gets worse. Five defeats in nine is not yet terminal, despite the jeers at the end.

Lose to Valencia on Tuesday, though, and the outlook will be very different.

CHELSEA: Turnbull 7, Bosingwa 6, Alex 5, Luiz 5, Bertrand 6, Lampard 6, Romeu 7, Malouda 6, McEachran 7 (Ramires, 41mins, 6), Lukaku 6, Torres 4. LIVERPOOL: Reina 7, Kelly 7, Carragher 6, Coates 5, Enrique 7, Henderson 6, Spearing 6, Lucas 8 (Adam, 71mins, 6), Maxi 5 (Skrテル, 90mins, 5); Carroll 6, Bellamy 7 (Kuyt, 79mins, 6) REFEREE: Phil Dowd. ATT: 40,511

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### Reds brush Chelsea aside at the Bridge to reach semi-finals of Carling Cup

WHEN Kenny Dalglish branded the scheduling of this tie a joke he didn't find it funny – but the Liverpool boss had the last laugh on a glorious night in West London.

The anger at being asked to play twice in the space of 48 hours turned to joy as the Reds kept their hopes of Carling Cup glory alive in style.

For the second time in nine days Liverpool ruled at Stamford Bridge. Their Premier League victory in West London may have come with a hint of good fortune but this was emphatic.

Once again Maxi Rodriguez proved himself the man for the big occasion as his close range finish broke the deadlock.

And then Martin Kelly picked the perfect moment to open his account for the club with a clinical header. On both occasions the outstanding Craig Bellamy was the creator.

Andy Carroll's early penalty miss was long forgotten as Liverpool booked their place in the semi-finals for the first time since 2005. Negotiate that tie and the Red army will be heading for Wembley in February – ending a 16-year absence from a stadium that used to be their second home.

How the 5,500 fans packed into the Shed End were glad they ignored Dalglish's advice to think twice about buying tickets for this game. Dalglish had warned them that the "disgrace" of having to play so soon after facing Manchester City may force him to play a severely-weakened side.

The manager's fury simply underlined just how much this competition means to the Reds this season. He knows it represents their best chance of ending the club's long six-year wait for silverware and it's clear his burning desire for success is shared by his squad.

The character and quality that had helped the Reds negotiate tricky trips to Exeter, Brighton and Stoke was once again evident in the capital.

It was a night which showcased the strength in depth at the manager's disposal this season.

Dalglish made seven changes following Sunday's energy-sapping draw against City with Pepe Reina, Jose Enrique, Lucas Leiva and Jordan Henderson the only players retained.

However, with Bellamy and Carroll installed up front, Rodriguez and Jay Spearing slotting into midfield and Jamie Carragher returning to the back four along with Sebastian Coates and Kelly there was no weak link. Enrique, who hadn't featured in the earlier rounds, became the 23rd different player used by Dalglish in the competition this season.

There was also plenty of encouragement taken from a look at the hosts' line up. Despite Andre Villas-Boas problems, the under-fire boss bizarrely fielded a shadow team with David Luiz and Oriol Romeu the only survivors from their 3-0 league win over Wolves on Saturday.

In fact Chelsea rested so many players there was even a start for £50million flop Fernando Torres but he never looked like returning to haunt his former employers.

Torres was rattled by a shuddering challenge from Carragher early on and he was anonymous throughout as the skipper and defensive partner Sebastian Coates shackled him brilliantly throughout.

During a frenetic opening both sides had vociferous penalty appeals turned down. Firstly, Luiz tumbled in the box after a rash tackle by Coates but an unimpressed Phil Dowd booked the Brazilian for diving. At the other end Carroll was left perplexed when Luiz got away with shoving him in the back as he rose to meet Enrique's cross.

Unperturbed, Liverpool stamped their authority on the contest. Lucas and Spearing were a hive of activity in midfield, full-backs Kelly and Enrique flew down the flanks and strikers Bellamy and Carroll linked up intelligently.

Midway through the first half the Reds should have had some reward for their endeavours. Enrique's cross was inexplicably handled by Alex as he rose with Carroll in the penalty area.

Dowd belatedly pointed to the spot and in the absence of Charlie Adam, Carroll grabbed the ball with purpose.

However, the big frontman went for power rather than placement but fired too close to Ross Turnbull who deflected it to safety. Carroll became the third Reds player to miss a spot-kick this season following misses from Luis Suarez and Dirk Kuyt.

Chelsea barely threatened as an attacking force in the first half but Coates was called upon to make one timely last-ditch tackle before Romelu Lukaku could pull the trigger. The Belgian teenager did send a header narrowly wide but the visitors always showed the greater attacking quality.

Dowd's erratic display took a turn for the worse before the interval when Lukaku somehow got away with a horrendous lunge on Henderson. It could have been red but instead Dowd booked a bemused Ryan Bertrand.

Coates produced his best performance in a Liverpool shirt and the assured Uruguayan came to his side's rescue 10 minutes into the second half.

Jose Bosingwa's effort bounced back off the bar and into the path of Luiz who was thwarted by Coates' goalline block.

It was a pivotal moment as three minutes later the Reds were in front.

Henderson's pass sent Bellamy scampering clear down the right and his low cross was gleefully turned in at the back post by Rodriguez.

The celebrations in the Shed End were still in full flow when the visitors killed off the tie.

Once again Bellamy, who was outstanding on his return to the side after sitting out the clash with City due to his shock at Gary Speed's death, was the provider with his curling free-kick headed home at the back post by Kelly.

Villas-Boas responded by throwing on Juan Mata and Nicolas Anelka but the Reds refused to release their vice-like grip on proceedings.

There was the worrying sight of Lucas being stretchered off with a knee injury and the midfielder left the ground on crutches.

However, a comeback was never on the cards as Dalglish extended his unbeaten run as Liverpool boss in games against Chelsea to 12 games.

Chants of 'There's only one Gary Speed' from the away end echoed around Stamford Bridge late on. It was a classy end to a classy night.

CHELSEA (4-4-2): Turnbull, Bosingwa, Alex, Luiz, Bertrand, Romeu, McEachran (Ramires 41), Lampard, Malouda (Anelka 64), Lukaku (Mata 64). Torres. Not used: Hilario, Ivanovic, Ferreira, Kalou

LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): Reina, Kelly, Carragher, Coates, Enrique, Henderson, Spearing, Lucas (Adam 70), Rodriguez (Skrtel 89), Bellamy (Kuyt 79), Carroll. Not used: Doni, Suarez, Downing, Flanagan.

REFEREE: Phil Dowd. ATTENDANCE: 40,511

BOOKINGS: Chelsea: Luiz, Alex, Malouda, Bertrand, Ramires. Liverpool: Coates.

GOALS: Rodriguez 58, Kelly 63.

## London Evening Standard

### Bellamy inspires Reds triumph

Craig Bellamy steered Liverpool into the Carling Cup semi-finals as they recorded a 2-0 victory over Chelsea to heap further pressure on under-fire Blues boss Andre Villas-Boas.

Bellamy's pinpoint delivery set up second-half goals for Maxi Rodriguez and Martin Kelly as the Reds took a step closer to winning their first silverware since 2006.

Earlier, Andy Carroll missed the chance to give Liverpool a half-time lead as referee Phil Dowd awarded a penalty after Alex handled the ball, but he drilled his effort straight at keeper Ross Turnbull.

It completed an emotional return for Bellamy, who had been omitted from the squad for Sunday's 1-1 draw with Manchester City on compassionate grounds following the death of close friend Gary Speed. The 32-year-old Wales winger provided the spark of creativity Liverpool needed to defeat toothless opposition who were prone to erratic defending.

Dowd pointed to the penalty spot in the 21st minute and it was Liverpool who were the beneficiaries. Alex blatantly handled the ball while under pressure from Carroll and Dowd hesitated before awarding the kick and booking the Chelsea defender.

Carroll, who had protested fiercely to Dowd, stepped up only to drill his effort straight at Turnbull, allowing the Blues to wriggle off the hook.

David Luiz stopped Rodriguez in his tracks with a wonderful tackle as the former Argentina international charged into the area. But Liverpool and Rodriguez could not be denied in the 58th minute when Liverpool surged into the lead.

Bellamy did the initial damage with a killer ball across goal - perhaps Luiz should have done more to prevent the pass - for Rodriguez to complete a simple tap-in.

Liverpool's large and noisy travelling contingent were back on their feet five minutes later as Liverpool grabbed a second.

Once more Bellamy supplied the ammunition - this time from a free-kick - and Kelly was given all the time in the world to nod home his first goal for the club.