Date: 8 November 2014
Opposition: Chelsea
Competition: League

BBC	Mail	Sunday Times	Sun Telegraph	Independent
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8 November 2014

THE TIMES

Liverpool's soft centre is opened up

Liverpool 1
Can 9
Chelsea 2
Cahill 14, Costa 67
Referee A Taylor Attendance 44,698

In the past, Jose Mourinho has used his right index finger to shush and even to gouge. On Saturday, the digit was employed in a more profound fashion. Asked how it had been possible for Chelsea to dominate at Anfield, to be the ones who were physically stronger after Liverpool had enjoyed 24 hours more recovery time having also rested half a team in midweek, Mourinho pointed said finger to his temple.

Sensing the chance to bolster his team further and diminish beaten rivals, the Chelsea manager elucidated. "It's not in the legs, because players who did not play during the week, the legs have more energy than people who played," he said. "So I think what makes the difference is inside."

In Cesc Fabregas and Ramires playing while injured, John Terry and Gary Cahill putting their bodies on the line, Nemanja Matic destroying everything in his path and Diego Costa confronting another Barclays Premier League defence before laying waste to it, Mourinho could see the qualities of champions. He did not need to say that Liverpool lacked those virtues -- that had been obvious in the previous 90 minutes.

"I was a champion in different countries with different clubs and there are points that are always present," Mourinho said. "I had it at Porto, at Inter Milan and at Real Madrid. I had it here in my first spell and I'm having it now. It's something that you have to have always -- people who are always ready to sacrifice themselves for their team."

The contrast with Liverpool is stark. Mourinho's unbeaten team boast many of the qualities that the home fans once took for granted in their own. There is a refusal to bend, a collective belief, a willingness to resort to the cynical if necessary, an ability to combine silk with steel. While the Kop once again accused Chelsea of having no history, it was those in blue rather than those in red who bore comparison to the great Liverpool teams in the past.

The evidence that Liverpool lack the requisite mentality continues to mount. If the six fouls they made in the entirety of their first game with Real Madrid hinted at deference, the seven changes that Brendan Rodgers made to his team for the second encounter confirmed it. The Liverpool manager then claiming that fielding a B team against the European champions had been vindicated by their performance, despite losing another one-sided game, took it into another realm altogether. Defeat was being passed off as a sort of moral victory.

The consequences of that approach were laid bare on Saturday. Six of those left out at the Bernabeu reclaimed their places and most failed to justify their inclusion. Among them, Mario Balotelli mustered no shots on goal on a day when his opposite number, Costa, scored the game's decisive goal. Liverpool's three-man midfield managed between them only the number of tackles Matic made on his own.

Then the respective defences. Whereas the goal Chelsea conceded when Emre Can's shot deflected off Cahill might have hinted at weakness, it turned out to be an aberration. It was Liverpool's back four and goalkeeper who again lacked the qualities required. Undermined by their perennial failure to mark effectively at set-pieces for Cahill's equaliser, they were then opened up far too easily for Costa's winner.

As Cesar Azpilicueta skipped away from Philippe Coutinho to set up the winning goal, the thought that, had roles been reversed, Coutinho would have been stopped in his tracks, legally or illegally, was irresistible. It became even more so when Cahill handled Steven Gerrard's shot in the closing stages. The offence went unpunished, and while Liverpool's anger was justified, it demonstrated the biggest difference between the teams -- whereas Chelsea will do whatever it takes to win, Liverpool will not.

That attitude starts in Liverpool's hierarchy, where any desire to buy the best has been consumed by a misguided transfer policy that prioritises potential winners over actual winners. The mentality that Mourinho alluded to is conspicuous only by its absence at Anfield. Liverpool have become a soft touch. It is they, and not Chelsea, who need to get their fingers out.

RATINGS

Liverpool (4-1-4-1): S Mignolet 5 - G Johnson 5, M Skrtel 7, D Lovren 4, A Moreno 5 - S Gerrard 5 - P Coutinho 6 (sub: F Borini, 70min 5), E Can 6 (sub: J Allen, 70 5), J Henderson 5, R Sterling 6 - M Balotelli 5 (sub: R Lambert, 79).
Substitutes not used: B Jones, K Toure, L Leiva, A Lallana.
Booked: Sterling, Balotelli.

Chelsea (4-1-4-1): T Courtois 7 - B Ivanovic 8, G Cahill 8, J Terry 8, C Azpiluceta 8 - Ramires 6 (sub: Willian, 54 6), N Matic 9, F Fabregas 7, E Hazard 8 (sub: F Luis, 89) - Oscar 7 - D Costa 7 (sub: D Drogba, 90). Substitutes not used: P Cech, K Zouma, J Mikel, L Remy. Booked: Ivanovic, Oscar, Costa, Courtois, Matic.

theguardian

Mourinho's giants leave Rodgers to rue wasted summer

For once, Jose Mourinho did not require calculated words to make a telling point. Chelsea had shown superior quality, confidence and strength against Liverpool, despite having the shorter recovery time from their respective Champions League trips and fewer fresh legs at Anfield. How? Mourinho said nothing, raised a finger and tapped his right temple. The answer was in the head.

For the Chelsea manager, win number nine from 11 unbeaten Premier League matches was built on an attitude he witnessed in his title-winning teams in Portugal, England part one, Italy and Spain. The pre-match team talk had come not from Mourinho but the immense Nemanja Matic who, according to Cesar Azpilicueta, "said that if we wanted to be champions we had to come to these sort of stadiums and win". The Serb inspired in word and deed.

Cesc Fabregas played with a hamstring injury, Ramires with a persistent adductor problem and Chelsea's commanding defence, still led imperiously by John Terry, threw themselves in front of everything. Too riskily in the case of Gary Cahill, who escaped two penalty claims after leaning into shots from Raheem Sterling and Steven Gerrard with an arm, although Brendan Rodgers was convincing no one with his claim that Liverpool deserved a reprieve.

They were a distant second-best and the Kop's frustration was mounting long before jeers greeted Rodgers' decision to withdraw Philippe Coutinho and Emre Can.

Asked to elaborate on the temple-pointing, Mourinho said: "It think it's the mentality. It's not in the legs because players who did not play during the week have more energy in the legs than people who played. That's obvious. So I think what makes the difference is inside."

There is, of course, far more to a team moving 15 points clear of last season's runners-up by 8 November than what occurs in the mind. And to why those same runners-up are disappearing in Chelsea's rear-view mirror, have suffered three successive defeats in eight days and have a manager sending conflicting signals over what it takes to earn a place in his Liverpool team by making seven changes for the second game in a row.

It is in the mind to some degree for Liverpool, who have looked shorn of self-belief without Luis Suarez and Daniel Sturridge and whose only relief is in lying four points off fourth place. Rodgers' team began with intent, as they should against the side who cost them the Premier League title last season and with most players having missed the Champions League defeat at Real Madrid. There were echoes of last term in the intense opening and an early lead courtesy of Can's deflected long-range strike but Liverpool had few answers once Chelsea took control and ended as a team without direction.

Finger-pointing at Liverpool is in the direction of their summer transfer business. The fear Anfield has missed another opportunity to strengthen is growing by the game and Rodgers even resorted to blaming geography for not landing his preferred targets after this latest defeat.

No doubt speaking with Alexis Sanchez in mind, he said: "We have to work harder and smarter to convince these players to come. Players look at where they want to live, they look at all these social factors as well as football. If someone gets offered more money to come here but they want to go to London then there is not much you can do about that." A flawed argument.

Liverpool spent pounds 40m more than Chelsea this summer, the defence who started on Saturday cost a combined pounds 65m including the goalkeeper (pounds 41m spent during Rodgers' reign) compared with the visitors' outlay of pounds 27.5m on their back line. Rodgers said in May he wanted a couple of proven signings as opposed to several squad fillers with potential. Liverpooldid the opposite and it is Chelsea who are now reaping the rewards of paying the going rate for finished articles. As Mourinho said: "Sometimes you get players to improve the squad and other times you get players to improve the team. We got players to improve the team."

Goalline technology helped the referee, Anthony Taylor, instantly award an equaliser when Cahill bundled the ball beyond Simon Mignolet as Liverpool failed to deal with another set piece and Diego Costa scored the winner, his 10th of the season, after Azpilicueta just kept the ball in play and wreaked havoc inside the home area. Matic was to the fore throughout, his seven successful tackles as many as Gerrard, Jordan Henderson and Can combined and underpinning Chelsea's dominance in central midfield. "He's a giant," Mourinho said. "Not for his size but for the way he plays. The man is a giant."

And Chelsea are peering down ominously on the rest.

Man of the match Nemanja Matic (Chelsea)

Compiled by Graeme Riley

Date: 8 November 2014
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8 November 2014

The Mail

Matic shows Rodgers what he is lacking

LIVERPOOL 1
CHELSEA 2

NO DRAMA. Of all the words Jose Mourinho used following Chelsea's latest statement of intent, none screamed out more than that soundbite.

Mourinho was not intending to disparage Liverpool but as the Chelsea boss explained why he never had a moment's concern, even when his side trailed, he could not have been more cutting.

Liverpool, remember, spent more than PS100million in the summer after finishing second last season but the players that were brought in never had it in them to raise any anxieties in Mourinho, despite charging into an early lead.

'I wasn't afraid to go behind,' Mourinho said. 'This team is very comfortable. It was no drama for me or the team when they scored.' Here, then, was the Portuguese effectively saying expensively assembled Liverpool were no threat to him on the day or for the rest of the season. As Chelsea power on towards the title, problems are piling up for Brendan Rodgers.

Liverpool's manager has seen Chelsea hurtle past his side to such an extent they have become a dot on the horizon. Liverpool are 15 points adrift after 11 matches with no chance of bridging the gap and, for the first time, frustrations among home fans bubbled over. Losing to Chelsea is bad enough but nothing grates with Liverpool fans more than the realisation that another summer has passed with the club failing to build from what should have been a position of strength. The biggest spending spree in their history is taking them backwards.

'The supporters have been given a brand of football over two years that they've really clung to,' said Rodgers, when asked about the growls from the stands that accompanied his decision to substitute Philippe Coutinho and Emre Can.

'It has been frustrating and I understand that. We brought young players in and they are taking time to gel.' What Rodgers will realise, though, is that Liverpool fans are impatient. Had they been given the choice, they would have taken the summer Chelsea experienced, when they signed Diego Costa and Cesc Fabregas to augment their squad.

'We are a better team [now],' Mourinho explained. 'We got players to improve the team. Sometimes you get players to improve the squad, other times you get playho's ers to improve the team. We got players to improve the team.'

Liverpool should have done that.

They chased Alexis Sanchez and made eyes at Radamel Falcao and Karim Benzema, but again they failed to land a trophy signature.

'We know what targets we wanted but for one reason or another they went elsewhere,' said Rodgers. 'The club have done everything they could over the summer to get the players to come here.

'Players now... in football terms, I think they look for more. They look for all these social factors and football as well. Say if someone gets offered more money to come here but they want to go to London, there is not much you can do.' And there was not much they could do about Chelsea. Though Can put Liverpool ahead, Mourin-side got stronger as the game went on, looking like a team of men playing against boys.

Diego Costa, scorer of the winning goal, was terrific, as was Eden Hazard, while John Terry and Gary Cahill -- who equalised Can's effort but was fortunate to escape a late handball -- were magnificent.

Dwarfing them all, however, was Nemanja Matic. 'Please give him [the credit] he deserves,' said Mourinho. 'He was signed in the most difficult market for players [in January] so the second half of last season was a space of improvement and adaptation. At this moment he is a giant. Not for his size, but the way he plays.'

Among his many duties, Matic gave Chelsea's team talk. 'Nemanja said if we wanted to be champions we had to win,' Cesar Azpilicueta revealed. 'If the target is to be champions you have to come to these stadiums and get a result.'

And from first whistle to last, there was never any doubt that Chelsea would.

LIVERPOOL (4-1-4-1): Mignolet 6; Johnson 7, Skrtel 7.5, Lovren 6, Moreno 6; Gerrard 7; Sterling 6.5, Henderson 6.5, Can 7 (Allen 70min, 6), Coutinho 5.5 (Borini 70, 6): Balotelli 5.5 (Lambert 79). Subs not used: Jones, Toure, Lucas, Lallana. Booked: Sterling, Balotelli. Scorer: Can 9.

CHELSEA (4-2-3-1): Courtois 7.5; Ivanovic 7.5, Cahill 7, Terry 8, Azpilicueta 7.5; Matic 8.5, Fabregas 5.5 (Filipe Luis 90); Ramires 6 (Willian 64, 6), Oscar 7, Hazard 8; Costa 8 (Drogba 90). Subs not used: Cech, Zouma, Mikel, Remy. Booked: Courtois, Ivanovic, Matic, Oscar, Costa. Scorers: Cahill 26, Costa 65.

Man of the match: Nemanja Matic.

Referee: Anthony Taylor 5.5.

The Daily Telegraph

We are not winners yet, says Mournho

Liverpool 1 Can 9
Chelsea 2 Cahill 14, Costa 67 Att: 44,698

If Chelsea came to park the bus here last April, they should have left Merseyside in an open-top one on Saturday given the gulf now between Jose Mourinho's side and the other title pretenders.

Mourinho would never accept the premature coronation, baulking at the suggestion he had created a team of winners. "No, because we have not won," he countered. "In football, you make history with victories and this team at this moment has no titles." It is only a matter of time. His side already play like champions, flawless from back to front, but possessing far more than talent.

They have the hunger; strength of character; an array of dazzling attackers who hunt possession as well as use it; and the ability through sheer superiority to grind opponents down - as they did Liverpool after falling behind to Emre Can's deflected shot. Then Chelsea have another face - the brooding mean, defensive streak that took over once they were ahead thanks to Diego Costa. The spine of wisdom, John Terry, Nemanja Matic and Branislav Ivanovic, would spill blood before conceding. The defensive organisation is as artistic a movement as an Eden Hazard dribble. Chelsea will waltz to the title by Easter, coveting favourable comparisons with previous Mourinho teams, and victories at Anfield are a barometer. Mourinho plays the role of pantomime villain in this arena but, by full-time on Saturday, the Kop was directing so much fury at the Liverpool team he must not have recognised the place.

This was a fractious afternoon, Brendan Rodgers's approval rating dipping as despair about the quality of Liverpool's squad morphed into rage.

Liverpool finished above Chelsea last season, but they had Luis Suarez then. Their response to his exit has been the equivalent of removing the engine from a sports car and adding nine pedals.

This was a meeting between a club that knows what it is doing in the transfer market, and another that is at best naive and at worst incompetent.

Mourinho did not speak about Liverpool's failings, but the eulogy about his own club must be underlined. "We got players to improve the team, not the squad," he said. Chelsea added two top-class internationals for PS60 million to go from third to first, PS60 million less than Liverpool paid for their nine recruits to go from second back to mid-table. The difference is quality of personnel, not only of those bought but those trusted with doing the buying.

Remarkably, one of those recruits, PS16 million striker Mario Balotelli, was last night recalled to the Italy squad for their Euro 2014 qualifiers.

Liverpool evidently saw being two points off the title as the perfect foundation for another period of transition. The club must be in love with evolution, ensuring that every success they have had in the last 20 years can be presented as ahead of schedule. It is a bluff, disguising gargantuan transfer blunders. This failure of recruitment puts value on keeping a light at the end of the tunnel instead of grasping the opportunity to fully emerge from darkness.

If Liverpool owner John W Henry wanted a box of matches, his transfer committee would convince him it made more sense to invest in acorns for a giant oak. "There might not be any flames now, John, but give it a few years and think how many bon-fires we'll be lighting then."

Rodgers is the focal point but it is not just him. He wanted more last May. "I would rather have one or two absolute top players than seven that might not help us," he said then. "It's about the quality. We can't be going into the Champions League this year with doubts about players. We have to be going in knowing what the players' capacity to play is and their capabilities."

On Saturday, he repeated a different message. "We know what targets we wanted but, for one reason or another, they went elsewhere," he said. "We have signed talented young players. Over their time here, whether it is with me or not, they will show they are very good players.

"We were in a great position at the end of last season. We had Champions League football and a way of working. We just have to work harder and smarter to convince these players to come."

The natural conclusion is Liverpool are not only incapable of keeping their best players - see Xabi Alonso, Javier Mascherano, Fernando Torres and Luis Suarez - but can no longer sign players of similar repute.

Costa, Alexis Sanchez, Willian, Rad-amel Falcao, Edinson Cavani, Henrik Mkhitaryan are just a few of those Liverpoolcourted but could not lure. "If someone offers them more money to go to London, there is not much you can do about that," said Rodgers.

This is not solely for the Liverpool manager to explain, nor is it a recent problem. The biggest reason for the club's dips since 1991 is lousy recruitment, from Graeme Souness through to the latter years of Gerard Houllier and Rafa Benitez to the Damien Comolli PS100million vanity project of 2011 he is still laughably defending.

Of the 19 signings made by the Liverpool transfer committee, only the first two - Philippe Coutinho and Daniel Sturridge - would get into a top-four side.

The next time anyone at Anfield moans about Financial Fair Play and clubs buying titles, they should be reminded it is not how much you have that counts, but how you spend it. That is why Chelsea will be champions again.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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8 November 2014

THE INDEPENDENT

Mourinho casts doubt on Liverpool mentality

Logically, their meeting with Chelsea at Anfield on Saturday was a game that should have favoured Liverpool. They had played in Europe in midweek a day earlier than their visitors and rested seven players from their Tuesday night encounter with Real Madrid. However, when asked to explain why his side had won, Chelsea's manager, Jose Mourinho, simply tapped the side of his head.

"It is not in the legs because, obviously, players who did not play during the week have more energy than people who played," he said. "That is obvious. So what makes the difference is inside." When he was asked if superior mentality was one of the reasons for the 2-1 win, he replied: "I think so."

There is a strong bond between Mourinho and his Liverpool counterpart, Brendan Rodgers, which would only increase the capacity of his analysis to wound.

"We are a better team," Mourinho said when explaining the differences between two clubs who finished second and third in the Premier League last season but now seem an ocean apart. "We got players to improve the team, not the squad. We have had an evolution in everything since last season."

While the certainties that drove Liverpool forward last season appear to have disintegrated - there were times when they appeared not to know how to clear their own lines and Rodgers' substitutions were jeered - Chelsea seem very certain.

Having endured a trophyless return to Stamford Bridge, Mourinho always argued that his second season would be better because with Mourinho they always are. He won the European Cup in his second seasons at Porto and Internazionale and he captured La Liga in his second season in Madrid. After 11 matches of the 2005-06 campaign, Chelsea had 31 points from 11 games, including a 4-1 dismantling ofLiverpool at Anfield.

This time they have 29 and, if this victory over Liverpool was harder fought and dependent on some questionable refereeing, it showed discipline and self-confidence after Chelsea fell a goal behind.

Southampton are hanging in there gamely but Chelsea are now eight points clear of Manchester City, 13 ahead of Manchester United and 15 in front of Liverpool.

"They have learnt a lot since last season," Mourinho said of his players. "They have adapted to my personality and I have adapted to theirs. They are getting experience and we are a better team.

"The second season is normally good for the manager and for the players because they have stability. How many coaches have these players had at Chelsea over the last three or four seasons? At this moment it is the same coach for the second successive year and that brings stability in the culture, the process of leadership and the dynamics."

Asked if his was a side without weaknesses, Mourinho laughed and said: "We are very good at hiding them."

After three successive defeats and one victory in the last six matches, the dynamics at Anfield are hidden and the weaknesses obvious.

Rodgers is a very different manager from Mourinho. His background is in youth-team football, which means he is much more attracted to the idea of buying and developing young players than the man who once employed him.

Mourinho's first job in football was assisting Bobby Robson with first-team affairs in Lisbon, Oporto and Barcelona. He has always preferred to sign ready-made footballers, hence his intense lack of patience at Inter with Mario Balotelli, who was last night recalled into the Italy squad. He did not buy Cesc Fabregas or Diego Costa to develop them.

Mostly funded by the sale of Luis Suarez, Rodgers spent [pounds sterling]116m on eight footballers in the summer and, if you discount Rickie Lambert, their average age was 22. Of those eight, half did not play against Chelsea and of the four who did only Emre Can played well.

There is still plenty of trust in Rodgers as a nurturer of talent but the clamour in the red half of Merseyside is for some A-list footballers in January.

"We have to work harder and smarter to convince these players to come," said Rodgers. "The club has done everything it could over the course of the summer to get the players that are going to improve us.

"But players look at where they want to live, the social factors as well as the football. If someone gets offered more money to go elsewhere, if they want to go to London, there is not much you can do about it.

"The club has shown its hand that it is prepared to pay the wages for top players. Whether they come is another story."

Liverpool 1
Chelsea 2
Goals: Liverpool Can 9; Chelsea Cahill 14, Diego Costa 67.

DAILY Mirror

RIP UP THE RECORD BOOKS

YOU can tell by the wicked smile on his face, Jose Mourinho feels there is something brewing at Chelsea.

He tried to deny it, of course, by pointing out his team have won nothing yet - and cannot possibly go through the Premier League season unbeaten.

He knows, though. He has done it often enough to know exactly what it takes. Forget his protestations. He is not really hiding it, because he has seen something in this Chelsea side that reminds him of all the great teams he has managed.

Asked what it is, he leans back with a theatrical swagger, and taps his temple. It's in the mind? "I think so." The smile, that smile, returns. He has seen it from west London to northern Italy.

"I was a champion in different countries with different clubs and there are points that are always present. I had it at Porto, at Inter Milan and at Real Madrid. I had it here in my first spell and I'm having it now," he said.

"It's something that you have to have always - people who are always ready to sacrifice themselves for their team, people that push to help. I'm so pleased about that."

Chelsea just had so much more knowledge than Liverpool, and so much more energy in the important areas of the field too, and the contrast between Diego Costa and Mario Balotelli illustrated that beautifully, or painfully, where the Reds are concerned.

Despite having his shirt almost torn off his back by Martin Skrtel, Costa's movement was immaculate, terrorising Dejan Lovren as he constantly found space between the home central defenders whilst offering his team-mates the perfect target to play off.

When he did not have the ball he was equally compelling, hurrying the defenders and finding time to close down Steven Gerrrard.

Balotelli (below) offered no such target, movement or energy. Quite why Brendan Rodgers still believes he can play that lone striker's role is a mystery, given the overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Without a striker to play off, Liverpool are impotent, and their record in front of goal this season shows that. Only when Sicknote Sturridge was briefly available did they look anything like a team, and Mourinho, in examining his own side's transformation, offered a searing insight into why.

"We got players to improve the team, not the squad," he said of the Blues' summer transfer business, with an obvious inference for his opponents. "The team had an evolution in everything from last season, they have learned a lot. They know each other well, they are adapted to my personality, I am adapted to them, they are getting experience - we are a better team." With Suarez (and a more robust Sturridge, who was equally important last season),

when Liverpool scored through Emre Can's deflected shot, they would have menaced Chelsea into submission.

Instead, their lead lasted five minutes as set-piece ineptitude was once again exposed.

No fewer than four Chelsea players had a touch within the sixyard box without a defender in marking distance, and keeper Simon Mignolet, who has been singled out for some surgical criticism, has every right to feel aggrieved after a fine initial save from John Terry's header.

The winning goal was equally hapless. Philippe Coutinho, feeble in his defensive duties on the right, allowed an Cesar Azpilicueta break and shot that, though again diverted by Mignolet, was converted by Costa from an instinctive position Balotelli would require a compass and detailed map to find.

"We had two big players - Suarez and Sturridge - who have been real goalscorers. When you've got that it gives defenders and midfielders confidence. For us, for most of the season, we haven't had that," said Anfield boss Rodgers.

He can point to a stonewall penalty not given when Gerrard's shot was clearly handled by Gary Cahill - and Liverpool can rightly ask why a Manchester referee with a history of decisions against them was given this game.

Yet Chelsea deserved their victory, for spirit, as well as quality.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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8 November 2014

LIVERPOOL ECHO

From heartbroken to simply broken. Twice inside seven months, the visit of Chelsea has viciously exposed the shortcomings that continue to taunt Brendan Rodgers and Liverpool. If defeat to the Londoners last season dealt a terminal blow to the Reds' hopes of being crowned champions, this latest setback underlined they remain further away than ever to ending that long wait.
For a variety of reasons, Liverpool haven't recovered from that tortuous April afternoon. And the throbbing hangover that has dulled the senses of the suffering Anfield faithful is now beginning to debilitate the players.
Now, for arguably the first time, questions are being asked of Rodgers, outsmarted once again by former mentor Jose Mourinho.
The Reds boss invited pressure on himself by controversially fielding a largely second-string side in the Champions League loss at Real Madrid on Tuesday. Debate raged. Was it pragmatism? Or was it a rebuke for those who performed so poorly in the dire defeat to Newcastle United last weekend?
The answer came when the teamsheet for yesterday's match revealed all seven players missing from the starting line-up in the Bernabeu had been recalled. Rodgers had gambled. But it backfired as Liverpool posted a incoherent, toothless display in keeping with their hugely underwhelming campaign.
The numbers make for grim reading. Three defeats inside eight days. Five in 11 Premier League games – just one short of their tally for the whole of the previous season. A mammoth 15 points behind leaders Chelsea. Anfield is not a happy place, the natives restless. The second-half substitution of Philippe Coutinho, Liverpool's brightest attacker, was one Rodgers misstep too many for sections of the crowd who greeted the decision with jeers. Fan frustration is understandable, the Reds hugely unconvincing in almost all of their home games this season.
And while Chelsea are rightly favourites to win the title, this wasn't so much a case of them beating Liverpool as the Reds beating themselves.
Rodgers' men weren't wanting for effort but their malaise was encapsulated in three separate incidents. First, Jordan Henderson tackled Steven Gerrard. Later on, substitute Rickie Lambert fell over his own feet chasing the ball.
And with the final touch of the match, as Anfield anticipated one last charge, Simon Mignolet sliced a clearance out for a corner.
Should Rodgers have rewarded his better performers in Madrid with a start? Certainly, with confidence-shot Dejan Lovren an accident waiting to happen, Kolo Toure could feel aggrieved. So too Lucas Leiva, while Fabio Borini would at the very least have offered some support for the isolated Mario Balotelli.
The harsh fact, though, is whoever they fielded, right now Liverpool aren't good enough. Yes, they should have had a penalty late on when Gary Cahill clearly handled a Gerrard shot. But nobody could grumble with the manner in which Chelsea shrugged off Emre Can's deflected opener with Cahill's equaliser and a Diego Costa winner. The return of Daniel Sturridge – the striker should be back for the trip to Crystal Palace in a fortnight – will help, but problems persist in a defence which, in an alarming period of play towards half-time, continually coughed up possession to hand the visitors an initiative they never relinquished.
It had started so well. Can had already had seen a shot strike John Terry and drop narrowly wide when he netted in similar fashion with his first goal for the Reds on nine minutes. After a swift move involving Gerrard, Henderson and Raheem Sterling, Can was fed 40 yards from goal. And with Chelsea standing back, the midfielder drove forward before unleashing a fierce drive that deflected off Cahill to wrongfoot Courtois and nestle into the top corner.
The lead, though, lasted just five minutes as Liverpool were once again undone at a set-piece. A Cesc Fabregas corner from the right was flicked on by Costa to Terry, and although Mignolet did brilliantly to save the Chelsea skipper's header his attempt to keep out Cahill's follow-up succeeded only in dragging the ball inches over the line. Goalline technology confirmed it the equaliser, but it was harsh on Mignolet. The Reds remained unruffled. Coutinho ghosted beyond both Matic and Fabregas on a mazy run that culminated with a shot Courtois parried away. But having dominated possession, Liverpool ended the half in total disarray, only two excellent blocks from Glen Johnson preventing Eden Hazard from testing Mignolet. With chief wind-up merchant Costa and Martin Skrtel having a running battle both on and off the ball, the bad blood that often exists between these sides soon came to the boil. That, though, favoured Chelsea, for whom the second half was far too straightforward.
Costa was too high with an ambitious overhead kick while, at the other end, Sterling forced Courtois into his only save of note after the interval with a low drive.
And the inevitable arrived on 67 minutes when Chelsea clinched their win. Cesar Azpilicueta just about kept the ball in play down the Chelsea left ahead of Coutinho and, after holding off the Brazilian to the byline, his driven cross was parried out by Mignolet only to eventually land at the feet of Costa, who did the rest.
Liverpool had no response, Rodgers' substitutions raising the ire of the crowd rather than improving his team's threat until Cahill's 'save' was missed by lamentable referee Anthony Taylor.
This wasn't to be Liverpool's day. And, so far, nor is it their season.

London Evening Standard

Diego Costa hits second-half winner as Blues come from behind to maintain unbeaten start

Diego Costa's 10th goal of the season maintained Premier League leaders Chelsea's unbeaten record and inflicted yet more pain on Liverpool at Anfield.
Back in April their win on Merseyside signalled the beginning of the end of the Reds' title dream and while this 2-1 victory was not as heartbreaking or damaging for the home side it was just as frustrating.
Midfielder Emre Can's first goal since his summer move from Bayer Leverkusen had given Liverpool an early lead but it has not been a situation they have been comfortable with all season.
Gary Cahill's scrambled 13th-minute effort via the goal decision system ensured Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho could have no complaints and he would have been positively overjoyed with Costa's clinical first-time effort midway through the second half.
While Mourinho is sitting pretty at the top of the table his former protege Brendan Rodgers finds himself under more scrutiny having placed particular emphasis on this game by making seven changes for the midweek Champions League defeat at Real Madrid.
The likes of Steven Gerrard, Raheem Sterling and - somewhat surprisingly considering Kolo Toure's performance at the Bernabeu - centre-back Dejan Lovren were recalled with Can the only alteration to the team which lost at Newcastle last weekend.
Having put in a shift on Tuesday the Germany Under-21 international was tasked with adding some solidity to the midfield but what he also did was put himself about.
Only 30 seconds in, his long-range shot was deflected wide by John Terry but the Chelsea captain's centre-back partner Cahill was not as fortunate as in the eighth minute when Can let fly from distance again and his shot ricocheted off the England defender to leave goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois stranded.
While a first goal in three matches was celebrated with unbridled joy at Anfield most in the crowd understood one would not be enough considering their defensive problems and Chelsea's considerable attacking prowess led by Costa.
Gerrard's slip in this fixture last April to present Demba Ba with the opening goal was the beginning of the end for the club's title hopes but when the Liverpool captain was caught in possession by Costa this time he escaped by conceding a corner, which he himself dived to head clear.
Unsurprisingly a set-piece was again to prove Liverpool's undoing as Chelsea's aerial supremacy saw Costa flick Fabregas' corner on to Terry who was denied by a brilliant save by Simon Mignolet only for the Belgium goalkeeper to carry the ball over the line from Cahill's follow-up.
Technology intervened and a goal was awarded.
Sterling and Philippe Coutinho both looked like troubling Chelsea's defence with driving runs but the visitors soon took control with a spell of pressure which instilled almost panic among Liverpool's ranks but failed to bring a second goal.
Costa, whose running battle with Martin Skrtel was a continuation of their spat in last month's Croatia versus Spain international, hooked an overhead kick into the Anfield Road end early in the second half with Sterling forcing Courtois into a low save after cutting in from the left.
A succession of niggly fouls and personal confrontations saw the match descend into a spell of scrappiness but that was broken by a turn of pace from Cesar Azpilicueta, back in the side after a three-match ban, and a touch of quality from Costa in the 66th minute.
As the Chelsea left-back burst past Coutinho on the touchline there was a suspicion the ball could have gone out of play but the Spain international continued to drill in a cross which Mignolet could touch to Costa who lashed the ball into the net first time.
Liverpool responded with Jordan Henderson's well-timed volley taking a double deflection off Azpilicueta and Nemanja Matic while Gerrard felt he should have had a penalty when his left-footed shot hit the arm of the ubiquitous Cahill late on.
Even the introduction of Rickie Lambert for Mario Balotelli, who had a first-half effort ruled out for offside but offered little threat otherwise, failed to produce an equaliser despite a slightly more direct approach.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

Date: 8 November 2014
Opposition: Chelsea
Competition: League

BBC	Mail	Sunday Times	Sun Telegraph	Independent
	Echo	Observer	Times	Telegraph
	Standard	Sun Independent	Guardian	Mirror

8 November 2014

THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Grief for Gerrard as Costa slips in

Long after the final whistle, the Chelsea fans were chanting Steven Gerrard's name, mocking the slip that had cost Liverpooleverything. The price of this defeat was not nearly as high but, for Liverpool's captain, the pain would have been almost as intense.

Although the title had been lost in the final furlong last season, Liverpool had re-established themselves among the Premier League's elite. There would be the Champions' League money, another round of squad strengthening and then who knew where they might go?

Seven months later, there would have been two sources of frustration racing through Gerrard's mind; the two shots handled by Gary Cahill in the Chelsea area that were both obvious penalties and the knowledge that Liverpool, 15 points behind Chelsea, were out of the title race by November.

The fear is that Brendan Rodgers' Liverpool might be like Kenny Dalglish's Blackburn or the Newcastle of Kevin Keegan; clubs that had one shot at the championship before fading. The deal the Liverpool manager did this week, essentially sacrificing the Champions' League fixture in Madrid for this game, was an admission that Liverpool lack the resources to fight on two fronts.

Liverpool actually played better against Real than they did in the match they had targeted at Anfield. As they watched Dejan Lovren flounder at the heart of the defence and Mario Balotelli playing another minor role in a major game, Kolo Tour[c] and Fabio Borini, both of whom had been hugely impressive in Madrid, must have wondered about the wisdom of it all.

Keeping Emre Can was a decision that was vindicated by a fine display and the opening goal, although the decision to bring him off was jeered by the home crowd, the first moment of dissent Rodgers has experienced since succeeding Dalglish.

Can had the confidence to shoot early and often. His first had struck John Terry's arm and deflected wide. The second hit Cahill and left Thibaut Courtois utterly helpless. Had Liverpool scored this early against Chelsea in April, they would probably have won the title.

For Chelsea's manager there was never any sense that this goal would be decisive. "I am not afraid to go behind," Jose Mourinho reflected. "This team is very stable and when they scored it was not a drama for me or for my team.

"The way they performed in the second half was an expression of ambition and self-belief. I do not believe we will go through the season unbeaten but, if we do lose a game, it will not have an impact."

Chelsea deserved to be level but there was a lingering irony about the manner in which they equalised. Mourinho has never quite forgotten Luis Garcia's 'ghost goal' that denied Chelsea a place in the European Cup final nine years ago. Here, at the same goal beneath the Kop, Simon Mignolet appeared to have brilliantly saved Cahill's header but the sensors detected it had crossed the line.

Liverpool's composure appeared to dissolve. For a quarter of an hour in the first half, they appeared not to know how to clear their own lines. The ball kept coming back towards Mignolet and Mourinho would have been angered that Chelsea had not made more of their superiority, wonderfully co-ordinated by Nemanja Matic.

In the second half, Liverpool cracked. Cesar Azpilicueta drove down the Chelsea left flank and delivered a cross that Mignolet could only push out into Diego Costa's path. Given his form, there was only one possible outcome and Chelsea's control was complete until, in the final moments, Gerrard's shot struck Cahill's arm. The Chelsea fans were not the only ones mocking Liverpool's captain. A horse called Gerrard's Slip was running in the 12.40 at Doncaster. It finished 11th.

Liverpool: (4-3-3) Mignolet; Johnson, Skrtel, Lovren, Moreno; Can (Allen, 70), Gerrard, Henderson; Sterling, Balotelli (Lambert, 79), Coutinho (Borini, 70).

Chelsea: (4-3-2-1) Courtois; Ivanovic, Terry, Cahill, Azpilicueta; Matic, Fabregas, Ramires (Willian, 54); Oscar, Hazard (Filipe Luis, 90); Costa (Drogba, 90).

Referee: Anthony Taylor.

Man of the match: Matic (Chelsea)

Match rating: 7/10

The Sunday Telegraph

Mourinho revels as ringmaster

Liverpool 1 Can 9

Chelsea 2 Cahill 14, Costa 67 Att: 44,698

Jose Mourinho had gleefully regaled that the last time Chelsea arrived in Liverpool, they did so determined not be the "clowns" in an Anfield circus that appeared set to roll up, roll up and deliver Brendan Rodgers' side as champions. Chelsea custard-pied that celebration but they are now, despite their protestations, in something of a carnival procession of their own.

Mourinho is the circus master and the martinet conducting an increasingly pyrotechnic approach to this title contest. Can anyone stop Chelsea? It does not appear likely. Last time Chelsea came and spoiled and, as Rodgers said, "parked two buses" with time wasting and fortune in their favour as Steven Gerrard slipped - and the rest became history. As the Chelsea fans reminded everyone.

This time there was no need for that. Chelsea were simply too good, too strong with that powerful spine of Thibaut Courtois, John Terry, Nemanja Matic and, above all, the charismatically threatening Diego Costa creating such an environment of power and belief that they may simply be unstoppable.

The new Invincibles? It is possible even as Mourinho understandably continues to tut 'no' and insist the bad times will come - although he also expects them not to last too long. One match, maybe. But, rationally, Chelsea might well go through this league season unbeaten.

Remember they have now been to both Manchester and Liverpool clubs and never looked like losing in any of those matches.

If Mourinho is the master then Costa is his spiky apprentice. The Spaniard relishes the battle and he deliberately provoked Martin Sktrel into a running skirmish that had the inevitable consequence. Costa became the match winner - striking his 10th goal overall in his first season in this league. At one point the back of his shirt was shredded - but it was Liverpool's hopes that were ripped up.

Rodgers' team now flounder 15 points behind Chelsea. Any pretence of a title challenge has gone. It is now about desperately trying to re-emerge into that top four and Rodgers is coming under increasing scrutiny.

"For us the focus is getting into the top four and that was always the aim for us giving the changes we have had, he said. "It's a difficult moment."

It has been a difficult week.

Defeat to Newcastle United followed by the controversy over fielding a weakened team in the defeat by Real Madrid and now this loss to Chelsea. He did not get the vindication. Rodgers is taking it on the chin, and he has to, but he also has to try and eke better performances out of some of his players who are badly letting him and Liverpool down at the moment.

Chief among those remains Mario Balotelli. Daniel Sturridge talked optimistically about returning from injury after the international break and although Rodgers sounded more cautious he cannot return soon enough.

Then there is Dejan Lovren who was such a bag of nerves in defence that it affected his teammates including goalkeeper Simon Mignolet. The list goes on. Few of the new signings have convinced.

Liverpool will understandably, rightly dwell on a penalty that was not given - and should have been - after referee Anthony Taylor ignored the pleas when Gary Cahill clearly handled Gerrard's shot. But even if they had scored who is to say that Chelsea would not, again, have stepped up a gear to claim the points? No one would have bet against that.

"It is bitterly disappointing for us it is a big decision in a big game that we did not get," Rodgers said. "It was not even a doubt. It was a clear, clear handball." It was. This was that touch of champions-elect from Mourinho's team and the manager has the assured look of a man who expects.

Mourinho expects success and even when Chelsea fell behind, through Emre Can's first goal for Liverpool, as the midfielder strode forward to strike from distance, taking a heavy deflection of Cahill to beat Courtois, there was no sense of panic. Instead that panic belonged to Liverpool.

"When they scored it was not a drama for me, not a drama for the team," Mourinho said. His team defended and attacked better than their opponents and had that core belief that adversity was simply a fleeting challenge rather than a fatal blow. Even so Mourinho will have afforded himself a smile at the manner in which Chelsea drew level - with the award being made through goal-line technology. It came, of course, at the Kop end where Luis Garcia had so famously scored that so-called 'ghost goal' in the epic Champions League semi-final between these two clubs a decade ago.

This time the impressive Oscar met a corner and headed goalwards for Terry to direct another header that was superbly beaten out by Mignolet. The ball deflected off Matic to Cahill who stabbed it towards the net.

Mignolet again saved but his momentum took him back and the ball, just, crossed the line.

It was Chelsea who scored again with Cesar Azpilicueta scampering down the left and, again only just, keeping the ball in to whip in a cross that Mignolet deflected out. Unfortunately it was collected by Costa who, with that instant, predatory instinct, fired the ball across and into the net.

"He is back," Mourinho, who later claimed that another Spaniard Cesc Fabregas is unfit for international duty, said simply.

Costa, his manager and Chelsea look ominous. There is no clowning around.

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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8 November 2014

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Rodgers feels the wrath of supporters after his Euro gamble backfires; Liverpool manager adamant his methods are right in face of criticism

IN THE 70th minute at Anfield yesterday, the relationship between Brendan Rodgers and the supporters of Liverpool changed. It was at that point, as he made the double substitution to remove Philippe Coutinho and Emre Can, that derision tumbled down from the main stand and on to the shoulders of the Liverpool manager.

It was a double-take moment, such was the level of criticism. Rodgers could do no wrong last season, when his side set off on such a breathtaking and unexpected shot at the title that supporters would jam the streets around the stadium to produce something more often seen in South American football. That felt a very long time ago when Coutinho left the field and supporters hurled insults at their manager instead of optimism at a team bus.

This has been a long and draining week for Rodgers. He has faced up to it well, but his team looks spent and devoid of ideas. Defeat yesterday was their third inside a week. It is now one victory in the past six games, a home success against Swansea. In seven games against Jose Mourinho, he has not won.

Liverpool had played a weakened team in Madrid. Of the eight players Rodgers brought in for that game, seven were back on the sidelines yesterday. It was an episode that brought questions as to whether he understood the European heritage that is so much a part of the fabric of this club. He needed to come out of yesterday with something more tangible for the supporters than a late penalty appeal that was turned down.

Liverpool can disappear as a force as quickly as they arrived. Rodgers is losing friends. The Champions League appearing as a burden is bizarre given how hard Liverpool fought to get there.

Rodgers said after yesterday's defeat that the target was a top-four place, and that in itself was a fairly bold admission considering the club owners spent PS120m in the summer on a team that had come within two points of the title last season.

Luis Suarez leaving was not supposed to send Liverpool back to being the peripheral club they had become in the previous four seasons of fighting to get into the top six.

"The changes raised a lot of criticism, which I can take," said Rodgers. "There is no issue with that. It was unfair disservice to the players. Kolo Toure is not a reserve player. He is an experienced player, Lallana is a full international. I made the call. The players have been brilliant. We just haven't got the results. It puts pressure on when you don't get results. We have to refocus."

When he was asked about the jeers for his decisions, he said: "Yes, it is to be expected. We weren't creating enough in the game to change the momentum and bring on an extra striker. The supporters are a big part of what we are doing here.

"Of course they will be frustrated, they have lost three games in the week and they are not used to that. There is a wee bit of frustration there, I understand that. If I could run the week again we'd hopefully win the games. We plan and prepare the team the best we can. I wouldn't do anything differently at all. We just didn't get the results. It is an experience and we can use it and be better for it."

What causes such consternation is the turnaround and the speed of it.

Chelsea hid in this fixture last season. They did not yesterday. Liverpool lost more comfortably than the score suggests. They lost more comfortably than the scoreline suggested at the Bernabeu too and they lost to a Newcastle side last week who have been desperate in the league this term.

There is much for Rodgers to ponder and the speed of the turnaround between his club and Chelsea will be at the forefront of his thoughts.

Mourinho again insisted his side cannot go through the season undefeated. Just 11 games in, the suggestion that thay can shows respect for the power within his remodelled team, something he accepted.

"It is possible to be champion and not go unbeaten," he said. "We see ourselves as title contenders and we want to play off that. In the Premier League I don't believe we will be unbeaten. It's a good start. I believe my team can keep this stability but we can lose tomorrow and my team is the same. One day we will lose and the next day we will win again. We will play bad but we will recover the quality of our game. We are a stable team.

"It was a fantastic performance. Expression of ambition in the second half against Liverpool at Anfield. Every team accepts a point [here] as a good result. My team didn't accept. The way they performed in the second half was the expression of that ambition and self-belief and the confidence they have in that moment.

"It was fantastic. Three important points. Sometimes you get points and don't deserve it. Today, that is not the case. The best team won."

There was no argument there. Not one.

The Observer

Costa ties it up as Reds come apart at the seams

This time there was no need for Jose Mourinho to worry unduly about Chelsea's opponents. There was no strategic time-wasting and none of the ultra-defensive tactics that led to Brendan Rodgers accusing him of "parking two buses" in front of goal when the sides met last season. Liverpool, to put it bluntly, do not inspire that kind of trepidation any more and Chelsea could dismantle them without any complaints about their methods.

They did it with the look of champions-in-waiting whereas it was difficult at times to remember that Rodgers had actually rested seven of these players when Liverpool lost to Real Madrid in midweek. Mario Balotelli's half-hearted efforts are becoming the norm at Anfield but it was rare to see Steven Gerrard play with such diminished qualities. Chelsea's fans relentlessly reminded Gerrard of his infamous mistake from this fixture last season and there was another dose of schadenfreude in the form of a horse by the name of Gerrard's Slip running in the 12.40 at Doncaster. Nothing, however, could have hurt the Liverpool captain more than his own performance and the way his team were overwhelmed.

It left Liverpool 15 points off their opponents at the top of the league and, for the first time, there was open dissent from the crowd towards Rodgers, angrily objecting to his decision to take off Philippe Coutinho and Emre Can for Fabio Borini and Joe Allen shortly after Diego Costa had scored Chelsea's second goal. Can had opened the scoring with a deflected shot in the ninth minute but he and Coutinho, in fairness to Rodgers, had faded badly. The bigger mystery was how Balotelli lasted so long. When he was substituted later on, the away end serenaded him with "Fernando Torres, he's better than you" - and it's not as if Chelsea's fans ever properly rated Torres. Chelsea did have to withstand some late pressure and Liverpool have legitimate grievances about that moment, after 87 minutes, when Gary Cahill blocked a Gerrard shot with his hand. The referee, Anthony Taylor, was guilty of missing a clear penalty but Rodgers was stretching the truth when he tried to argue a draw would have been an accurate assessment of how the contest went. The truth is that Chelsea were the more rounded side for at least three-quarters of the game. They played with control and know-how, with Nemanja Matic outstanding in midfield and Cesc Fabregas only marginally subdued by Jordan Henderson's man-marking. Fabregas, Mourinho revealed afterwards, had played despite a hamstring injury and may now miss a couple of matches. The same applies to Ramires, with a groin problem. "They were really in trouble but they put themselves there for the team," Mourinho said. It typified the spirit of his side. Chelsea had to show all their competitive courage, too, bearing in mind the way the game started, with Can's 25-yard shot taking a deflection off Cahill to wrong-foot Thibaut Courtois for the early breakthrough. Unfortunately for Liverpool, their vulnerability from set pieces will always encourage opponents and once again it was a significant factor in everything unravelling. The equaliser came five minutes later from a corner, swung over by Fabregas and initially headed on by Costa. John Terry had the first attempt at goal and Simon Mignolet's reflex save fell to Cahill via a slight touch off Matic. This time the goalline technology showed Cahill's shot had squeezed past Liverpool's goalkeeper. What an indictment for the home side that, in a matter of seconds, four Chelsea players had touched the ball in the six-yard area without a defender getting near. For the rest of the first half it was startling to see so many unforced errors from Liverpool's players and so much panic in the face of Chelsea pressure. Chelsea out-passed and outplayed them and, even though there were no more goals, it was rare to see aLiverpool side look so hassled on their own pitch. Gerrard could be seen misplacing passes, kicking the ball against Henderson at one point, but it was his lack of mobility that was shocking and the frequency with which opponents turned past him. Balotelli was ineffectual and frustratingly lazy whereas Rodgers surely made a mistake selecting Dejan Lovren when Kolo Toure had excelled in the Bernabeu. Lovren did little to alter the view his pounds 20m acquisition has been dismal business on Liverpool's part. He was signed to bring some leadership to the Liverpool defence but there was absolutely none and his day could probably be summed up by the moment Oscar treated him to a nutmeg. Eden Hazard later did the same on Henderson. Hazard had the beating of Glen Johnson while Branislav Ivanovic, a right-back, apparently, had long spells operating as an extra forward and Costa, this battering-ram of a striker, did everything he could to unsettle Liverpool's defence. Costa gives the impression sometimes that he cannot see a belt without punching below it. He seemed determined to embroil Martin Skrtel in a running feud and, by half-time, they were having to be held apart. More importantly, the Spain international is a lethal finisher. Midway through the second half, Cesar Azpilicueta ran down the left, kept the ball in play and turned brilliantly inside Coutinho. Mignolet turned his effort away but the loose ball flicked off Alberto Moreno into Costa's path. His finish was drilled in and when the game finished in a moment of tragicomedy - Mignolet kicking a simple backpass behind his goal - Liverpool were left to reflect how far they fallen since the last occasion Chelsea were in town.

LIVERPOOL Mignolet; Johnson, Lovren, Skrtel, Moreno; Can (Allen 80), Gerrard, Henderson; Coutinho (Borini 70), Sterling-; Balotelli- (Lambert 79)
Subs not used Jones, Toure, Lallana, Lucas,
CHELSEA Courtois-; Ivanovic-, Cahill, Terry, Azpilicueta; Matic-, Fabregas; Ramires (Willian 54), Oscar-, Hazard (Filipe Luis 90); Costa- (Drogba 90)
Subs not used Cech, Zouma, Mikel, Remy Anfield 44,698 Referee Anthony Taylor

Compiled by Graeme Riley

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8 November 2014

BBC

Chelsea strengthened their grip on the Premier League title race as they came from behind to win at Liverpool.
Emre Can's deflected shot gave Liverpool an early lead but Gary Cahill swiftly levelled for Chelsea with the help of goalline technology, confirming that Reds keeper Simon Mignolet had carried his effort over the line.
Diego Costa - a one-time target for Liverpool who had a running battle with Martin Skrtel throughout - secured the three points for Jose Mourinho's side midway through the second half to maintain their unbeaten league record.
Chelsea were superior overall, although Liverpool will complain bitterly they should have had a late penalty when Cahill appeared to handle Steven Gerrard's shot.
Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers made seven changes to the weakened sidedefeated by Real Madrid in the Champions League this week - but his ploy of making the Chelsea game a priority failed as they were condemned to defeat.
For Liverpool, it was also a sobering afternoon and an illustration of how these two teams have gone in opposite directions since they last met here in April.
On that day Liverpool were on course for the title, only for Chelsea to win 2-0 and change the course of the race that was eventually won by Manchester City.
Since then the Reds have lost their talisman Luis Suarez, as well as injured Daniel Sturridge, while Chelsea have strengthened with the bustling, aggressive figure of Costa - and what a difference he has made.
The visitors looked dangerous and stronger physically and talk of a potential 'Invincibles' campaign will only increase after this win.
Rodgers' rearranged side took an early lead when Can's long-range shot took a decisive deflection off Cahill to leave keeper Thibaut Courtois wrong-footed.
Liverpool needed to protect their advantage and, if possible, build on it but more of the defensive sloppiness that has characterised their season saw Chelsea equalise within five minutes.
Costa flicked on Cesc Fabregas's corner and even though Mignolet saved brilliantly from John Terry's header, he could only carry Cahill's effort from the rebound over the line, with confirmation provided by goalline technology.
The running battle between Costa and defender Skrtel was a theme of the first half, with referee Anthony Taylor taking a very lenient approach to the constant physical clashes between the pair, deciding to keep his card in his pocket.
Chelsea's greater power was winning influence in midfield and on a couple of occasions Liverpool's defenders needed to block in desperation as Eden Hazard found space.
The home team's best hope was the pace and dash of Philippe Coutinho and Raheem Sterling, who both tested Courtois on the rare occasions Liverpool were able to get in behind Chelsea's defence.
Mourinho's man were in front after 67 minutes when Cesar Azpilicueta escaped on the left - although Liverpool's fans felt the ball had gone out - and when Mignolet could only palm his cross into the path of Costa, the striker drilled home an unerring finish.
Rodgers responded with a double change but it was not one that was well-received. The removal of Can and Coutinho was greeted with loud jeers as Joe Allen and Fabio Borini came on.
Liverpool mounted a late rally of sorts, culminating in that penalty appeal, but Chelsea increasingly have a look of Premier League champions even after so few games.

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Full time Match ends, Liverpool 1, Chelsea 2.
90:00+5:58Full time Second Half ends, Liverpool 1, Chelsea 2.
90:00+5:54 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.
90:00+4:42Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. Filipe Luis replaces Eden Hazard.
90:00+3:05Booking Thibaut Courtois (Chelsea is shown the yellow card.
90:00+2:42 Attempt missed. Fabio Borini (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Alberto Moreno with a cross.
90:00+0:24 Foul by Fabio Borini (Liverpool.
90:00+0:24 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.
89:33Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. Didier Drogba replaces Diego Costa because of an injury.
89:29 Delay over. They are ready to continue.
89:15 Delay in match Diego Costa (Chelsea because of an injury.
87:03 Attempt blocked. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Rickie Lambert with a headed pass.
86:13Booking Diego Costa (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
86:09 Glen Johnson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
86:09 Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.
84:04 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
84:04 Foul by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.
82:57 Foul by Martin Skrtel (Liverpool.
82:57 Gary Cahill (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.
82:08Booking Oscar (Chelsea is shown the yellow card.
82:05 Glen Johnson (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.
82:05 Foul by Oscar (Chelsea.
80:15 Foul by Raheem Sterling (Liverpool.
80:15 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.
78:55Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Rickie Lambert replaces Mario Balotelli.
77:15 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by John Terry.
77:12 Attempt blocked. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Joe Allen.
76:53 Attempt blocked. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Joe Allen.
76:07 Fabio Borini (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
76:07 Foul by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.
74:24 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nemanja Matic.
74:23 Attempt blocked. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.
72:34 Offside, Liverpool. Alberto Moreno tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside.
70:18 Offside, Liverpool. Alberto Moreno tries a through ball, but Fabio Borini is caught offside.
69:22Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Joe Allen replaces Emre Can.
69:06Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Fabio Borini replaces Philippe Coutinho.
68:40Booking Nemanja Matic (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
68:34 Glen Johnson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.
68:34 Foul by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.
66:19Goal scored Goal!Goal! Liverpool 1, Chelsea 2. Diego Costa (Chelsea right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner.
64:20Booking Mario Balotelli (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
64:16 Foul by Mario Balotelli (Liverpool.
64:16 Oscar (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.
63:32 Delay over. They are ready to continue.
62:34 Delay in match Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea because of an injury.
61:54 Offside, Liverpool. Raheem Sterling tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside.
58:20 Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.
58:20 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.
56:48 Attempt blocked. Willian (Chelsea right footed shot from the right side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Diego Costa.
53:44Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Chelsea. Willian replaces Ramires.
53:00 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.
52:57 Attempt blocked. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Cesc Fàbregas.
52:43 Attempt saved. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.
50:21 Attempt missed. Diego Costa (Chelsea right footed shot from the centre of the box is just a bit too high.
49:20 Attempt missed. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box misses to the right. Assisted by César Azpilicueta.
47:59Booking Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
47:52 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
47:52 Foul by Branislav Ivanovic (Chelsea.
47:03 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Philippe Coutinho.
45:00 Second Half begins Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1.
45:00+1:03Half time First Half ends, Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1.
44:37 Offside, Liverpool. Dejan Lovren tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside.
43:59 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
43:59 Foul by Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea.
42:34Booking Raheem Sterling (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.
42:24 Foul by Raheem Sterling (Liverpool.
42:24 Ramires (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.
42:18 Attempt blocked. Oscar (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Diego Costa with a headed pass.
41:01 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.
40:29 Attempt saved. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Diego Costa.
35:52 Attempt saved. Diego Costa (Chelsea right footed shot from the left side of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Eden Hazard.
35:12 Attempt blocked. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Ramires.
34:30 Martin Skrtel (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
34:30 Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.
33:33 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Glen Johnson.
33:31 Attempt blocked. Eden Hazard (Chelsea right footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Oscar.
32:48 Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool.
32:48 Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.
32:30 Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool.
32:30 Oscar (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.
31:34 Offside, Chelsea. Cesc Fàbregas tries a through ball, but Diego Costa is caught offside.
28:06 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.
28:03 Attempt blocked. Diego Costa (Chelsea left footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Eden Hazard.
25:51 Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Emre Can.
24:19 Foul by Glen Johnson (Liverpool.
24:19 Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.
23:37 Mario Balotelli (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing.
23:37 Foul by César Azpilicueta (Chelsea.
21:44 Martin Skrtel (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.
21:44 Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.
20:10 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Oscar.
20:08 Attempt blocked. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool left footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked.
20:06 Attempt blocked. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Steven Gerrard.
19:33 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by César Azpilicueta.
18:20 Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside.
17:09 Mario Balotelli (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.
17:09 Foul by Ramires (Chelsea.
15:16 Attempt missed. Eden Hazard (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Ramires.
13:37Goal scored Goal!Goal! Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1. Gary Cahill (Chelsea right footed shot from the left side of the six yard box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Nemanja Matic following a corner.
13:35 Attempt saved. John Terry (Chelsea header from the centre of the box is saved in the bottom left corner. Assisted by Diego Costa with a headed pass.
13:01 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Raheem Sterling.
11:37 Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Martin Skrtel.
11:35 Attempt blocked. Diego Costa (Chelsea left footed shot from the left side of the box is blocked.
8:19Goal scored Goal!Goal! Liverpool 1, Chelsea 0. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Raheem Sterling.
4:25 Offside, Liverpool. Martin Skrtel tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside.
1:43 Attempt saved. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. Assisted by Emre Can with a headed pass.
1:19 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.
1:19 Foul by Ramires (Chelsea.
0:37 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by John Terry.
0:32 Attempt blocked. Emre Can (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked.
0:00 First Half begins.
0:00 Lineups are announced and players are warming up.

Compiled by Graeme Riley