

Date: 19 April 2015
Opposition: Aston Villa
Competition: FA Cup

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail
Independent	Mail	BBC

19 April 2015

THE TIMES

Liverpool cup fairytale left in ruins by Villa

Aston Villa 2 Benteke 36, Delph 54

Liverpool 1 Referee M Oliver Attendance 85,416

There has been no magic wand, Tim Sherwood said last night, lamenting the time taken to make the desired impact as Aston Villa manager. Try telling Villa's jubilant supporters that. They had just reached their first FA Cup final since 2000 and were dreaming of winning the trophy for the first time since 1957. In barely nine weeks since Sherwood took charge, a depressed club has been reinvigorated. Inspired by the energy of Fabian Delph and the poise of young Jack Grealish in midfield, Villa fully deserved a victory that will bring them back to Wembley Stadium to take on Arsenal in the final on May 30. While Steven Gerrard's dreams of an FA Cup final farewell from Liverpool -- a Hollywood ending, on his 35th birthday, before he departs for LA Galaxy -- ended in bitter disappointment, Villa's fans will see no shortage of romance in their overdue resurgence after the stagnation of recent years. Tenacious, focused, energetic and purposeful, Villa were everything their opponents were not. This was a wretched afternoon for Gerrard and for Liverpool, whose manager, Brendan Rodgers, admitted this was nothing like the first time his team had "come up short" when it really mattered, when the stakes were highest.

Nobody could accuse Villa of that. So listless in the final months of Paul Lambert's tenure -- so listless ever since Martin O'Neill departed in the summer of 2010, in fact -- they have been reenergised under Sherwood. They looked the more confident, assured team even before Philippe Coutinho, with the help of a deflection off Jones Okore, put Liverpool ahead on the half-hour. Undeterred, they prevailed through goals from Christian Benteke and Delph, with Grealish involved on both occasions. There is no rocket science behind Villa's improvement. Sherwood has merely injected some much-needed belief and energy into a squad that has been drifting towards relegation from the Barclays Premier League. Belief and energy can take a team a long way.

Rodgers, by contrast, spent almost the entire afternoon trying to find ways to change a game plan that, whatever he tried, appeared to play into Villa's hands. Explaining the changes -- from 3-4-2-1 to various manifestations of 4-3-3 and finally to 4-4-2 -- he spoke of his desperation to "spark some energy and flow into our game", saying his team had been "too passive". The diagnosis was spot-on, but no remedy stopped the malaise. Sherwood suggested afterwards that Liverpool's reshuffles had held little interest to him. Attitude matters more to him than strategy. Yesterday offered a perfect illustration why. In the absence of the injured Gabriel Agbonlahor, he chose to play Charles N'Zogbia and Grealish in advanced roles behind Benteke, suggesting that this would trouble Liverpool's three-man defence. Since it was all going so well, he was not about to change the system just because Rodgers had made changes.

Villa were the more impressive from the start, with N'Zogbia forcing Simon Mignolet into an awkward save, at full stretch.

Briefly, Liverpool took control, exploiting Villa's unease as they adjusted to their own reshuffle, forced by an injury to Nathan Baker. Okore, his replacement, did well to tackle Jordan Henderson in the penalty area, but he was too casual in passing the ball to Delph, who was similarly guilty as he dawdled into Joe Allen's challenge. From there it was Allen to Raheem Sterling, whose carefully weighted pass was controlled delightfully by Coutinho on his way into the penalty area before his shot was deflected in by Okore. You might have thought that the goal would stabilise Liverpool and deflate Villa. It did neither, thanks in part to Delph, who soon put the aberration behind him. Within six minutes Villa were level. Again they came down the left-hand side, as Delph exchanged passes with Grealish and continued his run into the penalty area. With Liverpool's defence stretched, Delph picked out Benteke, whose side-foot shot had just enough power to beat Mignolet. Liverpool had a brief flurry before the interval -- a shot by Coutinho deflected wide, a header by Dejan Lovren wide from Gerrard's corner -- but, with Sterling struggling to escape the shadow of Ron Vlaar, their lack of a focal point in attack was a serious concern to Rodgers. The introduction of Mario Balotelli meant a 4-3-3 formation, with Gerrard back in the anchor role in midfield. Still Villa had more joy with Plan A. Nine minutes into the second half, Delph released Benteke, who, pushed wide, played a back-heel into the path of Grealish, who sent Delph into the penalty area. Delph cut inside feeble challenges from Emre Can and Lovren and threaded a shot past Mignolet to put Villa 2-1 up. Villa threatened a third goal soon afterwards. This time Grealish was the one breaking from midfield, but, when the ball ran loose, Kieran Richardson wasted the opportunity.

It was not until the final ten minutes that Liverpool hinted at an equaliser.

Gerrard, dropping deeper with every tactical change, had made little impact in any of his roles, but, perhaps inevitably, he began to come to the fore as his and Liverpool's desperation grew in the closing stages. With four minutes remaining, from a corner by Coutinho, his header beat Shay Given, but Richardson denied him with a goalline clearance. Two minutes later, from Gerrard's pass, Balotelli put the ball in the net, but was flagged offside -- wrongly, it transpired.

On another day, a beaten manager might have used such an error as a straw to clutch. Rodgers was not in the mood. "The best team won," the Liverpool manager said. Sherwood agreed -- and quite right too.

the guardian

Aston Villa's Fabian Delph ruins Steven Gerrard's Liverpool FA Cup dream

The restorative powers of Tim Sherwood know no bounds. A first FA Cup final in 15 years awaits Aston Villa after a team invigorated by the arrival of its new manager two months ago incinerated the script of Steven Gerrard's dream farewell to Liverpool. Brendan Rodgers was left rummaging for answers amid the ashes. Villa may have edged away from danger in the Premier League since Sherwood breezed into Villa Park in February but they were relegated to a sideshow in the build-up to this FA Cup semi-final by the focus on Gerrard's so-called date with destiny on 30 May. A Wembley showpiece on the occasion of the Liverpool captain's 35th birthday, bidding adieu to a glittering career with another piece of silverware; it seemed pre-ordained.

Instead, Liverpool froze, Rodgers was tactically outwitted by the Villa manager and Fabian Delph plus Jack Grealish were the outstanding midfielders on display. Sherwood's side drove into the final against Arsenal with a confident, energetic and stylish performance, a perfectly executed gameplan and the club's first FA Cup win over Liverpool since the semi-final of 1897. Ron Vlaar shone amid a disrupted defence and Christian Benteke continued his prolific form with a ninth goal in his last seven outings. Delph's winner early in the second half was deserved on an individual and collective basis.

By contrast, Liverpool were subdued and anonymous until stirring late on when Gerrard had a header cleared off the line by Kieran Richardson and substitute Mario Balotelli had a goal disallowed for an incorrect offside decision. Rodgers was submerged in a tactical mess of his own making, ripping up his starting formation after only 25 minutes, changing his forward line at half-time and ending the game with almost every outfield Liverpool player in a different position to where they started. It was clarity versus confusion, and clarity inevitably won. Rodgers is now the first Liverpool manager since Phil Taylor in the 1950s not to win a trophy in his first three seasons at Anfield and the scrutiny will be intense if, as appears likely, Champions League qualification remains out of reach this season. But for a brief spell that yielded the opening goal for Philippe Coutinho, the 25 points and 10 places that separated the semi-finalists in the Premier League appeared an illusion. Villa's front three pressed to the same telling effect as Manchester United and Arsenal had done in recent league wins over Liverpool. "We knew we'd cause Liverpool problems if we played with two No10s," said Sherwood, who also tellingly admitted he "wasn't bothered" about what Rodgers' team intended to do as an attacking threat. In the event, it was minimal, with Balotelli posing more problems in a 45-minute substitute's appearance than anyone else in yellow.

Sherwood suffered disruption before and during the tie with Gabriel Agbonlahor failing to recover from a hamstring injury sustained the previous weekend at Tottenham Hotspur. The liberating effect of that 1-0 win at White Hart Lane resonated at Wembley. In the absence of Agbonlahor, Grealish and Charles N'Zogbia complemented the power of Benteke with tireless, creative performances in attack. The 19-year-old Grealish in particular relished the occasion, driving at Emre Can throughout and posing a constant threat around the Liverpool area. No wonder the England Under-21 head coach, Gareth Southgate, is trying to test the youngster's allegiance to the Republic of Ireland.

Simon Mignolet produced the first save of the game from N'Zogbia and it required a vital interception from Dejan Lovren to prevent the French midfielder releasing Benteke clean through on goal. All Liverpool had to offer in the opening 25 minutes was an optimistic penalty claim. Delph caught Raheem Sterling's heel as the 20-year-old, initially leading his side's attack in place of the absent and unreliable Daniel Sturridge, raced into the area. Referee Michael Oliver was rightly unmoved. It took another injury blow for Villa plus a necessary tactical switch from Rodgers to inject menace into Liverpool's performance. Nathan Baker's first start since January -- in place of the injured Ciaran Clark -- ended with a recurrence of a serious knee injury in the 25th minute. Jores Okore entered the fray as Rodgers abandoned his three-man defence, and the experiment of Gerrard operating anonymously behind Sterling, to go to 4-3-3. Suddenly Liverpool had the impetus and the lead.

Coutinho had been the driving force behind Liverpool's run to the semi-final and started the move by picking out Jordan Henderson's run into the penalty area.

The midfielder's cross should have been routine for Okore but Villa's fourth-choice centre-half dwelt too long on the ball, Delph was also unable to clear, and Liverpool regained possession on the edge of the box. Sterling switched the play into Coutinho's darting run and the Brazilian, under pressure from three Villa defenders, tucked a shot beyond Shay Given via Okore's right knee.

Villa's momentum and belief, however, could not be checked and they were level within six minutes. Having sprinted down the left before exchanging passes with Grealish, Delph delivered an inviting pass into Benteke lurking with intent just inside the Liverpool area. The Belgian international stroked a confident finish out of Mignolet's reach. Rodgers introduced Balotelli at the interval but the flow of the game remained unchecked. Alarming for the Liverpool manager, his team's defending deteriorated and Delph took full advantage to put Villa ahead with a fine team goal. The Villa captain broke from the centre circle and found Benteke, whose back-heel found Grealish -- who spotted that Delph had continued his run into the area. Collecting Grealish's measured pass, Delph cut back inside the flat-

Date: 19 April 2015

Opposition: Aston Villa

Competition: FA Cup

Times	Telegraph	Echo
Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail
Independent	Mail	BBC

footed Lovren and Can before beating Mignolet from close range. Liverpool's response was minimal until the final 10 minutes. Lovren put a free header over from Gerrard's corner, Richardson denied the Liverpool captain's header from a Coutinho corner and then came the game's controversy when Balotelli collected Gerrard's raking pass and beat Given only for an errant offside decision to curtail the celebrations. Seconds later, Liverpool were on their knees and out.

Man of the match: Fabian Delph (Aston Villa)

TheMail

SHERWOOD THE MAN WHO WRITES FAIRYTALES

ASTON VILLA 2 Benteke 36 Delph 54 LIVERPOOL 1 Coutinho 30

PARTISAN emotions aside, it was a great day -- for Aston Villa, for Tim Sherwood, for the FA Cup and, in its own way, for English football, too.

Here was another match that demonstrated the young talent produced in England is good enough, if only it is given the chance. The worry is that these players all seem to get their opportunity from the same man.

After Harry Kane at Tottenham, Sherwood has now promoted the cause of 19-year-old Jack Grealish. Cup success runs in the family for young Jack. His great-great grandfather Billy Garraty was man of the match when Aston Villa beat Newcastle to the FA Cup in 1905. Back then, the final was played at Crystal Palace.

Grealish grew up with Garraty's photograph on the wall and the dream he might one day emulate him. At the Villa being built by Sherwood, he will surely get his chance. With Gabriel Agbonlahor unfit, Villa's manager had a few options. He didn't have to select the teenager who started his first Premier League game 13 days ago. He could have played it safe. But that is not Sherwood's way. Good enough, old enough, is his motto -- and Grealish was both. It was a toss-up between him and Fabian Delph for man of the match and when Grealish was replaced by Joe Cole with seven minutes to go, it was to a justified ovation.

Grealish had a hand in both goals and was the pick of the youth on display.

Raheem Sterling, eyeing bigger fish than Liverpool, may wish to gather his focus. By comparison, he was anonymous. YES, Villa rode their luck on occasions. Delph may have given away a penalty for a clumsy challenge on Sterling in the first half, and in the second Mario Balotelli had the ball in the net only to be wrongly ruled offside. The best team still won, and this grand competition will welcome Villa to the final for the first time in 15 years. Villa last got their hands on the trophy in 1957. It is good to have new blood in the final. How did they do it? Basically, Villa knew what they were about, Liverpool did not. Liverpool switched from a back three to a back four, brought Balotelli on at half-time, packed five in midfield. Not even the decision to select the warrior Steven Gerrard paid off.

Brendan Rodgers went with his talismanic captain -- as most would -- yet Gerrard's Roy of the Rovers moments are becoming few and far between. Late in the game he stood over a free-kick from his favourite range, and planted it straight into the arms of Shay Given. Another shot went massively wide. He had a header from a Philippe Coutinho corner with four minutes to go but Kieran Richardson was equal to it on the line. At the end, Tom Cleverley, his former England team-mate, was the first to console him -- but there will be no Wembley farewell to cap Gerrard's career in England. The best he can hope for is to drag Liverpool into the Champions League places -- except it is out of Liverpool's hands if Manchester City keep winning, and he doesn't often make the team in league matches. It is a pity for it to end this way: Gerrard hasn't really dealt in anti-climaxes for Liverpool. Yet if there is not to be a Gerrard fairytale, the one enveloping Aston Villa will do as back-up.

Here was a team, threatened with relegation when Sherwood took charge -- and not out of the woods yet -- that will return to Wembley next month in the FA Cup final. Had the rules not changed to stop the runners-up qualifying, they would already be in Europe. As it is, Hull City -- beaten by Arsenal a year ago -- will be the last to have that privilege. Aston Villa will have to win to make it to the Europa League, but if they play like this, and Arsenal play as they did against Reading on Saturday, then don't bet against it. Villa are a handful, with the mighty Christian Benteke among a number revitalised by Sherwood's stewardship.

Liverpool's opening goal, after 30 minutes, if not exactly against the run of play, was a decent return on minimal investment. It started and finished with Coutinho -- who had a poor game otherwise, particularly with his passing -- and was helped by a fortuitous deflection. It was Coutinho's ball to Jordan Henderson that forced Villa into a hurried rearguard action, first Jores Okore and then Delph failing to adequately clear. The ball came out to Gerrard who moved it on to Sterling, who just as quickly fed it to Coutinho, now arriving in the box with a late run. His shot looked to be travelling wide, but clipped Okore and defeated Given in the Villa goal. One feared for Villa if Liverpool were allowed to relax and settle, but Sherwood (below) has long said his team is better suited to Europa League contention than a relegation scrap and so it proved. They looked at home at Wembley, were every bit as technically adept as Liverpool, bit back within six minutes and the game was on. Delph did the work, bursting through a group of three Liverpool players, and exchanging a onetwo with Grealish before crossing for Benteke. The striker's well-taken finish silenced the red half of Wembley. They looked worried, as well they should have been; Villa were now the more enterprising side. In the second half, as Liverpool packed the midfield to deal with this threat, it was Villa who sensed an opening, in a move that owed everything to the perseverance of captain Delph and the wit of Grealish. Delph collected the ball in the centre and fed Benteke, who passed it on to Grealish. Here, the

teenager made impressive choices. When many his age would have elected to shoot, Grealish instead saw the bigger picture. He slipped the ball to Delph who cut inside two men and finished sharply past Simon Mignolet. Had Nottingham Forest not been subject to a transfer embargo, Grealish might have been playing in the Championship this weekend, loaned out by former boss Paul Lambert to gain experience. s wy Instead, under Sherwood, he has been promoted -- and could now play at Wembley twice in as many months. He has represented the Republic of Ireland, the country of his grandparents, at Under 21 level but his ambitions are said to f l include playing for the country of his birth. At least he is going to be familiar with their home ground.

As for Liverpool and Rodgers, it is uphill from here to catch Manchester City in the Premier League. Rodgers is now the first Liverpool manager since Phil Taylor in 1959 to go three years without winning a trophy. Most who fail are dismissed by this stage. Liverpool are right to stand by him, but this was an opportunity missed, and Rodgers' face at the end suggested he knew it.

The Daily Telegraph

Sherwood feels the love as Villa end long wait

Aston Villa 2 Benteke 36, Delph 54 Liverpool 1 Coutinho 30 Att: 85,416

Tim Sherwood was appointed Aston Villa manager on Valentine's Day and his love affair with his new club intensifies by the day, now including the romance of the Cup. As the final whistle confirmed Villa's place in the May 30 FA Cup final against Arsenal, Sherwood took off down the touchline, punching the air and beaming at those ecstatic fans wildly shaking their "fight like lions" banners.

What was considered a gamble by Villa on Feb 14 looks inspired now. Sherwood is slowly steering Villa away from the threat of relegation, they are playing with more belief and verve, Christian Benteke is transformed, Jack Grealish is a revelation and they have just beaten Liverpool in the FA Cup for the first time since Oscar Wilde was being released from Reading Gaol and Bram Stoker was penning Dracula. That, too, was a semi-final victory (at Bramall Lane) in 1897 and Villa went on to win the final, vanquishing Everton 3-2 to clinch the Double. Since then Villa had lost to Liverpool six times in the Cup, without even registering a goal, but not now, not on Sherwood's watch. He was ripping up the history books. Villa had not reached the FA Cup final since 2000, and not won it since 1957. No wonder Sherwood sprinted off towards the Villa end as Michael Oliver concluded activities. A highly demonstrative character, Sherwood could not hold the emotion in any longer. He had stayed calm during the 90 minutes, eschewing celebrations, focusing on making the right changes at the right time. Some changes were enforced, such as sending on Jores Okore for the injured Nathan Baker while others were tactical such as Scott Sinclair replacing Charles N'Zogbia and Joe Cole coming on for the outstanding but tiring Grealish. It also slowed the game just as Liverpool were finally starting to build some momentum late on. In the other dug-out, Brendan Rodgers had kept tweaking his team, dropping the wing-backs, going to a back-four, sending on more strikers, withdrawing Steven Gerrard deep, but none of the Liverpool manager's alterations worked. Rodgers was outwitted by Sherwood. No wonder the Villa manager celebrated passionately afterwards. Sherwood not only got his tactics and substitutions right; he also got the mood right. Villa showed more desire than Liverpool. His team were shorn of the injured Gabby Agbonlahor, were the 9/2 underdogs and billed as the supporting cast in the great Steven Gerrard farewell drama but they ran more, wanted it more. Rodgers, perhaps diplomatically, described Gerrard as "excellent". Gerrard's mind may be willing but the legs are weak and his last game in English football will not be the Cup final on his 35th birthday before he departs for LA Galaxy. Not every Hollywood script has a fairytale ending.

One of the players who has bene-fited most from Gerrard's England retirement, Fabian Delph, took a wrecking ball to the Merseysider's farewell dream. Delph was outstanding, he never stopped running until Oliver's last blast, creating Benteke's equaliser riposte to Philippe Coutinho's opener, and then striking the second-half winner. Grealish provided the assist with a sangfroid that belied his teenaged years. Villa fans have long known about Grealish's rich promise. Now the whole country knows. Roy Hodgson was watching, Gareth Southgate has already been to see Grealish at Bodymoor Heath, and the tug of war between England and the Republic of Ireland over the No 10 with No 40 on his back has moved up a gear. The oft-maligned Tom Cleverley played an important, unheralded role, working overtime in midfield closing Liverpool players down, not allowing Gerrard and company to settle. On the eve of his 39th birthday, Shay Given was a rock of ages, having no chance with Coutinho's deflected strike but otherwise unyielding, including a save from a Gerrard freekick.

As good as Villa were, Liverpool were poor, lacking a cutting edge with Raheem Sterling struggling to find space, then Mario Balotelli coming on and failing to trouble Given. The Italian was unfortunate to be ruled offside when through but Villa defenders looked to have stopped anyway, having spotted John Brooks's flag. Rickie Lambert came on to little effect.

As well as confirming that Emre Can is a midfielder not a defender, Wembley highlighted that Rodgers needs to strengthen substantially and more judiciously in the summer, attracting better players than during the last close season.

Yet Liverpool are likely to be out of the Champions League with doubts deepening over the future of Sterling, their most prized asset. Potential buys need to be shown signs of Liverpool's ambition. Rodgers is a good manager, who has lost Luis Suarez to Barcelona and Daniel Sturridge to frequent injury, but he needs the

Date: 19 April 2015 Opposition: Aston Villa Competition: FA Cup	Times	Telegraph	Echo		19 April 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

American co-owners to invest heavily in July.

Villa's American owner, Randy Lerner, is seeking to sell the club which seems bizarre when the broadcasting revenue increases and when Villa enjoy days such as this with 30,000-plus fans forming mosaics and screaming their support.

In the build-up, Villa fans had been forced to endure all the stories about this being Gerrard's day. Making his 36th appearance at Wembley, Gerrard returned to the Liverpool starting line-up, taking the armband from Jordan Henderson, and taking some boos from the Villa fans who had neither forgotten nor forgiven a dive of his in front of the Holte End. After surviving an early scare when N'Zogbia forced Simon Mignolet into a tip-over save, Gerrard's team took the lead on the half-hour. Coutinho ushered Henderson into the box but Villa managed to regain the ball. The clearance from Okore was poor, and Delph also failed to rectify the damage. Sterling swiftly worked the ball into Coutinho, whose shot took a deflection off Okore's knee and continued past Given. Villa responded superbly, equalising within six minutes. Delph was the architect, driving forward down the left, linking with Grealish, and taking the return. His left-footed cross on the run picked out Benteke, who struck his ninth goal in seven matches. Villa fans were loving it, wafting their claret-and-blue balloons into the air, and waving their banners, one of which read "Villa, Stella, Balti". Their team were being fuelled more by pride and adrenalin, none more so than Grealish, whose adhesiveness of touch had Sherwood applauding at one point. For a player of 19 years, Grealish exuded a real maturity, taking the occasion in his stride. It must run in the family; his great-greatgrandfather Billy Garraty starred when Villa overcame Newcastle United in the 1905 FA Cup final. Nine minutes into the second half, Grealish awaited the right moment to release the ball in to Delph, who cut inside Dejan Lovren and shot past Mignolet. Liverpool sought to revive. Coutinho curled in a corner that Gerrard met with a powerful header but Kieran Richardson cleared off the line. Sterling, Balotelli and Lovren wasted efforts. Sherwood was off and running. Gerrard's dream was over. Villa's lives on.



Christian Benteke and Fabian Delph turn FA Cup semi-final and end Steven Gerrard dream

There was a late free-kick this afternoon that promised one last great Steven Gerrard intervention in the history of English football - one last swish of his right boot to rescue the game, to break the hearts of the opposition and change the course of the FA Cup. When the Liverpool captain could only clip it harmlessly into the hands of Shay Given you could tell that the game was up. Gerrard's 35th birthday famously coincides with the FA Cup final on 30 May but there will be no finale in the final, no further heroics - at Wembley at least. It is testament to the personal history of the man that the expectation was that, even in his veteran years, and coming back from a three-match suspension, he might do something monumental in this FA Cup semi-final. As it was, time looked to have crept up on Gerrard as he found himself besieged by a brilliant Aston Villa performance and the likes of Fabian Delph and Jack Grealish in particular. It will not have helped that this was just his first full game since 16 March, aside from the 48 seconds against Manchester United, but it did not look like much fun out there for the Liverpool captain, and even less so for Brendan Rodgers.

Gerrard can bid farewell to a fine Liverpool career come May, but the club and the manager he leaves behind has more profound questions to answer. Rodgers was unsparing of his team afterwards, criticising their lack of energy and guile against an Aston Villa side who controlled the game, but he will also have to face up to the reality that he lost the battle of managerial minds.

Step forward, Tim Sherwood, formerly a columnist on these pages and a man whose "Tactics Tim" sobriquet during his first managerial spell last season at Tottenham was not conceived as a compliment. This time, however, Sherwood called it exactly right with a plan he explained afterwards of two playmakers in Grealish and Charles N'Zogbia who passed the ball through Liverpool and secured a place in the FA Cup final against Arsenal next month.

From Christian Benteke there was another powerful demonstration of the centre-forward's art and it was the Belgian who scored the equaliser six minutes after Philippe Coutinho had given Liverpool an improbable lead. The best player on the pitch, Delph, scored what turned out to be the winner from a Grealish pass on 54 minutes and there was not much that Liverpool could offer in response.

Rodgers changed the formation from three in defence to a more orthodox four early in the game and said afterwards it was a switch he had made before. He brought Mario Balotelli on at half-time for the woeful Lazar Markovic but, aside from one offside decision that went against the striker, he looked yet again that he would be the last man to rescue Liverpool from their predicament.

Rodgers' team might yet push Manchester City for the final Champions League place although that looks less likely after the latter beat West Ham. Otherwise, this semi-final was an unwelcome reminder of the shortcomings that plagued Liverpool in the early part of their season. Daniel Sturridge was injured once again, and without him Liverpool lacked any kind of bite in attack.

Even with a Villa defence that lost yet another defender to injury early on, Nathan Baker this time, there was precious little threat from Liverpool for whom Raheem Sterling was quiet. Gerrard's header was cleared off the line by Kieran Richardson near the end but otherwise you were struck by how comfortable Villa made it look.

They will be underdogs again when they play Arsenal but at least Villa have some reason to hope after what once threatened to be the most moribund of seasons under Paul Lambert. They have won the FA Cup seven times in their history but only twice in the last hundred years and 1957 was the last time. Since that monumental 1982 European Cup triumph they have won just two League Cups, in 1994 and 1996. A trophy has been a long time coming. Sherwood's side were magnificent at times, controlling possession and moving the ball quickly to Benteke whenever possible. In midfield, Grealish glided with the ball at his feet and demanded it from team-mates at all times. Despite not being over-blessed with pace or strength, this young man always seems to have time to spare on the ball. The Liverpool goal came in a window of pressure for Rodgers' team around the half hour mark. Coutinho started the move which neither Jonas Okore, on for Baker, nor Delph cleared. The ball came back from Joe Allen to Sterling to Coutinho who darted into the Villa box and slipped the ball past Given with what looked like a slight deflection on the shot. By then, Liverpool had switched to four at the back with Emre Can at right-back and Gerrard pushed forward. In the second half the Liverpool captain would be moved back into the deepest holding midfield position. Villa's equaliser began with a throw-in on the left wing which Delph carried forward and played to Grealish inside him. From then it went swiftly back to the overlapping Delph who crossed first time for Benteke to guide the ball past Simon Mignolet. In response, Rodgers moved his team around with Gerrard, a marginalised figure in the first half, pushed back to sit in front of the defence. As time ticked down on Liverpool, the paucity of Rodgers' options was clear, and so too his lack of trust in them. The striker Rickie Lambert did not come on until the 90th minute. Delph's winner was another beauty, with Benteke and then Grealish working the ball through Liverpool before the England midfielder doubled back past Dejan Lovren and slipped the ball past Mignolet. The game a just seemed to pass by Liverpool with Rodgers left to wonder why his team had resorted to "kicking it long" to Sterling.

A boyhood Arsenal fan, Sherwood now faces the club at Wembley with the possibility of a trophy, a most improbable outcome for Villa given the depths they have plumbed at times this season. It was Liverpool who began in August with such high hopes but they looked a long way distant on this afternoon.



NO MORE MIRACLES; Gerrard's Wembley farewell falls flat as awesome Delph helps Villa gatecrash the party

ASTON VILLA 2 Benteke 36, Delph 54 LIVERPOOL 1 Coutinho 30

FOR 86 minutes, it appeared as though Steven Gerrard was more than ready for his lucrative knacker's yard in the Californian sunset. As a gripping FA Cup semi-final passed him by - with rival captain Fabian Delph doing a passable impression of a vintage Gerrard - the seniors tour of Major League Soccer was all the Liverpool skipper looked good for. In his first start for more than two months, and on his first appearance since that 39-second red card cameo against Manchester United, Gerrard was notable only for his lack of match sharpness and the wastefulness of his setpiece delivery.

Yet in the final four minutes, Gerrard came agonisingly close to keeping alive his hopes of an FA Cup Final swansong on his 35th birthday. First he saw a header cleared off the line by Kieran Richardson and then his cutting pass teed up Mario Balotelli for an effort that was wrongly disallowed for offside. In truth, this man used up his fair share of miracles about a decade ago, in Istanbul and in Cardiff. Fairytales have been scarce of late - from the title-blowing slip against Chelsea, to captaining England's worst World Cup finals performance, to being axed for a Champions League tie in the Bernabeu, right up to the moment he sank to his haunches in the Wembley centre circle at the final whistle yesterday.

Knowing full well he would never return to the hallowed turf for a competitive match again. With Lucas injured, it was tough to argue that Brendan Rodgers had made a sentimental choice in starting with Gerrard.

Nor even that he had lacked the courage NOT to pick the talismanic Scouser. It had been understandable, given the way Liverpool have shrunk in several of their biggest matches this season, but Gerrard is no longer capable of seizing a major occasion by the throat. Aston Villa were the better team, with their exemplary skipper Delph inspiring his men as Gerrard once had - creating Christian Benteke's equaliser and scoring the winner himself.

Tim Sherwood could barely have energised his new squad more effectively had he fitted electrodes to their testicles. This is a club transformed since the moribund fag-end days of Paul Lambert's reign. Villa have not won the FA Cup since the Busby Babes were defeated 58 years ago - but they will fancy themselves against Arsenal next month. Sherwood's players will tell you they fancy themselves against anyone just now. They almost fancy themselves as much as their manager fancies himself. Sherwood has his own trumpet and is not shy of blowing it, insisting Rodgers had been tactically bamboozled.

He will relish strutting up Wembley Way again for next month's final with a flower in the buttonhole of his gilet. Benteke (right) has netted nine goals in seven matches now, Delph looks like a Champions League player, while the teenage Jack Grealish - a local kid who looked like he was risking a detention for forgetting his shinpads, is the latest youngster Sherwood will be keen to take credit for.

At the other end of the age spectrum, Shay Given - 39 today - is ready for his second FA Cup Final appearance. The first was 17 years ago, when Grealish was in nappies.

Date: 19 April 2015 Opposition: Aston Villa Competition: FA Cup	Times	Telegraph	Echo		19 April 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

Villa had started brightly - Charlie N'Zogbia forcing an athletic save from Simon Mignolet only for Liverpool to strike Sf on the half-hour.

Jores Okore, an early substitute for the injured Nathan Baker, was caught dawdling on the edge of his own box and, after a cute Raheem Sterling pass had freed Philippe Coutinho, the Brazilian's shot deflected in off Okore's knee. Yet within six minutes, Villa were level. Delph surged forward, exchanged passes with Grealish and cut the ball back for Benteke to drill one.

At half-time, Rodgers sent on Balotelli and switched to a back four - but it was Villa who scored nine minutes later. Grealish picked out Delph, who slipped between Dejan Lovren and Emre Can to slot home the winner.

Villa could have sealed it long before Gerrard's late rally - Richardson was wildly off target then Leandro Bacuna wasted a three-against-two situation on the break. Gerrard was left virtually on his knees, staring into space, contemplating his semi-retirement in Tinseltown and ruing what might have been.



Reds suffer FA Cup heartbreak at Wembley

No fairytale farewell. No silver lining for a difficult season. No rescue act.

And, above all, simply no excuses.

Liverpool's hopes of FA Cup glory were dashed in dismal fashion as they capitulated to a 2-1 defeat against relegation-threatened Aston Villa at Wembley. Not even Philippe Coutinho's opener on the half-hour could lift Brendan Rodgers' side out of their stupor as the Anfield side, lethargic and second-best from the first whistle, surrendered meekly. Christian Benteke struck his customary goal against the Reds six minutes later before, nine minutes into the second half, Fabian Delph capitalised on sloppy defending to notch the winner.

The defeat will pose familiar questions over Liverpool's lack of mental strength in the biggest matches having failed in similarly embarrassing fashion against both Manchester United and Arsenal in recent weeks. And it ended the dream of Steven Gerrard signing off his Liverpool career by lifting the FA Cup here on his birthday on May 30. Gerrard, like every other Liverpool player, was way below his best as Rodgers twice switched formation only to be continually outfoxed by Villa counterpart Tim Sherwood. What will hurt Liverpool fans most is it was clear Villa wanted it more. They had the greater hunger and desire. By contrast, Rodgers' men – even accounting for the lengthy absentee list – appeared to freeze once more. That is a major, major worry for a team harbouring ambitions of winning silverware. Now the Reds must concentrate on the unlikely event of chasing down a Champions League berth.

Injuries and ineligibility meant Liverpool's team largely picked itself. Joining Daniel Sturridge, Mamadou Sakho, Adam Lallana and the cup-tied Jordon Ibe on the sidelines was the desperately unlucky Lucas Leiva, the Brazilian still awaiting his Wembley bow after suffering a thigh injury during training. It meant an instant recall for skipper Gerrard who, like Martin Skrtel, returned after serving a three-match suspension.

Rodgers' most pressing decision was to revert to a back three with Lazar Markovic preferred to Glen Johnson at right wing-back. After a tentative opening, Liverpool's first glimmer of an opening fell to Joe Allen in the seventh minute but his shot from a Coutinho cutback was far too high. Villa, though, settled much the quicker and grasped the early initiative, Simon Mignolet at full strength to turn over an ambitious Charles N'Zogbia shot from range. Liverpool were grateful to Dejan Lovren on 16 minutes when the Croatian stuck out a leg to prevent N'Zogbia playing Benteke clear on goal. Raheem Sterling had a hopeful claim for a penalty turned away after being clipped by Delph before Villa lost Nathan Baker midway through the half after the centre-back landed awkwardly following an aerial challenge, replaced by Jores Okore. By then, Rodgers had seen enough, switching to a flat back four in an attempt to breathe some life into Liverpool's play and wrestle the initiative from Villa. And it paid dividends when Liverpool went ahead on the half-hour through this season's FA Cup specialist.

When Jordan Henderson burst into the box, Okore and then Delph both failed to properly clear, allowing Sterling to play a clever pass in to Coutinho who evaded Ron Vlaar's challenge and raced in between two defenders for a finish that deflected off Okore on the way in. But the lead lasted just six minutes as Villa deservedly drew level. With Liverpool cut open down the right side of defence, Delph had space to cut the ball back for the unmarked Benteke to sidefoot home from 10 yards. It was Villa's first goal in an FA Cup semi-final for almost 60 years. Lovren directed a free header wide from a corner but Liverpool were relieved to make it through to half-time without further concerns. Mario Balotelli's introduction after the interval for the disappointing Markovic prompted another tactical tweak, but Villa continued to press as Benteke saw a shot deflected through to Mignolet. And they were ahead on 54 minutes. Jack Grealish, found 30 yards out by the breaking Benteke's clever backheel, fed Delph inside the area and the Villa midfielder easily turned inside two defenders and finished beyond Mignolet. Villa were swarming all over a lifeless Liverpool, Moreno executing a brilliant last-ditch tackle to deny Benteke a certain goal.

Kieron Richardson headed a Gerrard corner off the line from a Coutinho corner and Balotelli wrongly had a goal chalked off for offside before heading a Henderson cross over the bar.

Ultimately, though, Liverpool deserved what they got. Nothing.

ASTON VILLA (4-3-3): Given; Bacuna, Vlaar, Baker (Okore 26), Richardson; Delph, Westwood, Cleverley; N'Zogbia (Sinclair 75), Benteke, Grealish (Cole 83). Subs: Guzan, Weimann, Lowton, Gil. BOOKING: Delph (foul).

LIVERPOOL (3-4-2-1): Mignolet; Can, Skrtel, Lovren; Markovic (Balotelli 46), Henderson, Allen (Johnson 77), Moreno (Lambert 90); Gerrard, Coutinho; Sterling. Subs: Jones, Toure, Manquillo, Borini.

REFEREE: Michael Oliver.

ATT: 85,416.

BIRMINGHAM MAIL

Fearless and fired-up Aston Villa are in the FA Cup Final after beating Liverpool 2-1 at Wembley.

For far too many years the claret and blues have failed to turn up at the national stadium but today they made amends with a classy and, at times, courageous display.

Tim Sherwood's men went behind when Philippe Coutinho opened the scoring on 30 minutes but Christian Benteke maintained his hot streak to level soon after. Captain Fabian Delph got the winning goal after the break and man-of-the-match Jack Grealish celebrated as if they lifted the trophy there and then.

Wild scenes followed in the claret and blue section when the final whistle was blown.

Tim Sherwood jumped with joy, Villa's stars dropped to the floor in disbelief and Liverpool watched on in agony.

All that was missing was a podium and fireworks but maybe Villa will see that next month.

Tackles flew in early from both sides but it was Villa who looked more composed throughout.

They were the better side and the deserved winners. Now they must do it all again to see off Arsenal in May.

First to test Simon Mignolet was Charles N'Zogbia as the Frenchman interchanged well with Benteke up front in the absence of the injured Gabby Agbonlahor.

When Nathan Baker departed on 24 minutes with a knee injury, Villa struggled to find their shape and were exposed after Jores Okore failed to clear the danger. Liverpool took full advantage to break the deadlock. Raheem Sterling slipped in Coutinho and the Brazilian coolly finished past Shay Given.

In some ways it was a well-worked goal from the Reds but Villa really shouldn't have allowed it.

Fortunately under Sherwood this side will never wilt.

The reply, which came six minutes after the opener was of pure brilliance. Grealish, who starred, combined superbly with Delph down the left.

The skipper got the move started and then found Benteke on the edge of the area. From then there was only ever going to be one outcome as the in-form Belgian steered past his fellow countryman to level the scores.

Benteke's finish was exquisite and his celebration proved how much it meant to him.

In the build-up to the game the hitman promised that he would score at Wembley and he failed to disappoint.

There's a fine line between arrogance and confidence and Benteke has nailed it. A man not shy of self-belief himself is Mario Balotelli. The Italian replaced Lazar Markovic at the break as Brendan Rodgers looked for a spark up front. It never came.

Instead it was Benteke who continued to shine.

When Ron Vlaar played in Leandro Bacuna down the right the Dutchman immediately looked for the striker.

Lurking on the edge of the penalty area, he met the cross with a thumping side-footed effort but a deflection took the sting out of it and Mignolet easily collected.

A second Villa goal was coming and Liverpool could do nothing to stop it in the 54th minute.

Delph burst forward from the centre circle and played it into Benteke. His cheeky back-heel found Grealish who then spotted Delph who had continued his run. Grealish's carefully caressed pass was weighted perfectly and Delph simply side-stepped Dejan Lovren before slamming home.

After getting their noses ahead the hard work then began.

Okore and Vlaar stepped up in the time of need to block, intercept and generally frustrate the life out of Liverpool's limp strikeforce.

Then on 86 minutes Kieran Richardson cleared a Steven Gerrard header off the line as time ticked away.

Balotelli had the ball in the back of the net a minute later but was ruled out for offside.

When the final whistle blew 32,000 fans jumped for joy and savoured the moment.

Villa: (4-5-1) Given, Bacuna, Baker (Okore, 24), Vlaar, Richardson, Westwood, Delph, Cleverley, Grealish, (Cole, 83) N'Zogbia, (Sinclair, 74) Benteke.

Subs: Guzan, Weimann, Lowton, Gil.

Liverpool: (3-5-2) Mignolet, Can, Skrtel, Lovren, Moreno, Allen, Henderson, Gerrard, Markovic, (Balotelli, 46) Coutinho, Sterling

Subs: Jones, Johnson, Toure, Lambert, Manquillo, Borini,

STAR MAN: JACK GREALISH

Date: 19 April 2015 Opposition: Aston Villa Competition: FA Cup	Times	Telegraph	Echo		19 April 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		

BBC

Aston Villa will meet Arsenal in the FA Cup final after a thoroughly deserved win over a desperately disappointing Liverpool at Wembley. Villa's win was a triumph for manager Tim Sherwood as his side produced a performance of style, composure and grit to come from behind and reach their first FA Cup final since their loss to Chelsea in 2000. As a consequence there will be no dream finale to his Liverpool career for Steven Gerrard. The Reds skipper, who will join Major League Soccer side LA Galaxy in the summer, was hoping to make a final appearance for the club in an FA Cup final scheduled to take place on 30 May, his 35th birthday. Philippe Coutinho clipped Liverpool into the lead but the dangerous Christian Benteke levelled before half-time and Villa scored the winner their display fully merited through Fabian Delph's cool finish nine minutes after the break. Lethargic Liverpool mounted a rally of sorts late on when Kieran Richardson cleared off the line from Liverpool captain Gerrard and half-time substitute Mario Balotelli was dubiously ruled offside when he had the ball in the net. Villa, however, were not to be denied and the final whistle sparked scenes of joy among players and supporters alike. The normally animated Sherwood had been calm on the touchline throughout but all his emotions poured out as he celebrated another trip to Wembley on 30 May, on top of moving Villa towards Premier League safety. The ex-Spurs manager, who replaced sacked Paul Lambert in February, has overseen a superb rejuvenation at Villa Park. Villa had giants all over the pitch, particularly in the shape of Benteke and the gifted 19-year-old Jack Grealish, who played with a calm that belied his years in this hothouse atmosphere. Liverpool, in contrast, were dismal and once again failed to deliver when the big occasion demanded - which will be a matter of great concern to manager Brendan Rodgers. Villa were bristling and business-like whereas Liverpool were timid with little seen of Raheem Sterling, who let the occasion pass him by. Gerrard was recalled, as expected, but his influence was virtually non-existent in a first half where Villa were the more relaxed and confident side, exemplified by the strolling composure of Grealish and the power of Benteke. Villa were forced into a change when injured centre-half Nathan Baker was replaced by Jores Okore and, while they were adjusting, Liverpool took the lead against the run of play after 30 minutes. Okore's touch was uncertain and when some order emerged from the penalty box chaos Coutinho provided a calm finish past Shay Given. Liverpool's lead lasted only six minutes and Villa's equaliser came from a predictable source as Benteke sidefooted past his fellow Belgian Simon Mignolet after the industrious Delph worked an exchange with Grealish. The concerns of Rodgers had been underlined by an early change from a back three to a four and there were more adjustments at half-time as Mario Balotelli replaced Lazar Markovic and Gerrard was dropped into a deeper role. Villa simply continued as they were and were ahead 11 minutes after the restart when Grealish was again involved, setting up Delph to finish despite the despairing lunges of Dejan Lovren and Mignolet. Liverpool just about mounted a gallop as time ran out - but this was Villa's day and deservedly so.

Date: 19 April 2015 Opposition: Aston Villa Competition: FA Cup	Times	Telegraph	Echo		19 April 2015
	Guardian	Mirror	Birmingham Mail		
	Independent	Mail	BBC		
BBC Full time Match ends, Aston Villa 2, Liverpool 1. 90:00+4:01Full time Second Half ends, Aston Villa 2, Liverpool 1. 90:00+3:07 Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Mario Balotelli. 90:00+1:38 Attempt missed. Mario Balotelli (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is just a bit too high. Assisted by Jordan Henderson with a cross. 90:00+0:40 Attempt missed. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from the left side of the box is too high. Assisted by Emre Can with a headed pass. 90:00+0:01Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Rickie Lambert replaces Alberto Moreno. 88:50 Offside, Liverpool. Steven Gerrard tries a through ball, but Emre Can is caught offside. 87:36 Offside, Liverpool. Steven Gerrard tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside. 85:53 Attempt blocked. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is blocked. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho with a cross. 85:35 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Jores Okore. 83:50 Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is too high. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a cross following a corner. 83:30 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Kieran Richardson. 83:01Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Aston Villa. Joe Cole replaces Jack Grealish. 80:42 Attempt missed. Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Christian Benteke. 79:56 Attempt saved. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top centre of the goal. 79:21Booking Fabian Delph (Aston Villa is shown the yellow card for a bad foul. 78:51 Foul by Fabian Delph (Aston Villa. 78:51 Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half. 77:08Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Glen Johnson replaces Joe Allen. 76:39 Offside, Liverpool. Dejan Lovren tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside. 75:50 Delay over. They are ready to continue. 74:50 Delay in match Ashley Westwood (Aston Villa because of an injury. 74:41Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Aston Villa. Scott Sinclair replaces Charles N'Zogbia. 73:58 Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside. 72:43 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ron Vlaar. 72:12 Attempt blocked. Joe Allen (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. 71:32 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Kieran Richardson. 68:42 Offside, Aston Villa. Fabian Delph tries a through ball, but Christian Benteke is caught offside. 65:45 Foul by Jores Okore (Aston Villa. 65:45 Mario Balotelli (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing. 65:08 Foul by Leandro Bacuna (Aston Villa. 65:08 Raheem Sterling (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 64:50 Foul by Christian Benteke (Aston Villa. 64:50 Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 62:14 Offside, Liverpool. Alberto Moreno tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside. 61:11 Attempt missed. Kieran Richardson (Aston Villa right footed shot from the left side of the box is high and wide to the right. 59:44 Jack Grealish (Aston Villa wins a free kick in the attacking half. 59:44 Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool. 55:00 Offside, Liverpool. Emre Can tries a through ball, but Mario Balotelli is caught offside. 53:45Goal scored Goal!Goal! Aston Villa 2, Liverpool 1. Fabian Delph (Aston Villa right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom left corner. Assisted by Jack Grealish. 52:04 Attempt saved. Christian Benteke (Aston Villa right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Leandro Bacuna with a cross. 51:22 Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa wins a free kick on the right wing. 51:22 Foul by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool. 50:21 Foul by Charles N'Zogbia (Aston Villa. 50:21 Dejan Lovren (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 49:06 Attempt missed. Steven Gerrard (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho. 46:51 Attempt missed. Charles N'Zogbia (Aston Villa left footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the left. Assisted by Jack Grealish. 45:00 Second Half begins Aston Villa 1, Liverpool 1. 45:00Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Liverpool. Mario Balotelli replaces Lazar Markovic. 45:00+2:02Half time First Half ends, Aston Villa 1, Liverpool 1. 44:59 Offside, Aston Villa. Shay Given tries a through ball, but Christian Benteke is caught offside. 40:16 Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by Steven Gerrard with a cross following a corner. 39:58 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Ashley Westwood. 39:39 Attempt blocked. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Raheem Sterling. 35:22Goal scored Goal!Goal! Aston Villa 1, Liverpool 1. Christian Benteke (Aston Villa right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Fabian Delph. 34:31 Foul by Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa. 34:31 Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 30:58 Foul by Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa. 30:58 Joe Allen (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half. 29:43Goal scored Goal!Goal! Aston Villa 0, Liverpool 1. Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner. Assisted by Raheem Sterling. 28:35 Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Leandro Bacuna. 27:45 Foul by Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa. 27:45 Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 25:40Substitution SubstitutionSubstitution, Aston Villa. Jores Okore replaces Nathan Baker because of an injury. 24:27 Delay over. They are ready to continue. 23:32 Delay in match Nathan Baker (Aston Villa because of an injury. 23:10 Offside, Aston Villa. Kieran Richardson tries a through ball, but Christian Benteke is caught offside. 22:27 Corner, Aston Villa. Conceded by Alberto Moreno. 21:47 Ashley Westwood (Aston Villa wins a free kick in the attacking half. 21:47 Foul by Raheem Sterling (Liverpool. 21:02 Offside, Liverpool. Simon Mignolet tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside. 19:48 Foul by Christian Benteke (Aston Villa. 19:48 Emre Can (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing. 16:25 Hand ball by Alberto Moreno (Liverpool. 13:26 Offside, Liverpool. Martin Skrtel tries a through ball, but Raheem Sterling is caught offside. 12:39 Offside, Aston Villa. Leandro Bacuna tries a through ball, but Charles N'Zogbia is caught offside. 11:52 Corner, Aston Villa. Conceded by Simon Mignolet. 11:47 Attempt saved. Charles N'Zogbia (Aston Villa left footed shot from outside the box is saved in the top left corner. Assisted by Fabian Delph. 9:52 Attempt blocked. Raheem Sterling (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Lazar Markovic. 8:33 Corner, Aston Villa. Conceded by Martin Skrtel. 7:09 Attempt missed. Jordan Henderson (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box misses to the left. Assisted by Raheem Sterling. 6:11 Attempt missed. Joe Allen (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is high and wide to the right. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho. 4:07 Foul by Kieran Richardson (Aston Villa. 4:07 Lazar Markovic (Liverpool wins a free kick on the right wing. 1:58 Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool. 1:58 Jack Grealish (Aston Villa wins a free kick in the attacking half. 1:30 Alberto Moreno (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half. 1:30 Foul by Charles N'Zogbia (Aston Villa. 0:00 First Half begins. 0:00 Lineups are announced and players are warming up.					