

Date: 31 January 2017

Opposition: Chelsea

Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
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31 January 2017

## THE TIMES

Mignolet makes amends as Costa fluffs his lines

Liverpool 1 Wijnaldum 57 Chelsea 1 Luiz 24

On a day of closing windows, Diego Costa missed a chance to shut out the opposition completely when his penalty late on was saved by Simon Mignolet in front of a cackling Kop. With Arsenal losing to Watford and Tottenham Hotspur drawing against Sunderland, Chelsea could have finished the day 11 points clear. Antonio Conte's pacesetters still came away with a deserved point, and their lead at nine points, and remain overwhelming favourites for the Premier League title. David Luiz stunned Liverpool with a first-half free kick but the home team, roared on by their passionate fans, deservedly equalised through Georginio Wijnaldum. With Sadio Mane returning midway through the second half, this was a positive occasion for Liverpool, showing they could live with the frontrunners, and easing the growing doubts that have gathered during a disappointing January. Even before Luiz's 24th-minute free kick had cranked up the pressure further, Liverpool had understood fully what was at stake in their 50th meeting with Chelsea in the Premier League. They knew they risked losing all touch with Luiz and company in the title race, and suffering the indignity of losing four games in succession at home for the first time since Stanley Baldwin's first spell as prime minister. This was the test of Liverpool's mettle.

Sensing the nerves, Jurgen Klopp had sought to stir his players, and the Anfield faithful, with a remarkable rallying cry, claiming that: "At our best we're as good, if not better, than anyone in this league." Strong words.

As the rain fell, Klopp's players whipped up a storm at the start, pouring forward towards the Kop. Klopp's captain, Jordan Henderson, barked encouragement. Adam Lallana drifted around, linking with Philippe Coutinho after 10 minutes, the ball falling to Wijnaldum, whose drive was pushed away by the diving Thibaut Courtois. Lallana even beat Gary Cahill in an aerial duel. Liverpool enjoyed possession but lacked a way through until the second period.

Chelsea's first-team head coach, Conte, was even more animated than usual, belting a loose ball away, getting a lecture from Mark Clattenburg, the referee, and constantly urging his team to resist this early onslaught in red. Chelsea simply showed all their game craft, drawing Liverpool's sting, quietening a Kop at fever pitch, defending expertly and counterattacking suddenly. The ball flew from left to right, from Willian to Eden Hazard to Victor Moses, whose shot was blocked. Diego Costa was having trouble resisting gravity's pull. Gary Cahill screamed at Simon Bennett, the assistant referee. More damagingly for Liverpool, Hazard then won a cheap free kick from Lallana left of centre. As Willian stood over the ball, seemingly in no hurry to take it, Liverpool slowly formed their wall. Roberto Firmino, Henderson and Lallana tried to build a human barricade. Coutinho wandered to one side of the wall. On the other, James Milner watched Cahill's movement. It seemed the usual preparation, but it lacked urgency. Liverpool's goalkeeper, Simon Mignolet, moved to his left, away from the wall, gesturing to Emre Can, who was patrolling Costa, and the others to step up. As he shouted instructions, and looked at the rolling maul of players to his left, Mignolet momentarily lost track of events in front of him to the right. Maybe he thought Willian was not ready, with the Brazilian stood too close to the ball still.

Then suddenly, Luiz arrived. Initially, he had not appeared part of the set-piece routine, seemingly more interested in taking a quick rehydration opportunity. But he quickened his stride and hit the ball in that clever, side-footed way of his, making it accelerate but keeping it flat. It flew through the wall, between Henderson and Firmino, as Mignolet belatedly realised he had fallen for Chelsea's trap. He stared aghast to his right as Luiz's free kick brushed the post and settled in the net. Luiz sprinted away, pointing to the heavens, his soaking curls trailing behind him. Nearing the bench, the Brazilian slid on his knees and into the arms of a stooping, delighted Conte. The Italian immediately ordered his team to keep concentrating. N'Golo Kante nicked the ball off Firmino. Luiz cleared Nathaniel Clyne's cross. Cesar Azpilicueta hounded Coutinho into surrendering possession. Luiz looked to have tweaked his right knee, and emerged after the break with heavy strapping. The cameras focused on Mane, who was having his knee iced on the bench. Mane had jetted back from the Africa Cup of Nations and Liverpool had missed his incisive bursts.

Yet they still believed. Their fans kept the faith, when Firmino fired dreadfully over and even when the red sea parted and Moses swept through for Chelsea before being denied by the post. Liverpool steadied their nerves and charged upfield again. Lallana turned inside, but Henderson took over, lifting the ball from right to left to James Milner who had timed his run well to beat the offside. Milner headed back across, the ball deflecting across to Wijnaldum, who had darted in front of Luiz to head Liverpool level.

The decibel level rose even higher. Chelsea were being pressed back. Now this was an examination of their character. Liverpool hunted a second. Henderson flighted a pass to Coutinho but Lallana could not profit from the layoff. Chelsea needed some added impetus. Kante was superb, retrieving possession, soon releasing Willian down the inside-right channel but he shot wide. Willian was looking an obvious contender to be taken off as Conte sought to freshen up his team but Hazard was limping, and was called to the bench to be replaced by Pedro. Feeling the back of his right leg, Hazard headed straight to the tunnel, ignoring the invective of a Liverpool fan who did not seem to be enquiring about the Chelsea man's health. Still Liverpool attacked, responding to their supporters' songs. Wijnaldum turned Pedro and charged upfield. Milner was everywhere on

the left, occasional full back, frequently winger. With 16 minutes remaining, Anfield lifted the volume up another notch to greet Mane's arrival. It grew even louder, first with anger when Clattenburg pointed immediately to the spot when Joel Matip challenged Costa. The contact was slight, the reaction theatrical but it was a penalty. With Hazard off the field, Costa took the penalty but Mignolet guessed right in every sense, diving across to push away the striker's kick as the Kop howled with relief and joy. Chelsea almost scored through Pedro but Henderson, drawing on all his famed stamina, raced back to make a vital interception. Both sides went for it, right to the death. Pedro shot wide. Firmino headed at Courtois. Klopp's side end rotten run Liverpool's draw last night meant they avoided losing four consecutive games at Anfield in all competitions, something they have not done since 1923.

## the guardian

Liverpool's Simon Mignolet saves penalty to gain point against Chelsea  
These are the moments when Chelsea must be emboldened enough to think that unless something dramatic happens the Premier League title is on its way back to Stamford Bridge. They will be full of regret, naturally, after Diego Costa's failure to convert the penalty that would have meant Liverpool losing four successive games at Anfield for the first time since 1923. Yet this still registers as a satisfying night's work for Antonio Conte's men in a new position of strength at the top of the table.

It certainly felt incongruous to see Jürgen Klopp beating his chest and throwing his hands to the sky as the Liverpool manager made his way to the tunnel after the final whistle. Yes, it had been a spirited effort from his players, but at this stage of the season should a team in Liverpool position really be so enamoured about failing to make any ground on the leaders?

The harsh reality is that Liverpool have won one of their past nine matches in all competitions and in the past 11 days they have gone out of two cup competitions and, almost certainly, forfeited any lingering chance of winning their first championship since 1990. Chelsea have preserved a 10-point advantage over the team in fourth and, taking into account the results elsewhere for Tottenham and Arsenal, they might eventually look back at this draw as being a significant result. That, however, does not mean they will be free of frustration after a night that encapsulated the good and bad of Simon Mignolet, Liverpool's puzzling goalkeeper. Mignolet was badly exposed when David Luiz opened the scoring with a quickly taken free-kick in the 24th minute and it was startling to see someone purporting to be an elite goalkeeper being caught out in such a way. His save from Costa's penalty provided a counter-argument although the point remains that a team with Liverpool's ambitions could benefit from having a goalkeeper who does not mix outstanding reflexes with damaging lapses.

Liverpool played at times like they knew they had a season to save. They had the better of the first 20 minutes and dominated long spells of the second half, equalising via Georginio Wijnaldum's header, until the game threatened to head away from them in the last quarter of an hour. Another team's confidence might have been damaged by their recent slump but there was no evidence of that here – and that, perhaps, was the most impressive aspect of Liverpool's performance. It earned them some sympathetic applause at the final whistle, but there was palpable frustration, too, and Klopp went too far when he turned on the fourth official, Neil Swarbrick, after the penalty. Klopp did apologise, but it was still unpleasant to see him screaming into Swarbrick's face. He said that his words were "nobody can beat us" – a strange observation bearing in mind how distressing January has been for his club.

Klopp, as always, was immensely wound up and earlier in the match, as he informed the supporters behind his dugout that he wanted more noise, it was noticeable that his request did not go down well with all the fans in that stand. Chelsea had scored a couple of minutes earlier and Mignolet was not even looking at the ball when David Luiz, showing great speed of thought, took a few steps forward and aimed a 25-yard shot over what barely passed as a defensive wall. Adam Lallana, Jordan Henderson and Roberto Firmino were all lined up and Philippe Coutinho was making his way over.

Liverpool, in other words, did not have a single defender in their wall, which might help to explain why the four players in question looked like they were idly waiting at a bus stop. Mignolet had wandered from one side of his goal to the other and David Luiz impudently aimed the ball in precisely the spot the Belgian had deserted.

Liverpool, to give them their due, shook their heads clear for the second half and the equaliser arrived in the 57th minute when James Milner headed Henderson's right-sided delivery back across the six-yard area. The ball came to Wijnaldum via a slight deflection off Victor Moses and the Liverpool player aimed a downward header beyond Thibaut Courtois.

Klopp brought on Sadio Mané, back from the Africa Cup of Nations, in the hope he might conjure up a winner and Klopp could reflect on the two chances Firmino squandered in the first half.

Yet it was Chelsea who finished as the stronger side and Costa had the opportunity to win the match after the referee, Mark Clattenburg, decided that Joël Matip had flicked out a leg to halt the striker's surging run. Costa struck the penalty with power but Mignolet dived to right to turn the ball away and Liverpool were spared.

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## The Mail

ZERO TO HERO FOR MIGNOLET; But penalty save can't stop Chelsea widening the gap

GEORGINIO Wijnaldum's header meant Liverpool got what they deserved, but even with a penalty miss from Diego Costa it was Chelsea who would have felt happier. They came here 10 points clear of Jurgen Klopp's men, and left the same way. Even better, Arsenal lost at home to Watford, so Chelsea actually gained ground on the team that started the night in second place. Factor in Tottenham's two points dropped at Sunderland and this was a tidy night's work.

True, Liverpool looked the better side, but no marks are awarded for endeavour or artistic impression. Chelsea did what they needed to do, keeping Liverpool at a significant arm's length. Maybe an arm and a half. Ten points is a lot with only 15 games to go. Liverpool would have got nothing at all were it not for that poor Costa penalty and a goal that summed up their perseverance. The equaliser came after an intense period of pressure. Chelsea got the ball clear only for Jordan Henderson to send a cross deep into the six-yard box. It was met by James Milner, who did magnificently to head it back across goal and there was Wijnaldum, getting in front of David Luiz to steer the ball past Thibaut Courtois.

Yet, just as Sadio Mane had come on for a final 15-minute tilt at a winner, and Anfield was in full voice -- calamity. Dejan Lovren gave the ball away and Chelsea broke, through Costa. He stepped inside Joel Matip who stuck out a leg and Costa fell. Yes, he made the most of it. Probably, it was a foul. Either way, Mark Clattenburg decided to ignore the studied fall and focus on the infringement. Penalty to Chelsea. Costa stepped up, hit a weak one to the left, and Mignolet saved. To most inside the ground, justice was done. Certainly those who were hoping the title race might go to the end of April, at least, breathed a sigh of relief. It was redemption for Mignolet, too, after his embarrassing part in Chelsea's goal. On the final day of the last transfer window, Luiz was in the headlines, with his surprise return to Stamford Bridge -- and he marked the close of the January sales in some style, too. Although not with business; but pleasure. There is a reason Luiz's popularity as a footballer extends beyond Stamford Bridge. He is an entertainer, he adds to the gaiety of nations. Not too many centrehalves can boast that. It is the strikers who capture the attention, usually, the jinky wingers, the magicians in midfield.

Central defenders tackle, they head the ball away, they kicks lumps out of folk. And Luiz can do all of that. But he does more. He takes risks, he has a go, he contrives to be a little cheeky, to look as if he is enjoying the game.

Klopp, Liverpool's manager, was asked prior to kick-off what his team needed to do to win. 'We need to annoy them, be a little bit brave, play with a big heart, be angry, have fun,' he said. All of those boxes were ticked -- but by Luiz. He certainly annoyed the locals with his combative approach, he was brave, shrugging off a first-half injury that might have been a dead leg, and he always plays with a big heart. An arm thrown -- the dark side of his game -- showed anger. And the fun? It was all there in that Chelsea goal, a player not afraid to make himself the centre of attention, to look the fool if the upside was becoming the hero. Imagine if his kick had gone high and wide, or had been simply caught by Mignolet. Imagine had it gone in only to be recalled by referee Clattenburg and told to play to the whistle in future. He would have been mocked on all sides of Anfield. Instead, he wheeled away in celebration, Chelsea ahead against the run of play. Luiz had gambled and it paid off. Luiz scored: for fun, and for real.

Full credit to him for the technique, and for thinking quicker than the rest. When Emre Can brought down Eden Hazard after 25 minutes, most saw it as the opportunity to regroup and reorganise. Willian was taking his time over the ball, Liverpool were loosely structuring a three-man wall. In goal Mignolet was least prepared of all, back on his heels waiting for a typical setpiece, except there is little about Luiz that conforms to the typical. So, spying an opportunity, he began his run. Whether Clattenburg spotted it and responded, or the blowing of his whistle was merely a happy coincidence we cannot say, but from Luiz's point of view it all came together perfectly. Clattenburg blew when he was three strides from the ball, meaning Liverpool were utterly unprepared. Even so, Luiz's aim had to be spot-on or it would not have worked. It was. He lifted the ball over the wall and it went in off the inside of Mignolet's right post, the goalkeeper standing bemused by developments. By the time he responded to Luiz's ingenuity, Chelsea were celebrating by the touchline. As well they might. It had not been their finest start to a match this season. Liverpool had plenty of possession, pressed them back to the edge of their area on occasions and had visiting coach Antonio Conte by turns frantic and rattled. He even kicked the ball away as Jordan Henderson went to retrieve it for a throw-in, earning a ticking off from Clattenburg.

It was Liverpool who could not afford to lose, yet it was Chelsea who looked under pressure. Adam Lallana, disappointing in some big matches lately, was back to his best. An early corner looked dangerous and after 12 minutes he slipped the ball to Wijnaldum, whose shot from 25 yards forced a good save from Thibaut Courtois. Roberto Firmino should have done better from a Philippe Coutinho corner late in the first half and after 49 minutes, Nathaniel Clyne's run into the box picked out the striker again who snatched at an excellent chance, blasting it over. Yet the problem for Liverpool was obvious. The more they committed to attack in search of an equaliser, the greater the space became from Chelsea on the counter. A second free-kick, this one taken by Willian, missed all of its intended targets and was seen late by Mignolet, who tipped it round the far post. And in the 51st minute, a mistake by Milner let in Victor Moses. The converted

wing-back striking the outside of a post with a shot that could have finished the game.

## The Daily Telegraph

Chelsea charge hit by Costa penalty miss

Simon Mignolet is not everyone's idea of a first-choice goalkeeper, not even Jurgen Klopp's for periods of this season, but you could say that the Liverpool man has, at the very least, kept the Premier League title race interesting for another day. Without his penalty save from Diego Costa with 13 minutes of this relentlessly intense rivalry this would have been Chelsea's victory No 19 of the season and the great blue juggernaut would have been a speck on the horizon for the rest. As it is they dropped points for only the second time in the league since that defeat by Arsenal on Sept 24, and yet still Antonio Conte's team ended the night having extended their lead at the top to nine.

That was the consequence of the night's biggest shock, Arsenal's home defeat by Watford, as well as Tottenham's draw at Sunderland which meant that the Premier League leaders could afford the two points. Had Costa been more assertive from the spot then it would have been all three yet again, although that would have been very hard on Liverpool who fought back from David Luiz's equaliser with a fine second half. So many sides are simply held at arm's length by Conte's magnificently organised winning machine, but Liverpool succeeded in striking a blow and Georginio Wijnaldum's second-half header reflected their ambition in coming back into this match. There was no questioning the grip that Liverpool had on the first half's flow of possession, it was just the challenge of getting a grip on the game that eluded them. This is what Conte's Chelsea can do: allow an opponent to dominate the possession while leaving them wondering why the game will not bend to their control. Over the course of the first 45 minutes, Liverpool had 66 per cent of the possession and yet they created just one chance that stretched Thibaut Courtois, a shot from Wijnaldum. On the touchline, Conte covered so much ground that he more or less tracked every move Nathaniel Clyne made save the moments the Liverpool right-back made it over the halfway line. The Chelsea manager got a little carried away at one point and involuntarily kicked a ball into touch away from Jordan Henderson which drew a warning from the referee Mark Clattenburg. One thing you can say for Conte is that he has done his best to defuse every row he has inadvertently found himself in this season with his managerial counterparts, be it Jose Mourinho, Mauricio Pochettino or, in this case, Klopp. He crossed over to the Liverpool manager's technical box to clap him on the back and apologise.

The absorption of Conte in the game is complete and it seems to go for his players too, who barely put a foot wrong in the whole first half. They did not create much going forward but they converted their one promising free-kick into a goal that shocked Anfield. There was more argument about the award of the free-kick itself, which was given away by Adam Lallana who fouled Eden Hazard after he had lost control of the ball in the left channel. Simon Mignolet only had three men in his wall and was shouting at persons unknown when Luiz took a run at the ball and curved it with his instep over the inadequate defences and into the left side of the Liverpool goal.

It was unfortunate for the Belgian goalkeeper that he did not even move in the direction of Luiz's free-kick, let alone get a hand on it. Clattenburg, who never has any doubt in these moments, was sure that the goal was good. Luiz might even have started his run-up before the referee's whistle was blown in which case it certainly was an ingenious shake-up of an old routine.

Confidence is not currently in rich supply at Anfield and there was another wobble four minutes later when Willian struck a free-kick from the left that was allowed to drift across the Liverpool area. Luiz had a slide at it but on this occasion it was Mignolet who got a hand down to bat it away.

The Chelsea defence was sure-footed throughout that first half and the outstanding Cesar Azpilicueta was there to head away a decent back-post cross on 31 minutes. Conte's men just seemed to soak it up. They were tight on Philippe Coutinho and Roberto Firmino, and when they had a chance they broke out of the Liverpool press adroitly.

If the Chelsea system had worked just about as perfectly as Conte might have hoped in the first half then after the break it seemed to flatten out. That dynamic back three augmented by Victor Moses and Marcos Alonso at wing-back flattened out to a back five which ceded the space down the wings. Klopp's team were back in it. Firmino should have scored four minutes after the break when Liverpool got away quickly on the counter, via a long ball into the right channel that Lallana back-heeled into the path of Clyne. Most surprising about the perfectly-executed tackle on the Liverpool right-back was that it was Hazard who made it. From there the ball fell to Firmino, unmarked on the left side of the area, and he swung wildly and cleared the bar with his shot. It might have been the moment when faith started to ebb but Liverpool had the equaliser before the hour.

It came from a cross from the right from Henderson, another moment when you wondered why there was not more pressure applied by Chelsea on the man with the ball. Milner headed the ball back across and it took a bounce off Moses before Wijnaldum adjusted himself to head it in.

The penalty came when Costa stepped back inside Joel Matip and went over his leg. The award looked harsh. Mignolet saved to his right side. There was a gripping encore to the game in which both sides tried to win it and Sadio Mane came on, but when it ended Chelsea were even further ahead of the rest.

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## THE INDEPENDENT

Liverpool salvage a point but Blues' title challenge shows no signs of slowing down

It is reflective of how this season is going that, despite Chelsea dropping a lead to also drop points and Diego Costa having a 77th-minute penalty saved in a redemptive moment for Simon Mignolet, they still extended their lead at the top by a point. That was down to Arsenal rather than a resurgent Liverpool, who can seek some comfort out of a night filled with engaging controversy. On the last day of January, they still couldn't win in what was a generally miserable month, but this 1-1 draw at least saw life flow back through the team again.

That was all the more impressive because it looked like a bit of quick-thinking from David Luiz could also kill off their season all too quickly, as the Brazilian caught a flat-footed Mignolet out with a brilliantly innovative free-kick. Georginio Wijnaldum brought Liverpool back into the game with a second-half header, before Mignolet kept his own head - to maybe keep his place in the team - with a penalty save that made up for so many errors and could mark a turning point. Liverpool did start with the type of energetic performance that had been so lacking for pretty much all of 2017 since the New Years Eve win over Manchester City, and that had been so required after this poor run. They were pressing Chelsea aggressively, and forcing Conte's defence right back around Thibaut Courtois's goal. Giorgio Wijnaldum brought a brilliant save from the Belgian with one long-range strike, amid a few anxious moments for the league leaders. It seemed to say so much about the readiness of the two sides for this game when Philippe Coutinho caught out a hesitant Nemanja Matic about 10 yards into the Chelsea half - but ended up meaning little.

The lingering question in all of this was whether Conte had calculatedly got his side to sit back - in the manner of one famous clash between these two sides in the recent past - and was merely willing to let Liverpool come at them all too aggressively, to try and then catch them out.

Whatever the actual truth of that, there was certainly plenty of calculation to Luiz's 25th-minute goal.

It's remarkable now to think he has been accused of being headless. Here, the Brazilian showed more presence of mind than anyone on the pitch, and certainly Simon Mignolet. As Willian sized up the shot and the goalkeeper looked to shape his wall after Eden Hazard went down rather easily on the edge of the Liverpool box, Luiz suddenly ran through for a quick free-kick and thumped it in off the left-hand post.

Mignolet was left stranded, and his team left having wasted a lot of energy for nought.

The goalkeeper was at least a little more alert to turn away a dipping Willian set-piece moments later, but Liverpool had by then gone much flatter.

They could have done with Roberto Firmino keeping his shot just after half-time a bit flatter, as the Brazilian squandered what was probably the chance of the game, in one of the moves of the game. The effervescent Coutinho gloriously backheeled the ball into the oncoming Nathaniel Clyne's pass, as he burst into the air only to be supremely challenged by - of all people - Eden Hazard. It merely fell to Firmino, who was left one on one with Courtois, only to leave the ball in the Anfield Road stand.

That seemed to play on Liverpool's minds even more, and led to some more clumsy moments at the back, only for Klopp's side to show the kind of mental persistence he so often talks about - and values in his sides above anything.

Jordan Henderson also showed the kind of accuracy the Premier League is seeing much more often from him, as he clipped over a divine ball for James Milner. The left-back headed the ball back across goal for Wijnaldum to eventually head past Courtois.

Chelsea again withdrew right back, but were this time looking that bit more fragile.

Costa certainly looked it as he went down easily under contact with Matip. Klopp was furious, Chelsea surely ready to extend their lead and kill off the title. Except, in a season when Mignolet has shown some of his worst traits, he reminded us of his best by saving his sixth penalty in the Premier League.

It was a moment of redemption - but still couldn't reduce Chelsea's lead. They go nine points clear, and look no more likely to be stopped.

## DAILY MIRROR

GINI'S GOT BOTTLE

LIVERPOOL 1

Wijnaldum 57

CHELSEA 1

Luiz 24

PREMIER LEAGUE FROM ANFIELD

AT least they can hold their heads high again, at least Jurgen Klopp can say he put the pride back into Anfield.

Liverpool's rousing second half ensured the avoidance of a fourth straight home defeat, but this was confirmation that Antonio Conte will be the one putting the ultimate pride back into Stamford Bridge.

In fact, Chelsea will have departed considering this to be a missed chance.

Not just because Diego Costa had a late penalty saved but because they looked in control after David Luiz produced an impudent opener.

Georginio Wijnaldum levelled with a second-half header and Liverpool deserved their point on a raucous night.

Klopp came over all Franklin D Roosevelt in his programme notes, essentially claiming the only thing Liverpool had to fear was not Diego Costa but fear itself.

"Fear can restrict your progress," he suggested before insisting his team is "as strong, powerful and capable as any in the country at the moment" and that, in their prime, his "good, if not better, anyone else in country".

Stirring stuff or vaguely desperate ruse to rouse participants and punters alike.

There had been precious little evidence of superiority in the 29 days before January's close, a lone success in eight stabs and that was against Plymouth. But his rallying call did strike something of a chord. If nothing else, urgency was stamped all over a vibrant Liverpool start.

Chelsea, now Conte has Premier League patterns etched on his brain, were predictably prepared, only a decent Wijnaldum shot remotely bothering Thibaut Courtois in an opening half of mainly Liverpool possession.

In this counterattacking age, Conte is becoming king.

And in Eden Hazard, he has a prince of the breakaway, H prin not only quick but regal, not only sharp but intelligent, not only flighty but tough.

He had already flagged up his danger on a couple of occasions before Adam Lallana was fooled by that moment of Hazard deceleration that draws the foul.

Donald Trump could have sorted out a wall quicker than it took for keeper Simon Mignolet to get his organised.

Whatever your views on Luiz, he is an intuitive, gifted, inventive footballer.

Those gifts were blended into one beautiful free-kick.

Even had Mignolet not still been impersonating a traffic officer, it is highly unlikely he would have repelled a strike that planted a passing kiss on an upright on its way in.

It was a genius moment from a player whose days of being maligned seem to belong to a comical past.

Do not underestimate his defensive input into this operation, either. Not that he was inordinately stretched for long periods.

It was not until the second half that Roberto Firmino started to look at getting beyond the familiar back three, started seeking out areas of danger behind the triumvirate.

His more direct adventure should have paid off when Hazard's commendable tracking back only culminated in his tackle sending the ball to the Liverpool striker, who reacted with remarkable, crowd-finding panic.

But Firmino's approach was symptomatic of a more incisive, less frilly Liverpool second half.

They caught Chelsea in a comfort zone and made them pay the penalty.

Wijnaldum has stealthily shown himself to be one of the finest midfield headers of a Premier League ball.

It looked routine when his chance arrived via the head of James Milner and, inadvertently, Victor Moses, but it required sharp reaction and quality technique. In shaking Anfield into a frenzy, Wijnaldum demonstrated both.

Crowd and team-mates reinvigorated, it just remained to be seen if fervour or cool counter-attack could win the s d l e night.

Neither could, even though Costa had that glorious chance after dubiously falling over Joel Matip's leg and convincing referee Mark Clattenburg. His spot-kick was poor and Mignolet turned the ball round a post.

Honours even but the final one will still be draped in blue.

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Klopp SOS call answered with morale-boosting show of energy and purpose

Jürgen Klopp's SOS call was answered.

His pre-match rallying cry amounted to 'save our season' and the message got through as Liverpool stopped the rot on a pulsating night at Anfield.

This time Klopp's shattered players departed with appreciative applause rather than brickbats ringing in their ears. It was far from a stellar performance as the spoils were shared but it still represented a big step forward after the damaging setbacks of recent weeks. The nightmare scenario of Chelsea inflicting a fourth successive home defeat on the Reds for the first time in 94 years was avoided.

It was a morale-boosting end to a punishing month as Liverpool played with an energy and a purpose that's been so sadly lacking throughout their January blues.

This was a gutsy display to give Kopites genuine hope that something can still be salvaged from a campaign which had gone alarmingly off the rails.

A precious point against the leaders on a night when Arsenal were beaten at home by Watford and Tottenham only drew at Sunderland leaves the Reds fourth and only a point adrift of second place. Catching Chelsea may not be realistic over the months ahead but this spirited response will fuel Klopp's belief in Liverpool's ability to hold on to a Champions League spot, especially with Sadio Mané back on club duty following the Africa Cup of Nations and the injury situation clearing up.

With just three games in the whole of February, the manager will get the training time he craves as he looks to rekindle the fluency and the swagger Liverpool played with in the autumn. It was a rollercoaster night as the Reds failed to make the most of their flying start and were punished by David Luiz's quickly taken free-kick. To their credit, Liverpool didn't fold. They dug deep and deservedly levelled in the second half courtesy of Gini Wijnaldum's third goal of the season.

Defensive deficiencies once again threatened to cost them dear but Simon Mignolet stood tall – producing a stunning penalty save to deny Diego Costa a winner. 'Unity is strength', read the giant banner in the Kop before kick-off and there was no hint of negativity around the place with the atmosphere crackling. Boosted by the fact that Nathaniel Clyne was passed fit to start at right-back, Liverpool flew out of the traps.

There was a tempo and an intensity to the Reds' play which has been absent of late. Chelsea simply weren't allowed to settle as Klopp's men were combative and in their faces. Liverpool hassled and harried them into making mistakes.

Adam Lallana set the tone, pressing like his life depended on it and others followed his lead. Emre Can thundered into challenges and moved the ball quicker as there was a real purpose to Liverpool's work.

It wasn't easy to create opportunities. Chelsea's wing-backs were so deep, the Reds were essentially up against a back five with Nemanja Matic and N'Golo Kanté providing further protection. Wijnaldum's sweetly struck 20-yarder finally forced a sprawling save from Thibaut Courtois. Klopp continued to applaud on the touchline. Nobody could question the endeavour on the field.

When Antonio Conte kicked the ball away to prevent Liverpool from taking a throw-in quickly, it was another sign that the leaders were rattled.

But from a position of control, lapses in concentration started to creep in.

Joel Matip endured a poor night and his sloppy pass gave Chelsea the chance to counter dangerously as James Milner did well to thwart Victor Moses.

There was no let-off on 24 minutes after Lallana had barged into Eden Hazard 25 yards out. Liverpool were caught napping, Mignolet still organising his defensive wall as Luiz stepped up to slam home a free-kick which cannoned in off the inside of the post. Briefly, the mood changed. When groans accompanied the sight of Wijnaldum playing it sideways, a furious Klopp turned to the fans behind him in the Main Stand and vented his spleen.

Matip continued to look shaky and Mignolet had to be alert to keep out Willian's free-kick. Liverpool had their moments before the interval but nothing fell for them. Courtois flapped at Milner's corner and the ball struck Matip before Matic hacked to safety. Firmino then somehow failed to connect when he rose to meet Coutinho's inviting centre. The early stages of the second half brought more frustration for the Reds. After Lallana's classy backheel released Clyne, the ball ricocheted kindly into the path of Firmino. The Brazilian had time to steady himself but blazed high and wide. The erratic Dejan Lovren deciding to take pot shots from 40 yards didn't help matters and Milner was relieved to see Moses clip the outside of the post after losing out to him inside the penalty box.

Liverpool were crying out for inspiration and finally it arrived just before the hour mark.

Captain Jordan Henderson, who was immense in the second half, clipped a quality delivery towards the far post and Milner nodded intelligently back across goal.

A deflection off Moses ensured it dropped perfectly for Wijnaldum, who nodded past Courtois from six yards out. Anfield erupted. All the anxiety evaporated.

Buoyed by the equaliser, Liverpool pressed on in search of greater reward.

Can took an extra touch when he should have pulled the trigger and was shut down by Alonso. With 15 minutes to go Klopp played his ace with Mané granted a rapturous ovation on his Anfield return as he replaced Coutinho.

However, within seconds Liverpool's two centre-backs pressed the self-destruct button. First, Lovren jumped in and committed himself, leaving the Reds exposed. Costa raced through and as he turned inside, Matip brought him down.

All that hard graft looked set to be in vain but Mignolet came to the rescue, diving full length to his right to brilliantly keep out Costa's spot-kick.

There were further scares as Liverpool ran out of gas and Chelsea finished the stronger. Henderson producing a goal-saving last-ditch tackle on substitute Pedro, who then fired narrowly wide. Firmino could have won it at the death but nodded straight at Courtois. Only a draw but here were some much needed green shoots of recovery.

MATCH FACTS

Liverpool: Mignolet, Clyne, Matip, Lovren, Milner, Henderson, Can, Wijnaldum, Lallana (Origo 90), Coutinho (Mané 75), Firmino

Not used: Karius, Sturridge, Klavan, Moreno, Lucas.

Chelsea: Courtois, Azpilicueta, Luiz, Cahill, Moses, Kanté, Matic, Alonso, Willian (Fabregas 83), Costa (Batshuayi 90+3), Hazard (Pedro 72).

Not used: Begovic, Zouma, Terry, Chalobah.

Referee: Mark Clattenburg Attendance: 53,157 Goals: Luiz 25, Wijnaldum 57

Bookings: Henderson, Milner, Willian,

Man of the match: Jordan Henderson. Led by example throughout.

## EveningStandard.

Georginio Wijnaldum's second-half goal ensured [Liverpool](#) held [Chelsea](#) to a 1-1 draw at a rain-soaked Anfield on Tuesday night as Simon Mignolet saved a late [Diego Costa](#) penalty.

David Luiz handed Antonio Conte's side the lead in the 24th minute with his superb free kick before Wijnaldum restored parity with his header in the 57th minute.

Mignolet then made amends for being caught out for Luiz's goal when he saved Costa's penalty with 14 minutes to go to secure a much-needed draw for the Reds, which maintains Chelsea's 10-point lead over Liverpool in the Premier League standings.

Jürgen Klopp's side came into their game with leaders Chelsea off the back of three disappointing showings at Anfield over the past week - which saw the Reds lose to Swansea in the league, Southampton in the EFL Cup and Championship side Wolves in the FA Cup.

Despite those run of results, Klopp's side were impressive in the early stages of their clash with Chelsea.

The hosts dominated possession and, within 12 minutes, had tested Thibaut Courtois when Wijnaldum's powerful effort was parried clear by the Belgian goalkeeper.

Chelsea took their time to get into the game but, after eventually doing so, the Blues took an unlikely lead when Mark Clattenburg awarded Conte's side a free kick for Adam Lallana's apparent barge on Eden Hazard in the 24th minute.

Liverpool goalkeeper Simon Mignolet was caught out trying to organise his back line despite Clattenburg blowing his whistle and when Luiz ran up to take the free kick, the Belgian could do little to stop the Brazilian's powerful effort which flew over the wall, onto the post and into the net.

The goal came on Luiz's 100th appearance in the Premier League for Chelsea, and it handed the Blues an unexpected lead - who then nearly made it 2-0 through the defender.

Liverpool, who had Sadio Mané on the bench following his return from the Africa Cup of Nations on Monday, failed to organise themselves quickly enough during another free kick, which Luiz narrowly missed.

The Reds, though, upped their tempo in their pursuit of an equaliser but Chelsea protected their lead by defending in numbers which allowed the Blues to go into the break with the advantage.

Despite the scoreline, Klopp sent his men back out onto the wet Anfield pitch with a clear aim: to score. And they nearly did when Lallana backheeled the ball into the path of Roberto Firmino who seemed unaware of how much space he had to pick out a shot and instead fired high.

Diego Costa's backheel down the other end of the pitch then found Victor Moses, but James Milner's failed clearance allowed the Chelsea wing-back to shoot from a tight angle though it missed the target.

Liverpool continued to ask questions of Chelsea's defence and it paid off in the 57th minute when Jordan Henderson's superb lofty ball found Milner on the left, whose header then fell to Wijnaldum.

The forward got the better of Luiz to head in a deserved equaliser for the hosts before Henderson appealed for a penalty after contact from Moses in the area. Clattenburg correctly deemed the contact to be minimal, but it didn't prevent Liverpool from continuing to push men forward in their search for a winner though they nearly conceded when Chelsea were awarded a penalty for Matip's foul on Costa in the area.

The striker struck the ball to his left, but Mignolet dived the correct way to deny Costa and earn his side a 1-1 draw that keeps Liverpool in fourth place while Chelsea lead second-placed Tottenham by nine points.

Date: 31 January 2017  
 Opposition: Chelsea  
 Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

31 January 2017



Chelsea had to settle for a draw against a much-improved Liverpool at Anfield after Diego Costa's late penalty was saved by Simon Mignolet - but still extended their lead at top of the Premier League to nine points.

Liverpool keeper Mignolet made amends for his first-half embarrassment when he had been caught off guard by David Luiz's superb free-kick from 25 yards.

Georginio Wijnaldum's close-range header 11 minutes after the break gave Liverpool a draw they fully deserved, ending a run of three successive home losses, two of which knocked them out of the EFL Cup and the FA Cup.

However, it could have been much better for Chelsea and worse for Liverpool when Costa went to ground under challenge from Joel Matip 14 minutes from the end. Referee Mark Clattenburg pointed to the spot but Mignolet dived low to his right to save the Spain striker's spot-kick.

Roberto Firmino wasted Liverpool's two best chances, shooting high over an open goal and heading straight at Thibaut Courtois in the closing seconds.

Honours even - but Conte celebrates

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte disguised his disappointment about Costa's late penalty being saved by Mignolet with his reaction at the final whistle.

The Italian knew Chelsea would be facing a wounded Liverpool after those three damaging defeats - and he clearly saw this as one point won rather than two lost as he went straight to the visiting fans and pumped his fists in delight.

The Blues were not at their best and yet showed the resilience and compactness of old as they were dominated in possession but kept Liverpool at arm's length for most of the game.

And in N'Golo Kante they had the game's outstanding performer, perpetual motion and first to every loose ball in midfield and at both ends of the pitch.

Costa had an off night, including squandering the penalty, but Chelsea found answers elsewhere and carried a threat of their own after Pedro came on as a late substitute.

Chelsea may only return to London with a point, but results elsewhere for Arsenal and Tottenham made this a good night for the Premier League leaders.

Klopp thwarts rivals again

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp had endured his worst week since arriving at Anfield in October 2015 with the Premier League defeat by Swansea City, the EFL Cup semi-final loss to Southampton and the FA Cup fourth-round humiliation against Championship side Wolves.

The German, however, has proved his mettle against his closest Premier League rivals - and once again he emerged unbeaten to maintain his excellent record against Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham since his appointment.

This draw means that he has played 15 league games against that group, winning six, drawing eight and losing only one, a home defeat by United last season.

Liverpool's hopes of a first title since 1990 are receding as they are 10 points behind Chelsea - but there was plenty for Klopp to be happy about.

This was more like the high-intensity Liverpool of the early months of the season, although their play lacks subtlety at times as they seem to get carried away by the emotion of the crowd, as well as their animated manager in his technical area.

And further good news was the sight of leading scorer Sadio Mane, who has nine league goals, coming on as a substitute after his return from Africa Cup Of Nations duty with Senegal.

Man of the match - N'Golo Kante (Chelsea)

'Outstanding in attitude' - what they said

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp: "I said before the game - and people didn't like it - but this wonderful, powerful club needs to keep its nerves.

"Not everything is bad because we lose. This team is outstanding in attitude so let's do the best we can and see where we end up at the end of the season. The results tonight were good for us, but we must continue to fight."

Chelsea manager Antonio Conte: "It was a very tough game. Both teams tried to play with intensity. I'm pleased. We saw a different game to when we played Liverpool and lost at home.

"It's pity Diego Costa missed the penalty because he played very well. We had different chances to score goals, but we must be happy with the result and the performance because it is not easy to play away at Liverpool."

Luiz's first Chelsea goal for almost four years - the stats

David Luiz scored his first Premier League goal for Chelsea since April 2013 - 1,386 days ago.

All 14 of Georginio Wijnaldum's Premier League goals have been scored in home games (11 for Newcastle, three for Liverpool).

Simon Mignolet has saved six of the 14 penalties he has faced in the Premier League as a Liverpool player, more than any other keeper for the Reds.

Chelsea are unbeaten in their past five Premier League trips to Anfield, last losing there in May 2012.

The Reds have gone five games without a home win in all competitions for the first time since October 2012.

What's next?

Chelsea have another huge Premier League game coming up - they entertain Arsenal (12:30 GMT) in the early kick-off on Saturday. On the same day, Liverpool are away to struggling Hull City (15:00).

Date: 31 January 2017

Opposition: Chelsea

Competition: League

Times	Telegraph	Standard
Guardian	Mirror	Echo
Independent	Mail	BBC

31 January 2017



Match ends, Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1.

90'+4' Second Half ends, Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1.

90'+4' Substitution, Chelsea. Michy Batshuayi replaces Diego Costa.

90'+3' Attempt blocked. Marcos Alonso (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Pedro.

90'+1' Attempt saved. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool header from the centre of the box is saved in the centre of the goal. Assisted by Sadio Mané.

90' Simon Mignolet (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

90' Foul by Pedro (Chelsea.

90' Substitution, Liverpool. Divock Origi replaces Adam Lallana.

90' Attempt missed. Pedro (Chelsea left footed shot from outside the box is close, but misses to the right. Assisted by N'Golo Kanté.

89' Foul by Dejan Lovren (Liverpool.

89' Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea wins a free kick on the right wing.

88' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

88' Cesc Fàbregas (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

87' Hand ball by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.

84' Nathaniel Clyne (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

84' Foul by Marcos Alonso (Chelsea.

83' Substitution, Chelsea. Cesc Fàbregas replaces Willian.

79' Hand ball by Sadio Mané (Liverpool.

79' Willian (Chelsea is shown the yellow card.

79' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick in the defensive half.

79' Foul by Pedro (Chelsea.

78' Foul by Emre Can (Liverpool.

78' N'Golo Kanté (Chelsea wins a free kick on the right wing.

78' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool.

78' Pedro (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

76' Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.

76' Penalty saved! Diego Costa (Chelsea fails to capitalise on this great opportunity, right footed shot saved in the bottom left corner.

76' Penalty conceded by Joel Matip (Liverpool after a foul in the penalty area.

76' Penalty Chelsea. Diego Costa draws a foul in the penalty area.

75' Substitution, Liverpool. Sadio Mané replaces Philippe Coutinho.

72' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

72' Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.

72' Substitution, Chelsea. Pedro replaces Eden Hazard.

68' Attempt missed. Willian (Chelsea right footed shot from the right side of the box misses to the left. Assisted by Eden Hazard.

66' Hand ball by Nemanja Matic (Chelsea.

65' Foul by Philippe Coutinho (Liverpool.

65' Willian (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

63' Offside, Liverpool. Philippe Coutinho tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.

63' Attempt blocked. Emre Can (Liverpool left footed shot from the right side of the box is blocked. Assisted by James Milner with a cross.

62' James Milner (Liverpool wins a free kick on the left wing.

62' Foul by Diego Costa (Chelsea.

59' James Milner (Liverpool is shown the yellow card for a bad foul.

58' Foul by James Milner (Liverpool.

58' Victor Moses (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

57' Goal! Liverpool 1, Chelsea 1. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool header from the centre of the box to the bottom right corner.

57' Attempt blocked. Adam Lallana (Liverpool left footed shot from outside the box is blocked. Assisted by Georginio Wijnaldum.

54' Offside, Chelsea. N'Golo Kanté tries a through ball, but Victor Moses is caught offside.

51' Victor Moses (Chelsea hits the right post with a left footed shot from the right side of the box.

50' Attempt missed. Dejan Lovren (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is too high. Assisted by Nathaniel Clyne.

49' Attempt missed. Roberto Firmino (Liverpool right footed shot from the centre of the box is too high.

48' Foul by Jordan Henderson (Liverpool.

48' Marcos Alonso (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

Second Half begins Liverpool 0, Chelsea 1.

45'+3' First Half ends, Liverpool 0, Chelsea 1.

45' Jordan Henderson (Liverpool is shown the yellow card.

44' Offside, Liverpool. James Milner tries a through ball, but Roberto Firmino is caught offside.

42' Offside, Liverpool. James Milner tries a through ball, but Emre Can is caught offside.

41' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by David Luiz.

40' Offside, Chelsea. Willian tries a through ball, but Diego Costa is caught offside.

39' Attempt missed. Willian (Chelsea right footed shot from outside the box is too high.

37' Adam Lallana (Liverpool wins a free kick in the attacking half.

37' Foul by Gary Cahill (Chelsea.

33' Delay over. They are ready to continue.

32' Delay in match David Luiz (Chelsea because of an injury.

31' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by César Azpilicueta.

29' Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by Simon Mignolet.

29' Foul by Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool.

29' Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick on the left wing.

24' Goal! Liverpool 0, Chelsea 1. David Luiz (Chelsea from a free kick with a right footed shot to the bottom left corner.

24' Foul by Adam Lallana (Liverpool.

24' Eden Hazard (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

23' Offside, Liverpool. Emre Can tries a through ball, but Philippe Coutinho is caught offside.

20' Offside, Chelsea. César Azpilicueta tries a through ball, but Gary Cahill is caught offside.

20' Corner, Chelsea. Conceded by James Milner.

20' Attempt blocked. Victor Moses (Chelsea right footed shot from the right side of the box is blocked. Assisted by Eden Hazard.

18' Foul by Joel Matip (Liverpool.

18' Diego Costa (Chelsea wins a free kick in the attacking half.

14' Foul by Adam Lallana (Liverpool.

14' David Luiz (Chelsea wins a free kick in the defensive half.

12' Offside, Liverpool. James Milner tries a through ball, but Adam Lallana is caught offside.

12' Attempt saved. Georginio Wijnaldum (Liverpool right footed shot from outside the box is saved in the bottom right corner. Assisted by Philippe Coutinho.

3' Corner, Liverpool. Conceded by Nemanja Matic.

First Half begins.

Lineups are announced and players are warming up. Lineups are announced and players are warming up.