

West Ham 1-1 Chelsea: Late VAR drama mars London derby

February 11, 2023

Chelsea drew a third game in a row in the Premier League as they were held by West Ham at London Stadium in the early kick-off.

Late VAR drama saw Chelsea spared and then angered as they drew 1-1 away to London rivals West Ham in the Premier League on Saturday.

Tomas Soucek had what briefly looked to be a late winner chalked off before the midfielder got away with a clear handball in his own box to leave the visitors stunned.

Chelsea had earlier enjoyed arguably their best spell since Graham Potter's appointment during the first 25 minutes, Joao Felix netting a well-worked opener on his return from suspension.

But former Chelsea full-back Emerson Palmieri levelled soon after, and while the visitors dominated much of the following hour, their woes in front of goal meant they were at the mercy of VAR towards the end.

Chelsea's purposeful start had West Ham struggling, surviving an early scare when Joao Felix saw a goal disallowed for offside.

But he did put the visitors in front in the 16th minute, tapping in Enzo Fernandez's curling cross from deep on the left.

Kai Havertz's ruled out goal soon after seemed to jolt West

Ham – who lost Lucas Paqueta to a shoulder injury – into life.

The equaliser arrived before the half-hour, Emerson pouncing after Jarrod Bowen flicked on Vladimir Coufal's right-wing delivery.

Chelsea were back in the ascendancy after half-time, but clear-cut chances were hard to craft.

It briefly looked like Chelsea would pay for that.

Rice headed on a free-kick delivery and Soucek converted the rebound, but the England man clearly strayed offside.

West Ham had an escape of their own a few moments later when Conor Gallagher's shot struck the hand of the falling Soucek, but no penalty was awarded as Chelsea drew a third straight league game for the first time since February 2012 under Andre Villas-Boas.

What does it mean? Chelsea's problems in front of goal continue

They at least managed to avoid going three league games without scoring, which would have been their first such drought since 2007 (four games), but this was hardly an emphatic response.

Joao Felix was sharp and they did of course have a couple of goals ruled out for offside, but otherwise big chances were rare – their opener was Chelsea's only opportunity worth more than 0.14 expected goals.

Chelsea won their first three Premier League games under Potter, scoring seven goals in the process, but they have now won just two of their subsequent 13 (D6 L5), netting only eight goals in this run.

Joao Felix shows his class

His red card against Fulham last month was a big blow to Chelsea, as demonstrated by this performance.

Joao Felix was particularly lively in the first half, scoring after having one chalked off. On top of that, his three shots was a match high, while none of his Chelsea team-mates tallied more key passes (two) either.

Madueke off the boil

Noni Madueke was another who looked quite busy, but his decision making in the final third was poor before he was withdrawn in the 68th minute, having not created a chance for a team-mate.

Key Opta Stats:

- West Ham and Chelsea have shared the points for the first time in nine Premier League encounters since a 0-0 draw in September 2018.
- The Hammers have failed to win 10 of their last 11 London derbies in the Premier League (W1 D2 L8), conceding at least once in every game in this period (20 goals against in total).
- There were no shots on target in the second half between West Ham and Chelsea, the second Premier League match with none after half time this season, after Southampton v Nottingham Forest in January.
- Emerson became the first player to score his first Premier League goal for a club against Chelsea having previously appeared for the Blues in the competition since Frank Lampard for Man City in September 2014.
- Joao Felix became the 12th different player to score for Chelsea in the Premier League this season, no side have had more in 2022-23 (excluding own goals).

What's next?

Chelsea go to Germany in the Champions League on Wednesday to face Borussia Dortmund. West Ham have another derby on

February 19 as they travel to play Tottenham.