



ITV's missed goal shows how live really has to be live

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 As a kid I used to spend Saturdays avoiding finding out that day's football match scores so I could feel the suspense when watching the highlights on Match of the Day, five hours after the final whistles had been blown. Last night's [blunder by ITV sport](#) reminds us how much has changed since then, and how the premium on live events has increased.

After a turgid 127 minutes of cup tie football between Everton and Liverpool, ITV's transmission people decided to suddenly switch mid-action to a commercial break, just  a couple of minutes before the match was due to go to penalties. In that brief moment as we watched a trailer for an ITV drama and a car advert Everton [scored](#). We returned to the live coverage to see Everton players celebrating their late, late winner. (From [my point of view](#), that's a little bit of payback to Liverpool for the tragedy of the [2006 Cup Final](#)).

This was a disaster for ITV Sport's credibility as the whole premise of live football is that it allows you to watch as it happens and enjoy every minute of the developing drama. To not show the goal live is like skipping Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy or not showing [the sledge in Citizen Kane](#).

Mainstream TV is turning into live event TV, be it Big Brother or the various talent and reality shows. News is at its most commanding, too, when delivered 'live', even when nothing much is happening. Hence the endless procession of correspondents standing in places where something occurred sometime earlier.



We want authenticity. We want reality. And we want it as it happens. This is especially true of sport, where ultimately, the result is everything. And when the media does not preserve that illusion of immediacy we feel cheated. Perhaps, not as much as Rafael Benitez though....

And you can watch that goal, again and again, [here](#).

[Photos from Everton FC](#)

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