

STAR SPORTS 1  
FA Cup  
Hull City v Sheffield United  
Live from 9:07pm

Live from 7:00pm  
AC Milan v Catania  
Live from 12:45 (Monday)  
STAR SPORTS 4  
English Premiership  
Liverpool v Manchester City

Live from 6:37pm  
Swansea City v Chelsea  
Live from 9:07pm  
LA LIGA  
Getafe v Atletico Madrid  
Live from 11:00pm

Espanyol v Rayo Vallecano  
Live from 1:00am (Monday)  
NEO PRIME  
Bundesliga  
Bayer Leverkusen v Hertha Berlin  
Live from 7:30pm

Hoffenheim v Ausburg  
Live from 9:30pm

Nat'l Cricket League  
(Four-Day Match, Day 2)

Khulna v Dhaka Metro  
Venue: Cox's Bazar

Dhaka v Barisal  
Venue: Chittagong

Rajshahi v Chittagong  
Venue: BKSP-3

Sylhet v Rangpur  
Venue: Fatullah Stadium

# Liverpool, City set for showdown

AFP, London

 Carried by a wave of raw emotion, leaders Liverpool will look to land a potentially decisive blow in the Premier League title race when they host Manchester City on Sunday.

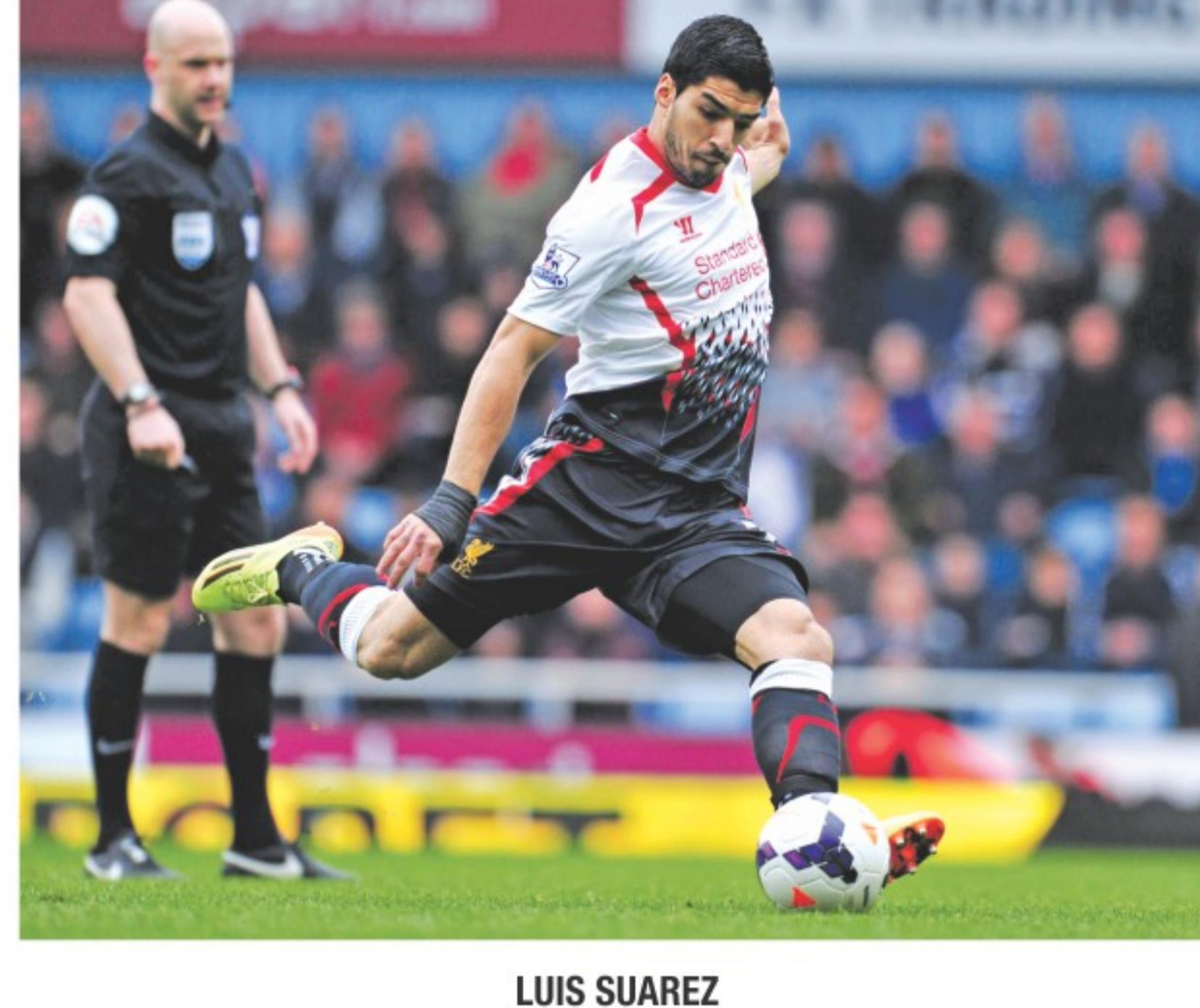
Tributes to mark the 25th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster will frame the encounter and with Liverpool on course for a first title since 1990, Anfield is likely to be a cauldron of fervour and belief.

As with every other game in England this weekend, kick-off will occur seven minutes later than scheduled as a mark of respect for the 96 Liverpool fans who died after a fatal crush at Sheffield Wednesday's Hillsborough stadium during an FA Cup semifinal in 1989.

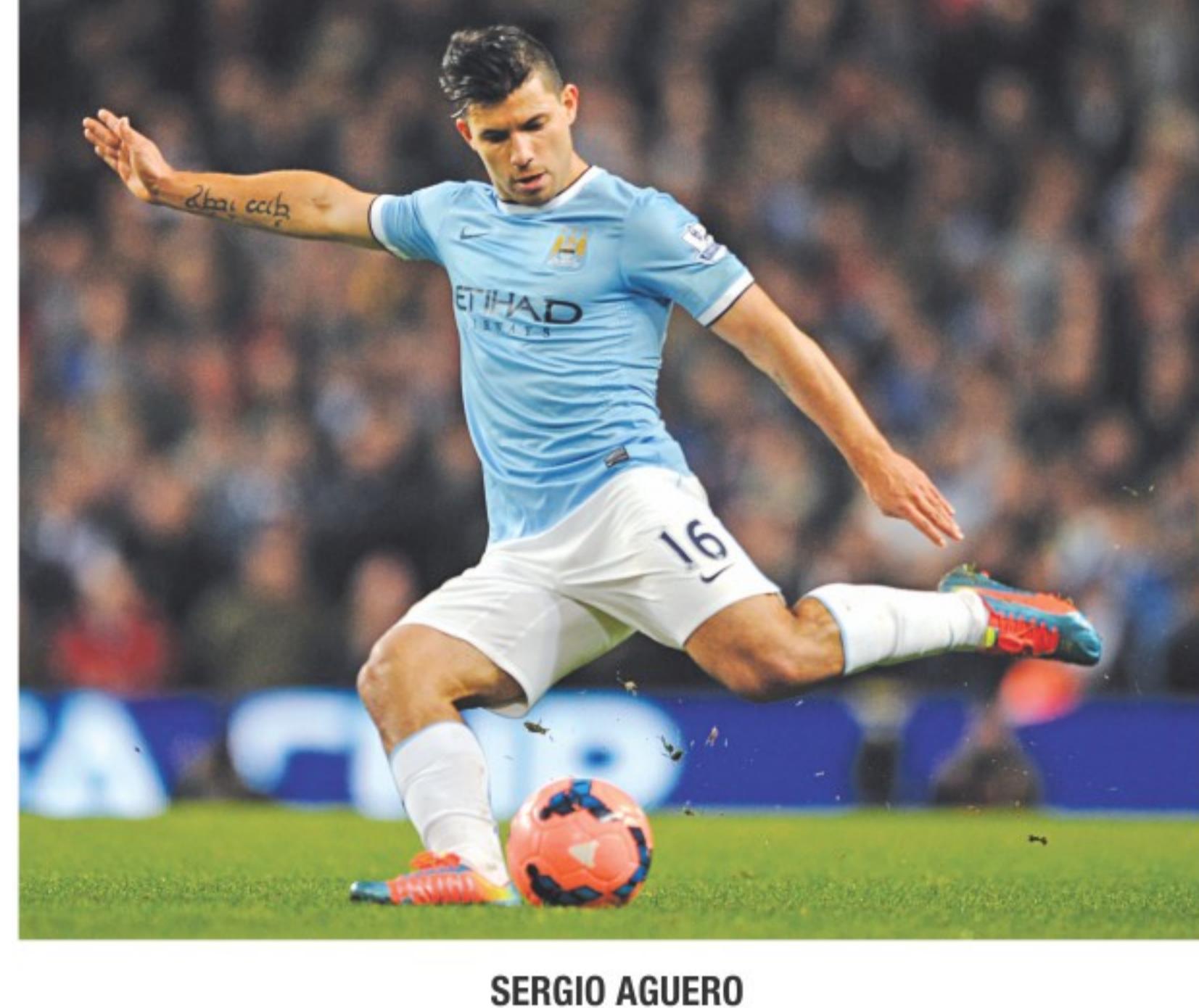
The timing reflects the moment at which that game against Nottingham Forest was called to a halt.

Former players from the two sides will exchange wreaths prior to the match, which will also be preceded by a rendition of the Liverpool anthem, 'You'll Never Walk Alone', and a minute's silence.

Fresh inquests into the deaths opened recently after the original coroner's verdicts of accidental death were quashed following a campaign by victims' families, whose wounds



LUIS SUAREZ



SERGIO AGUERO

remain as fresh as ever.

While no amount of on-pitch success will ever provide adequate consolation, Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers says that his side's title bid is inspired by memories of the Hillsborough dead.

"We can't say too much about Hillsborough because the inquests are underway," he said earlier this week.

"But as a manager coming into the football club, I know there are 96 people in the sky who will always be supporting this football team."

"If we are to achieve anything this year, they will always be in our thoughts – the 96 in the sky and the families that go with them."

The rawness of the occasion leaves City in an uncomfortable position, and manager Manuel Pellegrini has encouraged his players to approach the game with clear heads.

"It will be a very emotional day, but the team that has the cold mind will win the game," said the Chilean.

"It is easy in these big games to have the motivation, but it is very important to manage the anxiety. That is very important for all the players."

Pellegrini has also claimed that it is "not a game that will decide the title", but a win for either side would alter the picture significantly, as both sides know that they will be champions if they win all of their remaining matches.

City, who trail Liverpool by four points with two games in hand, received a huge fillip prior to the game

with the news that top scorer Sergio Aguero will be fit to play after five games out with a hamstring problem.

Apart from centre-back Matija Nastasic, who has an ongoing knee complaint, Pellegrini has a fully fit squad to select from, while left-back Jose Enrique (also knee) will be the only absentee for the home side.

With 29 goals to his name, Liverpool striker Luis Suarez needs just two more goals to equal the Premier League scoring record for a 38-game season, but he says that the team's requirements come first.

"Of course it would be special," said the Uruguayan.

"But for myself, it is more important that Liverpool finish in a good position. I try in every game to score because I am a striker."

Back-to-back defeats at City and Chelsea left Liverpool six points below leaders Arsenal at the turn of the year, but a burst of nine consecutive wins (during which they have plundered 32 goals) has propelled them to the summit.

City have an impressive record against Liverpool in recent seasons, however, having avoided defeat in their last five league encounters.

Rodgers can nonetheless take heart from the fact that his side have won all four of their home meetings against the other teams in the top seven so far this season, scoring 14 times and conceding only once.

## BFF to decide away venues

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to inspect the venues of Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) outside the capital before taking the final decision over where the BPL matches will take place in Feni, Chittagong and Gopalganj.

The BFF members yesterday sat at an emergency meeting after Sheikh Jamal DC, Mohammedan SC, Brothers Union and Uttar Baridhara Club opposed to play their away matches in the locations outside of capital.

An Inspection Committee, which was formed at the meeting, has been asked to submit its report immediately and it has been learnt that the members of the committee may start the inspection the venues from today.

"The second phase of the league will start on time from Tuesday and the matches outside Dhaka are likely to be suspended until the BFF comes to a final decision basis on the report of the venue inspection committee," said BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag after the meeting yesterday.

The Inspection Committee is likely to start the inspection from today.

**Bielsa close to Marseille job**

AFP, Montpellier

Former Argentina coach Marcelo Bielsa moved closer to taking charge at Marseille on Friday as he watched the slumping French giants against Montpellier in Ligue 1.

The 58-year-old Bielsa, who has also coached Chile and Athletic Bilbao in Spain, took his seat 45 minutes before kick-off alongside Manuel Amoros, a former Marseille player, and Diego Reyes, who was his right-hand man at Bilbao.

Bielsa is the favourite to succeed Jose Anigo, who took over from Elie Baup in December.

Marseille went into Friday's game in sixth place in the table and 12 points off a Champions League qualifying place.

## Everton in top four

### RESULTS

Crystal Palace 1 (Puncheon 76) Aston Villa 0  
Fulham 1 (Rodallega 40) Norwich 0  
Southampton 0 Cardiff 1 (Cala 65)  
Stoke 1 (Pieters 42) Newcastle 0  
Sunderland 0 **Everton 1** (Brown 75-09)  
West Brom 3 (Vidra 3, Brunt 4, Sesegnon 31)  
Tottenham 3 (Olsson 34-09, Kane 70, Eriksen 90)

If Palace do complete their escape then boss Pulis deserves to be mentioned as a potential manager of the year candidate for his remarkable work at the south London club, who looked relegation certainties when he took over from Ian Holloway in November.

The bottom four positions are occupied by Norwich who have 32 points, followed by Fulham (30), Cardiff (29) and Sunderland (25). Sunderland have two games in hand on the teams above them.

The top three sides Liverpool, Chelsea and Manchester City are all in action on Sunday with Liverpool playing Manchester City at Anfield and Chelsea going to Swansea City.

All of Saturday's matches kicked off at 1507 local time (1407) to commemorate the Hillsborough disaster 25 years ago this weekend when 96 Liverpool fans died at their FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest in Sheffield.

That match was abandoned after six minutes and the seven-minute delay on Saturday marked that duration and also included a minute's silence around the grounds.

## Rossi boost for Italy

AFP, Rome

Italy international striker Giuseppe Rossi has given his country a pre-World Cup boost by returning to training with Fiorentina on Friday.

Former Manchester United forward Rossi injured his knee on January 5 but just two months out from the beginning of the World Cup in Brazil, he is now back in training in Tuscany.

The American-born 27-year-old was greeted by around 500 fans for his return.

It was the second major knee problem he has suffered in his career having missed the majority of a two-year period from 2011-13, during which time he transferred from Villarreal to La Viola, due to a torn cruciate knee ligament.

His return was welcome news for Italy coach Cesare Prandelli and the diminutive striker was part of the 42-man squad named for physical tests at Italy's training base just outside Florence at Coverciano on Tuesday and Wednesday next week.

## Costa back in squad

REUTERS, Madrid

Atletico Madrid top scorer Diego Costa has been given the all clear by medical staff and included in the squad for Sunday's game at Getafe after shaking off a thigh strain, the La Liga leaders said on Saturday.

Brazil-born forward Costa missed Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final, second leg win against Barcelona after picking up the injury in the first leg the previous week.

Costa's was the final name on the 19-man squad list for the game at Getafe's Coliseum stadium that Atletico published on their official Twitter feed.

Atletico are a point clear of Barca with six games left and three clear of third-placed city neighbours Real Madrid.

Barca and Real play on Saturday, with the champions at Granada and Real at home to Almeria.

Atletico coach Diego Simeone, who has transformed his unfancied team into genuine contenders in Spain and Europe since taking over at the end of 2011, said 18th-placed Getafe would be a dangerous opponent as they are fighting to avoid relegation.

"Tomorrow's game is difficult because of the need Getafe has," Simeone, who was playing for Atletico the last time they won La Liga in 1996, told a news conference on Saturday.

"It breeds anxiety and motivation to play against us and I expect a dangerous opponent with good dead ball skills and plenty of options in attack," added the Argentine.

"The most important thing is the state we are in because we don't depend on anyone, only on our effort and the work we are doing. Hopefully we can see a team that is competitive and knows how important the match is."

Costa, a Spain international, has 25 goals in La Liga this term, the same number as Barca forward Lionel Messi and three behind top scorer Cristiano Ronaldo of Real.

## Work to resume at troubled stadium

AFP, Sao Paulo

Work at Sao Paulo's troubled World Cup stadium was given the go-ahead to resume on Friday after a stoppage caused by the death of a construction worker.

Building work on the 10,000-capacity north stand at the Corinthians Arena was halted on March 31, two days after a worker fell to his death.

But the Brazilian labour minister said that construction on the ground which will host the World Cup opener between Brazil and Croatia on June 12 can resume, a spokesman said.

The minister, who had already authorised a resumption of work on the ground which will host the World Cup opener between Brazil and Croatia on June 12 can resume, a spokesman said.

The arena will stage its first test event on May 17 when Corinthians welcome Figueirense in a Brazilian league game.



PHOTO: AFP

West Bromwich Albion striker Matej Vydra celebrates his opening goal against Tottenham Hotspur during their Premier League match at the Hawthorns yesterday.

## Arsenal shoot Wigan

AFP, Wembley



Lukasz Fabianski saved two penalties as Arsenal beat holders Wigan Athletic 4-2 in a shootout at Wembley on Saturday to reach their first FA Cup final for nine years.

Having stunned Manchester City in last season's final, before being relegated from the Premier League, Wigan looked set for another famous Wembley day when Jordi Gomez put them ahead with a 63rd-minute penalty.

But Per Mertesacker made amends for conceding the penalty by heading in an 82nd-minute equaliser and with the score still 1-1 at the end of extra time, Fabianski took centre stage in the shootout.

The Pole, usually a deputy to compatriot Wojciech Szczesny, saved Wigan's two first attempts, from Gary Caldwell and Jack Collison, before Santi Cazorla dispatched the decisive spot-kick to send Arsenal through.

Victory took Arsene Wenger's team into their first FA Cup final since 2005, when they last won a trophy, and helped ease the pain of being knocked out of the Premier League's top four by Everton earlier in the day.

They will play the winners of Sunday's second semi-final between Hull City and third-tier Sheffield United.

Uwe Rosler's Wigan, meanwhile, must turn their attention back to the Championship promotion chase, having been thwarted in their attempt to become only the seventh club to retain the FA Cup.

The game was preceded by a minute's silence in memory of the 96 Liverpool fans killed in the Hillsborough disaster, which occurred during an FA Cup semi-final in Sheffield 25 years ago this weekend.

Ninety-six seats were also left empty on the halfway line.

Boosted by the return to fitness of Aaron Ramsey, who made his first start since December, Arsenal attacked the game with purpose on a mild, sunny afternoon at the national stadium.

Wigan were content to mass their ranks behind the ball, but they gradually began to show signs of life in attack.

Gomez saw a misdirected cross skim the crossbar, the livewire Callum McManaman fired narrowly over, and Marc-Antoine Fortune forced Fabianski into a near-post save.

It was Arsenal who finished the half on top, however, with Sanogo cantering onto a pass from Lukas Podolski, only for his heavy touch to allow Carson to make a save.

Wenger's side continued to monopolise possession early in the second period, but with just under half an hour remaining, Wigan went ahead.