

April 2020 Issue 2

The



Halfway Line

THE GOAT DEBATE!

Solved in this months issue!

Good and Bad Debuts

Golden Oldie goal scorers
in Premier League

Paying the Penalty



& much much more.....



THIS MONTH ALSO FEATURES A TRANSFER SPECIAL

Editors note: Pre-match pep talk

Welcome back. I mean that in a good way, like Henry to Arsenal, Fowler to Liverpool or Drogba to Chelsea. Not in a bad way like George Graham to North London, Steve Bruce to the North-West or Alex McLeish to the Midlands!

Not all returns are as welcome as others but at The Halfway Line we of course don't see ourselves as a God, like the Fowlers' of the world, or even a Juninho, but more like a Steven Pienaar – welcomed back to a club, knowing that 100% will be given, you'll enjoy some top moments but above everything else you simply know what you are going to get and for the majority of the time you'll do it with a smile on your face.

The fact that you've picked up this issue means you've still got the passion for football, you love an overhead kick in off the bar, you stay up late on every transfer deadline day to see if one last ditch deal gets over the line, and you're likely to spend far too much time on eBay looking for that football kit bargain and contemplating spending £250 on a never worn pair of 1998 adidas predators (you know the ones!)

So what does issue 2 bring in The Halfway Line? Last issue was our debut, so a feature this month will be looking at player's debuts, the good and the bad.

We look to tackle the unanswerable debate over who is better, Messi or Ronaldo, despite comfortably knowing it doesn't matter and we are blessed to have had both doing what they do for so so long.

I mentioned deadline day and we are going to look at transfer scenarios and strategies and try to make some sense of it all, as well as looking for clues on successes and failures.

We've the usual features like Classic Kits, Historical line ups, the Best XI's and the treatment room as well as a look at travelling British footballers, the oldest Premier League goal scorers plus lots more to keep you entertained.

Now sit back and relax just as you would a neutral watching a penalty shoot out enjoy seeing the outcome whilst embracing the love of our beautiful game.



Iker Casillas – Record Champions League appearance holder – 177 games



The Halfway Line Up

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Dani Alves – Over 40 major honours as a professional, including trophies at Sevilla, Barcelona, Juventus, PSG and the Brazil national team



Debuts – the good and the bad

Jurgen Klinsmann – Tottenham Hotspur 1994

The first World Cup winner ever to play in the Premier League had a reputation as a diver and cheater on these shores before his arrival.

Seen as a coup for Tottenham, signed under Ossie Ardiles, who looked to incorporate Klinsmann in a very attack minded line up, alongside fellow 1994 World Cup star Ilie Dumitrescu.

In the season's opener, away against Sheffield Wednesday, Tottenham won 4-3, with Klinsmann scoring, alongside Sheringham, Barmby and Anderton as part of the quintet attacking armoury. Klinsmann's header was ultimately the winner and he followed it up with the legendary diving celebration that sits long in the memory of the Premier League. A perfect start for the German who ended the 1994/95 season as the Footballer Writers Player of the Year.



Ashley Cole – The most FA Cup winners medals (7) and one of only two players to win the English domestic double with 2 different clubs



Fabrizio Ravanelli, Wayne Rooney and Alan Shearer

All three struck hat-tricks on their debuts, all in slightly different circumstances.

Fabrizio Ravanelli

A big name in Italy, although often playing second fiddle to the likes of Vialli & Del Piero at Juventus. A fresh Champions League winner and finalist goal scorer arrived at the perhaps less fashionable Middlesbrough in 1996. Like Klinsmann, on the opening day of the season Ravanelli struck, not once but 3 times, against Liverpool in a hectic 3-3 draw and announced himself, the White Feather, to the Premier League.



Wayne Rooney

Wayne Rooney's record breaking move to Manchester United took place on 31st August 2004. Some 28 days later Rooney started for the first time for United at Old Trafford in a Champions League group stage game against Fenerbahçe. It is fair to say he produced, and at 18 years and 335 days old he smashed in 3 goals in a 6-2 victory. The first of 253 goals for the Red Devils, a record for Manchester United. Nothing like starting how you mean to go on!



Ruud Gullit – The first overseas manager to win the FA Cup



Alan Shearer

Alan Shearer, unlike Ravanelli and Rooney was making his first professional start, not just a debut for a new club, for an unfancied Southampton side against an Arsenal side with title aspirations. No problem for 'Big Al' who went to strike a hat-trick. This was all before the Premier League was established, but as we all know, he quite liked that competition as well.



Not quite hat-tricks but worth a mention for **Jermain Defoe** and **Romelu Lukaku** who developed a great ability to score goals on their debuts for most of their new clubs. Defoe scored on his Glasgow Rangers debut against Kilmarnock. That strike followed debut goals for West Ham, Bournemouth, Tottenham, Portsmouth and Toronto. Lukaku bagged debut strikes for West Bromwich Albion, Everton, Manchester United and Inter Milan.

Also praise to **Marcus Rashford**, who clearly enjoys a goal scoring impact on debuts, doing so on his first appearances for Manchester United (Europa League), his first in the Premier League, for the England senior team, the Under-21s, in the League Cup and in European football's premier competition The Champions League.



Carles Puyol – 513 games for Barcelona, 18 major trophies including 6 La Liga and 3 Champions League titles



As noted Wayne Rooney's Manchester United debut was in a Champions League fixture. Another Champions League debut worth mentioning is that of **Ryan Bertrand**. Bertrand, a Chelsea youth player made his first ever Champions League appearance at the Allianz Arena against Bayern Munich. What makes that special? It happened to be the Champions League final, he was played out of position, and they won!



Not high profile but seems only fair to consider goalkeepers for this article also. A clean sheet would always be the desire for any keeper and a shutout on your first appearance ensures a warm reception from your new fans. So it would certainly help if you get that clean sheet by saving a 90th minute penalty that means you don't just get a clean sheet but 3 points for your new team.

Hats off to **Simon Mignolet** who achieve that on his Liverpool debut at Anfield against Stoke City.



Xavi – Holds the Barcelona record for the most appearances in all competitions (including friendlies), the record for most league appearances, with 505 games, and the record for most appearances in official competitions, with 767 games



For all the good debuts, there are inevitably the bad ones too..

Well documented at the time, **Jonathan Woodgate** had one to forget making his debut for Real Madrid. He had to wait a year after signing to make his first start due to injuries, and he probably wish he'd waited a little longer. An own goal and a red card.



On your debut you are looking to make an big statement of intent. In Aug 2015 **Tyrone Mings** came on for Bournemouth at half time on the opening day of the season post an £8 million transfer from Ipswich. It was his top flight debut but he took a knock 6 minutes in, and ruptured his cruciate ligament in his knee and didn't play again in the league that season!



Early finishes on your debut aren't a rarity! Premier League debutants Laurent Koscielny, Gervinho, Jack Colback, Tomas Repka all received red cards on their debuts but none as quickly as **Iain Turner**. 9 minutes into his Premier League debut he saw red! One way to securing a clean sheet on your debut!

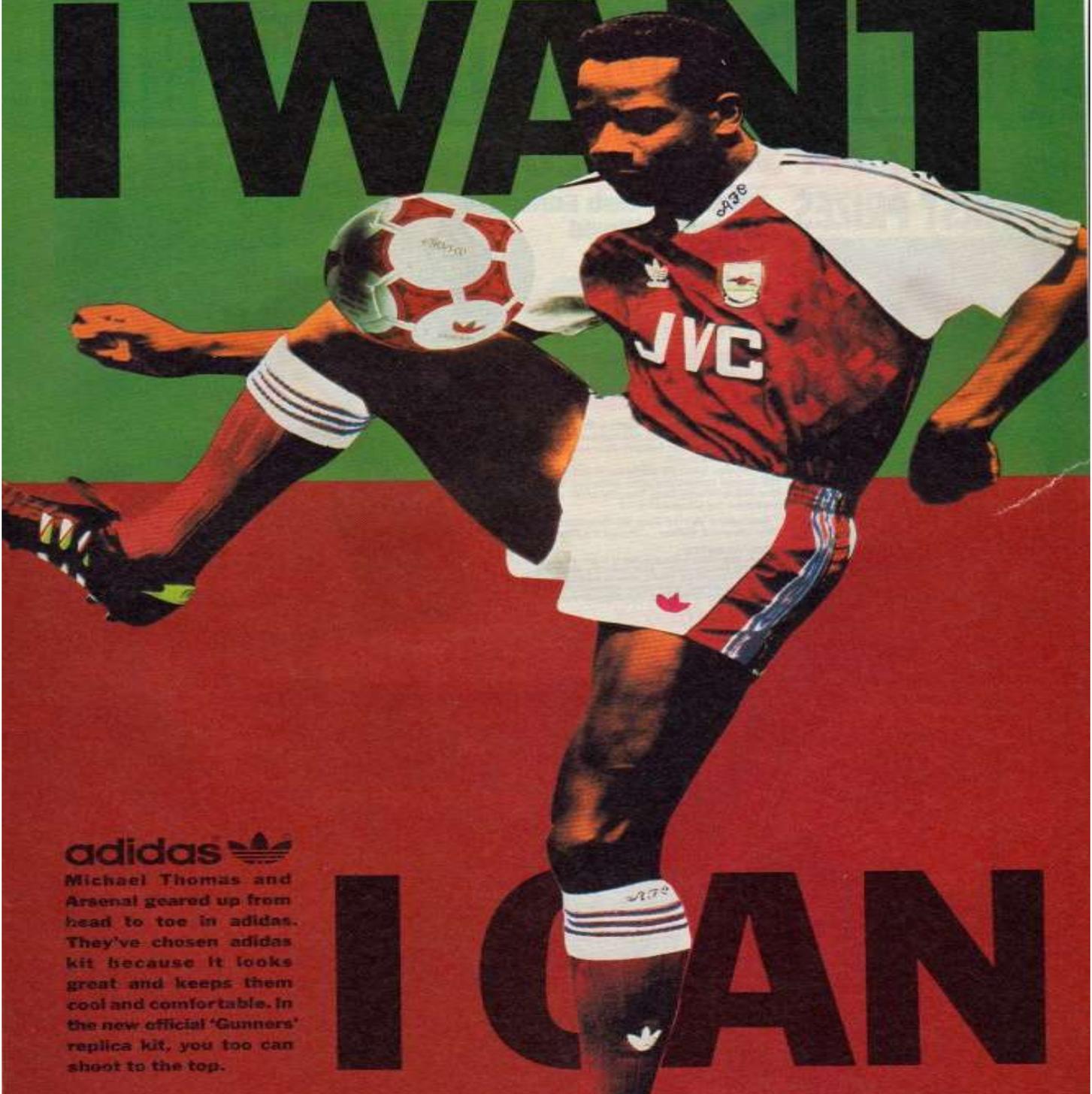
Also, as a manager, you try to set a good example. Graeme Souness, player-manager for Glasgow Rangers made his debut and promptly got booked twice in the first 34 minutes and took an early bath.



Raul Gonzalez – The highest Spanish goal scorer in European leagues combined



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Steven Gerrard – Scored in a Champions League final, a UEFA Cup final, the League Cup final and an FA Cup final



PAYING THE PENALTY

Penalty kicks can make you or break you. Whether you are as cool as a cucumber (see Zidane 2006 World Cup final, & Gaizka Mendieta's waiting game) or the legs go to jelly (see Gareth Southgate or Roberto Baggio) the free shot from 12 yards is never quite as straight forward as it should be.

We at The Halfway Line dug up some fun facts on the Penalty.

- Ronaldo (the Brazilian) once scored a hat-trick of penalties in an international game against Argentina
- Martin Palermo once missed a hat-trick of penalties in an international games against Colombia



- Steven Gerrard scored 2 penalties against Manchester United in one game, but missed a third! No one has ever scored a Premier League hat-trick of penalties in one game

(Matt Le Tissier & Wayne Rooney have both scored dead ball hat-tricks but these include free-kicks as well as penalties)



Alan Shearer – The top goal scorer in Premier League history – 260 goals



- Obafemi Martins and Bobby Zamora have both scored penalties with their left foot and right foot in the Premier League
- Les Ferdinand is the highest scoring player in the Premier League without having scored a penalty (149 goals)



- Alan Shearer has scored the most Premier League penalties (55) **and** missed the most (11)
- David James has saved the most penalties in the Premier League (13)



- Dmitri Kharine has the best % saves of penalties faced in the Premier League (faced 11 and saved 5 = 45.5%)



Pele – The only player ever to win 3 World Cups as well as the youngest ever to win it @ 17 years and 239 days old



- The holder of the worst % ratio of missed penalties in the Premier League is
Juan Pablo Angel
(taken 10 and scored 5 = 50% missed)



- Sebastian Coates, once of Liverpool, conceded 3 penalties in one game for Sporting Lisbon. Luckily he got sent off as well, before he could concede anymore!
- The last player in the English League to score a hat-trick of penalties was Josh Wright of Gillingham in just 9 minutes against Scunthorpe in 2017. The previous time was in 1957!
- And still to date, the record for the worst penalty ever goes to Diana Ross



Neymar – His transfer from Barcelona to Paris Saint-Germain for £200million makes him the most expensive footballer of all time



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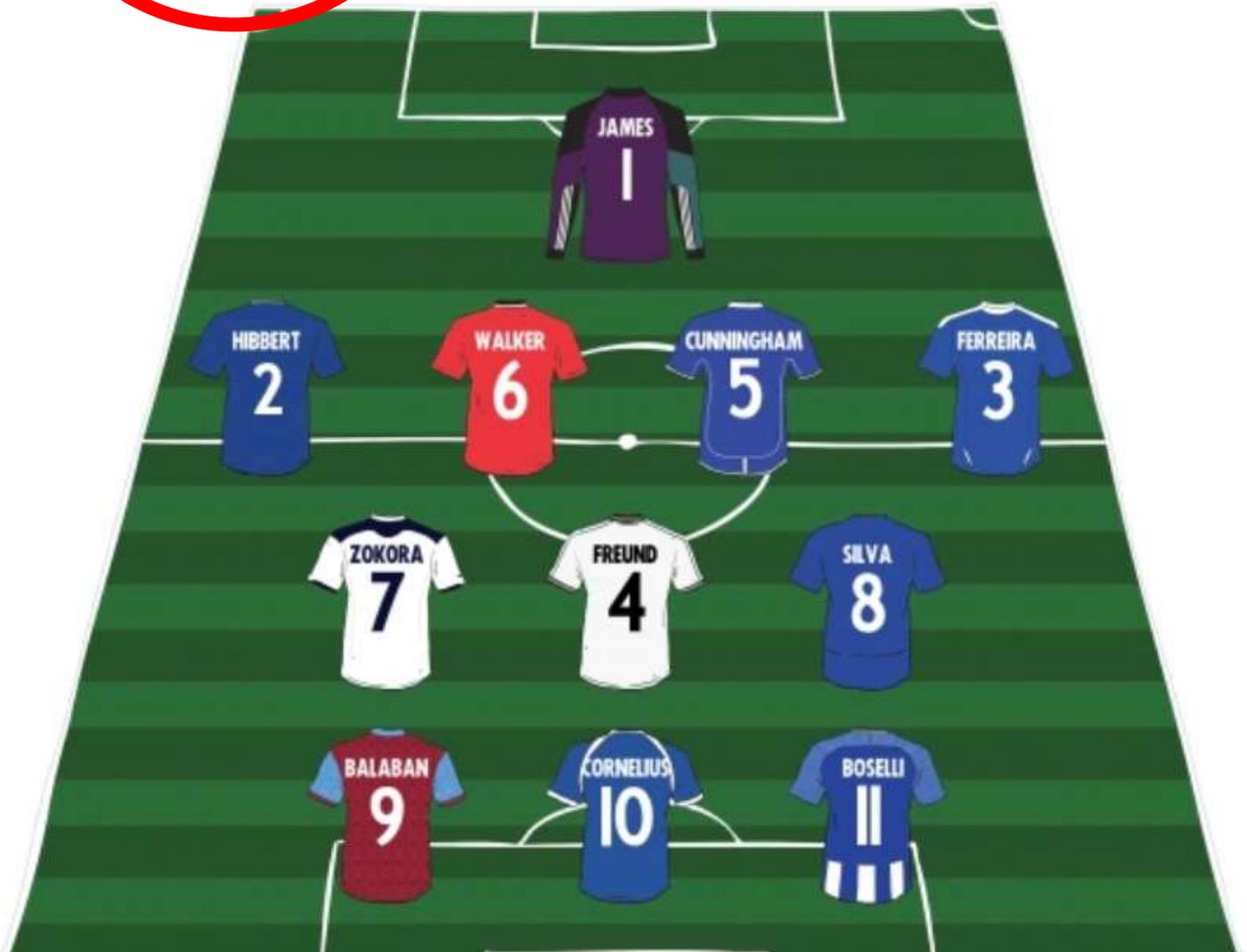


Marco Van Basten – First player to score 4 goals in a Champions League game. Also named European Footballer of the Year 3 times





No Goals Premier League stars XI



Alessandro Nesta – Hugely successful centre back but injuries prevented him from ever playing in the knockout stages of all 3 World Cups he played in



No Goal Premier League stars

David James – 572 league appearances. Difficult to include a goalkeeper in the team of not scoring a goal (obvious others have scored) but David James did play up front for Manchester City for approximately 7 minutes in a last game of the season fixture against Middlesbrough, and failed to score!

Tony Hibbert – 265 league appearances. The Everton mainstay fits in at right back for the team. 10 years at the club saw him rewarded with a testimonial, in which he scored in!

Des Walker – 264 league appearance. Walker scored once of Nottingham Forest, before the Premier League was formed. Never struck again at Forest or Sheffield Wednesday

Kenny Cunningham – 335 league appearances. The Irish centre back featured for Wimbledon, Birmingham City and Sunderland and holds the record for the most number of Premier League games without finding the back of the net.

Paulo Ferreira – 141 league appearances. 9 years at a top performing league club, and not one goal! (None at Porto either before his £13.2 million move) Fits in at left back as Mr. Versatile.

Didier Zokora – 134 appearances – Tottenham's midfield under Martin Jol had a decent amount of flair, and thank goodness, as Zokora was not offering a goal threat.

Steffen Freund – 102 appearances. Another tough tackling midfield warhorse at the Lane. Cult status at the club, but not for his goal scoring ability!

Adrien Silva – 14 appearances. You are thinking that's not many games and you are right. But, if calculations serve me right, the £22 million fee paid by Leicester City to Sporting Lisbon is the most paid for a player never to score a goal in the Premier League.

Bosko Balaban – 8 appearances. Bought by John Gregory to push Aston Villa to be true title contenders. £6 million paid was no small sum in 2001. Bank balance seemingly the only impact made.

Andreas Cornelius - 8 appearances. Signed for a club record fee to lead from the front in their latest Premier League adventure in June 2013. Multiple injuries, and zero goals, he was sold back to FC Copenhagen in January 2014.

Mauro Boselli - 15 appearances. – Given the number 9 shirt following a big £6.5 million move from Argentina. The 15 league appearances were split with 2 loan moves in the middle and not even the confidence building loan moves could boost his chances of a Premier League goal.

Others unlucky to miss out on the first XI, but we can put them on the bench are likes of Lucas Radebe (197 games), Danny Simpson (174 games), Rob Jones (185 games) and Stefane Henchoz (243 games). The strikers supporting from the bench, based on transfers fees are Alexander Sorloth to Crystal Palace (£9 million) and Kostas Mitroglou to Fulham (rumoured £15 million)



George Weah – The first African to win the Ballon O'dr Footballer of the year whilst playing for AC Milan. Also played for Monaco, PSG and Marseille.



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Lillian Thuram – If you are only going to score 2 goals for your country, nicely played to do it in a World Cup semi final (1998)



The Premier League Greatest XI Nationalities

Featured here are the greatest line ups that only include players from one nation. In the first issue we focused on the countries that make up the United Kingdom. In this issue we look at France, Spain, Germany & Italy, the super power countries from European football.



These are not based on statistics, appearances, goals, records, these are merely the view of the author. That said some are self-explanatory and I would imagine would not ignite too much debate, but others, perhaps less fashionable positions could irk the reader and encourage a discussion as to why their favourite right back is not in the starting XI. I have intentionally not included a subs bench, as I fear I'd not have much space left for the rest of the magazine.

At the end of the feature, why not play out your favourite XI from one nation and share it around for a conversation starter.



Roy Keane – The joint most successful Irish footballer of all time, 19 trophies (joint with Denis Irwin)



FRANCE XI

The French team is pure class.

A huge universe of players to pick from as France (aside from the home nations) has given the most players to the Premier League.

In goal it was between two World Cup winning keepers, Hugo Lloris and Fabian Barthez. Although both slightly error prone, I feel Lloris stands out in terms of qualities.

Marcel Desailly the rock is a no brainer, and Bacary Sagna in by default as there is a lack of competition at right back, outside perhaps Mathieu Debuchy and Pascal Chimbonda.

Sylvain Distin gets the nod over the likes of Laporte, Gallas, Koscielny and LeBeouf based on the incredible consistency and appearances in his career, and at left back Patrice Evra takes the spot ahead of Gael Clichy who can feel hard done by.

Midfield you'd do well to get a better four. On the flanks for pure excitement and flair, you have two former Football Writers Award winners in Robert Pires and David Ginola. Dmitri Payet, was almost good enough, but doesn't make the XI. Back to back title winner with different clubs (and also former FWA winner) N'Golo Kante pips the likes of Yohan Cabeye and Emmanuel Petit, and plays next to Patrick Vieira who's inclusion needs no justification.

Leading the line, you have two talisman, who you could both argue bought the quality of the Premier League to new levels. Firstly, King Eric who masterminded the early domination by Manchester United, playing alongside perhaps the best of them all, Thierry Henry.

Journeymen Louis Saha and Nicolas Anelka would make a great option from the bench, but I am not sure many could challenge the starting strike force.



Steve McManaman – First British player to win the Champions League twice





Ivan Zamorano – When Ronaldo and Roberto Baggio demand shirt numbers, you do the honourable thing, improvise..



SPAIN XI

From 2008 to 2012 the Spanish national team dominated not just European football but World football. The Premier League is lucky enough to have witnessed some of the Spanish players from that era who dominate this Nations XI.

In goal, the toughest decision. David De Gea or Pepe Reina. Based on longevity and consistency I am going for Reina. De Gea wobbled to start with at United, and that goes against him.

The national team may have dominated, but that didn't see an influx of quality defenders from Iberia, and this is the weakest part of the XI.

Hector Bellerin plays at right back, and also a right back by trade, Cesar Azpilicueta, who as part of a 3 man defence excelled at Chelsea under Conte, plays alongside. The centre back partner was a choice between Chico Flores at Swansea and Ivan Campo at Bolton – Campo shades it based on his hero status at the Reebok and he gets selected. The goal threat from Marcos Alonso sees him take the number 3 shirt, beating off competition from Nacho Monreal and Jose Enrique whom both performed admirably in the Premier League.

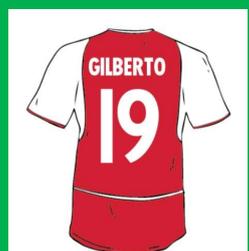
Midfield we are spoiled for choice. The four all stand out on their own. Cesc Fabregas, the youngest player to reach 100 assist in Premier League is joined by Juan Mata, Xavi Alonso and David Silva. The latter, arguably the finest import from Spain to the English League.

Those that miss out include Santi Cazorla, Jesus Neves, Mikel Arteta, Luis Garcia and Pedro.

Up front there is less competition and the two strikers pick themselves. Fernando Torres and Diego Costa both formerly and latterly of Atletico Madrid are our marksmen.



Gilberto Silva – The first Arsenal player to score at the Emirates Stadium. Invincible.





Ole Gunnar Solskjaer – Super sub baby faced assassin. The only substitute in Premier League history to score 4 goals after coming on. Feb 6th 1999, Nottingham Forest 1 – 8 Manchester United



GERMANY XI

For the German XI, the keeper choice is somewhat a foregone conclusion. The invincible goalkeeper, and slightly mad Jen's Lehmann is in between the sticks.

The right back slots goes to Markus Babel, with his only real competition in Moritz Volz. Scoring the 15,000 Premier League doesn't get you the spot.

Centre back pairing of relative new comer Tony Rudiger and double League winner Robert Huth keep out the Arsenal duo of Per Mertesacker and Shkodran Mustafi which can't come as a surprise to many.

The left back position is for Christian Ziege. Excelled at Middlesbrough causing Liverpool to pull a fast one to buy him. Didn't reach those levels at Anfield or at the Lane, as injuries took their toll.

The midfield is full of strength and power. The wide pairing of Mesut Ozil and Leroy Sane add the creativity and Didi Hamann and Michael Ballack add the steel and endeavour.

Ilkay Gundogan can argue a place but yet to produce the level of consistency expected of him at the Etihad Stadium, but Andreas Schurrle despite two cracks at the whip doesn't warrant selection.

Upfront you have the master, Jurgen Klinsmann, who spoiled us for only one season plus a brief loan spell at White Hart Lane alongside former Manchester City and Southampton forward Uwe Rosler, who beats off competition from Lucas Podolski and Fredi Bobic, who can't claim one hat-trick for Bolton is enough to get into the side.



Andreas Pirlo – Scorer of the highest number of free-kicks in Serie A history (Joint with Mihajlovic)





Diego Milito – In good company with Ronaldo (Por), Inzaghi, Bale and Riedle to score 2 goals in a Champions League final



ITALY XI

The Italian XI is perhaps the toughest XI so far to pick as not all positions in a 4-4-2 stood out as top performers..

The keeper choice shows you don't have to perform in your home country before or after a spell in the Premier league to gain recognition. Carlo Cudicini owns the number one jersey for outstanding displays at Chelsea even though a credible challenge lacks, e.g., Taibi or Serena.

At right back we are playing the name not the Premier League career. Christian Panucci takes the number 2 shirt. Plays as others e.g., Darmian & Zappacosta flattered to deceive.

World Cup winner Marco Materazzi plays central defence, when not suspended, alongside Gianluca Festa, a solid performer for Middlesbrough. These two are picked ahead of the likes of Agbonna and Amoruso.

A few choices at left back namely David Santon and Emerson, but we are going for Alessandro Pistone. Granted he didn't pull up many trees, but worth a 90 minutes to do a job for the team.

Midfield is a mismatch! Stefano Eranio plays right wing, for his arrogance at turning up to play for Derby County, and Benito Carbone plays left for his arrogance to literally play for anyone who would have him!

In the centre is a Chelsea duo. One of the originals at the Bridge and double FA Cup Final hero, Roberto Di Matteo partnering the most expensive ever Italian to play on these shores, Jorginho. Although all deserving, not many putting pressure on them for a place in the XI.

Up front it's two legends at their London clubs, and in the league itself. The highest scoring Italian in the Premier League, Paolo Di Canio and Premier League great, Gianfranco Zola.

What a pairing. Might not win many headers though.

Mario Balotelli, as we know, the first Italian to win a Premier League title can sit from the side line and learn from the maestros, whilst Gianluca Vialli can also feel hard done by.



Robbie Fowler – Holder of the fastest Premier League hat-trick in 4 mins 33 seconds, before Sadio Mane took the record in 2 mins 56 secs





Lorenzo Insigne – What he lacks in height makes up in skill and passion. 10th all time Napoli goal scorer, with all the potential to top the charts in the near future



Do you disagree? Why not have a go yourself and fill in your best ever Nation XI to play in the Premier League



Pepe Reina – Fourth in line for most appearances by a Spaniard in the Premier League (285) and has also represented Barcelona, Bayern Munich & AC Milan





LETHAL WEAPON.



Cristian Chivu - You may recall his first international strike for Romania against England, in Euro 2000. Treble winner with Inter Milan, as well as a top performer with Ajax and Roma



Classic Kits

Every issue The Halfway Line will feature some classic kits. It maybe purely kit based, it could be a classic kit being worn by a classic player, or a classic kit in a classic match. In this month's issue we are featuring classic kits that share a specific design feature.

Some things just automatically go together, like Hugh Grant & British Rom-Coms, or an ice cold beer & a hot summers day and when it comes to a classics design, there is something about a **draw string neck collar and a football shirt**. The design was very in trend at the inception of the Premier League, in fact the first ever goal scored in the League, by Brian Deane, was done so in a draw string neck shirt for Sheffield United. A number of other early Premier League kits donned the laces in the neck collar, across a spread of home and away kits. Inaugural champions Manchester United, Aston Villa, Chelsea away and Ipswich Town feature. Also in mainland Europe with Copenhagen, Roma, Parma, Benfica and a 3 kit offering from Sampdoria (home, away and third kit!). There's an offering from Mexican giants Club Necaxa as well as a particularly successful national team, with France.

The trend fell away, dare I say for health and safety reasons, perhaps, but as with most things retro, we have seen a wave of new releases come our way, and lets hope this time they are here to stay. These include an away kit from Lens in France, a third kit from Leganes in Spain and further anniversary kit offerings.

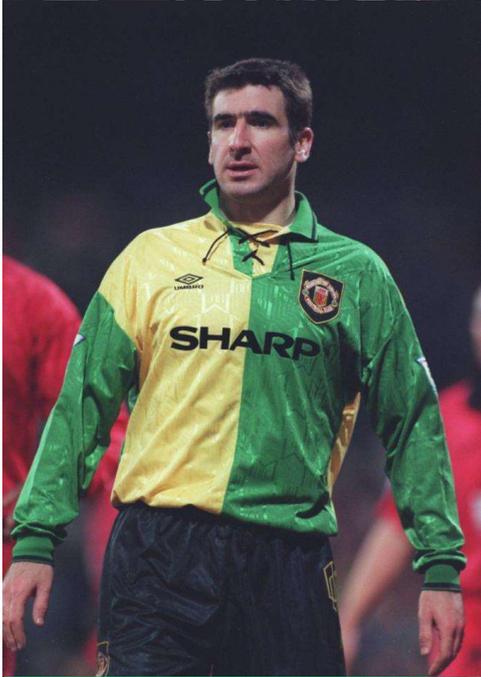
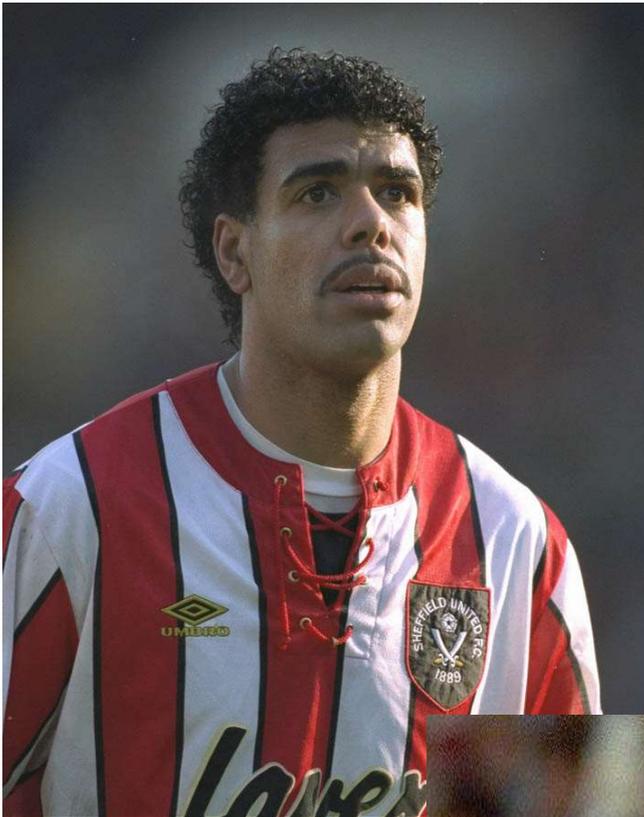
The collection also includes a centenary effort from Boca Juniors that would list as one of our all time favourite shirts, which appears somewhat impossible to purchase!

See and enjoy the selection over the following pages.....



Brian Deane – First ever goal scorer in the Premier League, and first to get a brace!





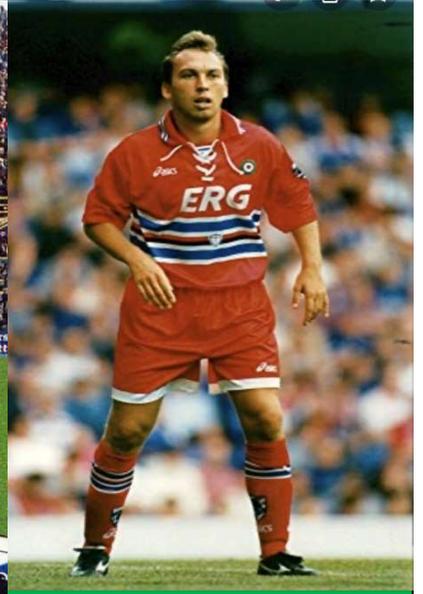
Franck Ribery - 9 Bundesliga titles, a record. Totalled 24 trophies over 12 seasons with Bayern after a nomadic career beforehand





Rio Ferdinand – Two time world record holder for the most expensive defender. Didn't miss much as a centre back 😊





Claudio Taffarel – Man of the Match in the UEFA Cup final of 2000 against Arsenal and penalty shoot out hero in the World Cup final 1994



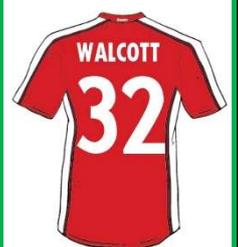


Ansu Fati – Youngest ever goal scorer in the European Champions League at the age of 17 years and 40 days in December 2019





Theo Walcott – Youngest player ever to be picked for an England World Cup squad, aged 17 in 2006.





Patrice Evra – First player to lose 4 Champions League finals (2004, 2009, 2011 & 2015)





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SPORTS



Nigel De Jong – Perhaps most famous for his yellow card challenge on Xabi Alonso in the 2010 World Cup final



Premier League Golden Oldies

In the last The Halfway Line issue (#1) we explored the themes evident in the youngest ever goal scorers list in the Premier League. Everton featured heavily in the top 20 and it got us to thinking is there a theme with the oldest goal scorers in the Premier League. Here is what we found...

The top 10 is as follows as at 07/04/2020

- 1- Teddy Sheringham at 40 years & 268 days for West Ham United against Portsmouth
- 2 – Dean Windass at 39 years & 236 days for Hull City against Portsmouth
- 3 – Ryan Giggs at 39 years & 87 days for Manchester United against Q.P.R
- 4 – Stuart Pearce at 38 years & 216 days for West Ham United against Southampton
- 5 – Graham Alexander at 38 years & 183 days for Burnley against Hull City
- 6 – Mark Hughes at 38 years & 150 days for Blackburn Rovers against Leicester City
- 7 – Tugay Kerimoglu at 38 years & 99 days for Blackburn Rovers against Portsmouth
- 8 – Mick Harford at 38 years & 35 days for Wimbledon against West Ham United
- 9 – Gary Speed at 37 years & 351 days for Bolton Wanderers against Reading
- 10 – Peter Schmeichel at 37 years & 337 days for Aston Villa against Everton

Nothing standing out immediately but lets dig a little deeper



Mancini – Good at step overs? Yes, see Roma v's Lyon in 2005. Good at management? No, see Foggia 2019



To start with it is a remarkable achievement from Teddy Sheringham. This is the player who not only is the oldest goal scorer in the Premier League, on a festive Boxing Day fixture in 2006, but he is also the first ever televised goal scorer in the Premier League era. His strike for Nottingham Forest against Liverpool in August 1992 was some 14 years prior to his last!!



Teddy Sheringham also finds himself in the top ten of all time oldest players to have played in the Premier League. He is there on his own in terms of an outfield player – the other nine are goalkeepers! The top of the list is John Burridge, the former Manchester City goalkeeper, who played at the age of 43. That is also the age for the record for the oldest debutant in the Premier League, with Burridge unsurprisingly taking that honour also. Below are the top 10 oldest players but we slightly digress...

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 - John Burridge - 43 | 6 - Neville Southall - 41 |
| 2 - Alec Chamberlain - 42 | 7 - Kevin Poole - 41 |
| 3 - Steve Ogrizovic - 42 | 8 - Jens Lehmann - 41 |
| 4 - Brad Friedel - 42 | 9 - Teddy Sheringham - 40 |
| 5 - Mark Schwarzer - 42 | 10 - Edwin Van Der Sar - 40 |



Mark Viduka – His 4 goals in the Champions League is the most by any Australian



You'll note that the top two oldest goal scorers, Sheringham and Dean Windass both scored their goals against Portsmouth, Coincidence, of course, similar to Neil Sullivan being in goal for two of the best strikes in Premier League history (Beckham from *the half way line*, and the Di Canio volley), both against Wimbledon.

But if you analyse down the list of the top 10, and see who the opposition were, you will see that, and no disrespect, at the time of the goals, the opposition weren't at the higher echelon of quality in the league. Three strikes were against Portsmouth, and the remainder were scored against teams that all have history of consistent struggles in the Premier League, bar perhaps Everton*, who have of course themselves flirted with trouble. Leicester City stand out now as one of only 6 teams to win the Premier League, but when the goal was scored by Mark Hughes against them in March 2002, they were relegated after finishing bottom that season.

(*Everton finished 15th the season when Peter Schmeichel scored against them)

You have to reach into the top 20 of the oldest goal scorers for a goal to be scored against what we would describe as an elite team, Number 12 on the list is Les Ferdinand, who scored at 37 years of age for Bolton Wanderers against Manchester United in 2004.

The remainder of the 11-20 list show teams that were scored against and we would consider them to be deemed average middle to bottom of the league teams.

11 – Paul Scholes (37) Man U v Wigan	16 – Kevin Moran (37) Blackburn v Oldham
12 – Les Ferdinand (37) Bolton v Man U	17 – Peter Crouch (37) Stoke v Swansea
13 – Kevin Phillips (37) B'ham v Bolton	18 – Gareth McAuley (37) WBA v B'mouth
14 – John Wark (37) Ipswich v Blackburn	19 – Didier Drogba (37) Chelsea v Leicester
15 – Richard Gough (37) Everton v S'ton	20 – Nigel Winterburn (36) WHU v Leeds



Martin Skrtel – Joint second most own goals in Premier League history (7)

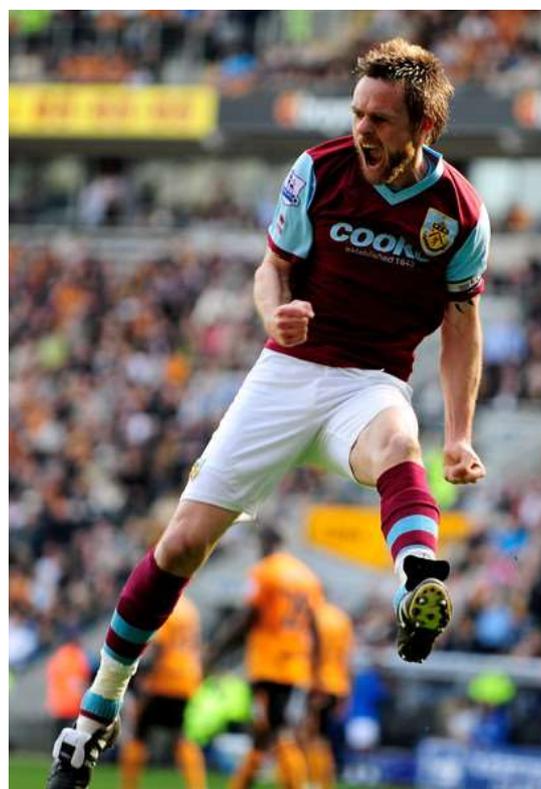


So does that mean anything? Top tier teams do not allow the older, perhaps slower players to perform against them. Makes sense. The better teams are fitter, stronger and more ruthless.

What is also noticeable is whom the goal scorers play for.....

The top 20 for whom the goals were scored for, again you could argue are perennial strugglers, with the exception of 2 clubs. Manchester United's goal scorers are unique in themselves. The most successful player in the history of the league, Ryan Giggs alongside perhaps one of the most naturally gifted, Paul Scholes. These two appear as an exception to most rules! 19th on the list is Didier Drogba, who also breaks the theme, by scoring for Chelsea at the rip old age of 37.

The other goal scorers play for teams that perhaps can't recruit or nurture the best young players, or maybe do not have a squad big enough and therefore will field players well into their supposed retirement age. Take Graham Alexander as an example. A hell of an athlete to play right back for a newly promoted team, Burnley in 2009-10 and his first goal scored that season if my calculations are correct makes him the oldest player when scoring their first goal in the top flight, 37 at the time. Alexander struck seven times that season, but despite these heroic efforts, Burnley were relegated straight back to the Championship.



Javi Capdevila – The only member of the starting XI of Spain's 2010 World Cup final not to have played for Real Madrid or Barcelona



There is no one dominate team as per the Everton feature in the previous issue. You can see West Ham United and Blackburn Rovers make up 30% of the top 20 oldest goal scorer with three players each in the list. Manchester United and Bolton Wanderers each provide two each.



The youngest top 20 goal was dominated by strikers, 65% in fact, followed by 30 % midfielders and just 5% (1) for defenders.

What differs for the oldest goal scorers list is there's a far more even split. 40% strikers, 20% midfielders and a much larger 35% as defenders, and of course 5% for the one goalkeeper!

Perhaps the next issue of The Halfway Line we can give the goal scoring goalkeepers the limelight and see who is top of combining clean sheets and hitting the back of the net.

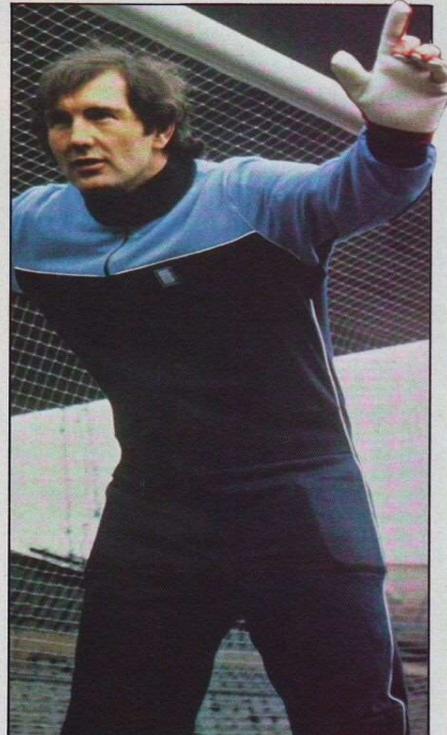
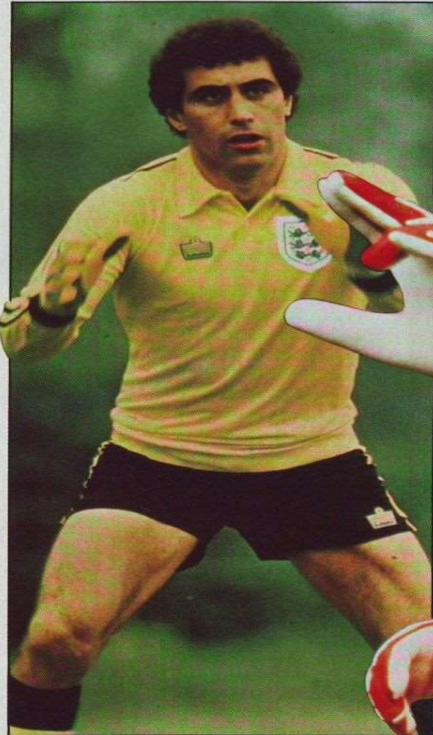
Until then, we can light heartedly assume, if you are an *old* footballer, and you play for West Ham United or Blackburn Rovers, you have a decent chance of hitting the back of the net, especially if you are playing against Portsmouth, but you are highly unlikely to be winning anything with either of them.



Toni Kroos – At the time of debut (Sept 2007) was the youngest player to represent Bayern, @ 17 years and 265 days. First German to win Champions league with 2 clubs.



England's Top 3



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Andrej Kramaric – During Leicester's title winning season, decided to get first team football and left on loan in January and having only played 3 games, did not qualify for a winners medal



THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME THE RONALDO AND MESSI

DEBATE



To start with surely the debate could pick a more glamorous, majestically named animal. Nothing against goats, but if you are talking about the best in the world surely you pick a Lion or a Shark! You need a far more superior animal or mammal or even go the fantasy route like a Unicorn!!!

However it's a moot point, as we don't believe we are able to debate the best of all time, we are looking at the best of the current era. Since the 1950's you could argue one stand out player has dominated each decade. The 50's belonged to Di Stefano, the 60's were Pele's, the 70's were Cruyff's, the 80's were Maradona's and the 90's, we would personally give to the Brazilian Ronaldo, based on 1995 to 1999. You can debate the competition in Van Basten, Baggio and Zidane and perhaps that's a separate article right there!

But from 2000 to 2020 , for two entire decades we have been blessed to have two players re-write football records between them and have dominated World Football on an individual level.

So we have the best two players of an era, but which one is better?



Jan Oblak – At Atletico Madrid, in 2015/26 season he conceded only 18 goals in 38 games, equalling the La Liga record



There are number of modern day arguments; Yes to Marmite or No to Marmite, Home & Away or Neighbours, Snickers or Mars, EastEnders or Coronation Street, and of course the GOAT debate, Messi or Ronaldo. There seems no appetite to settle for enjoying both. Personally we'd be delighted to watch Home & Away and Neighbours whilst devouring a Snickers and a Mars!!

But the modern world demands a top spot is claimed and we thought to look at the evidence and try to argue the point of who is better or discover they are just too good to compare.

For a start, both have had to have pretty big feet in order to fill the boots of their predecessors in their careers.

The Sporting Lisbon conveyer belt before Ronaldo had rolled out Luis Figo, Ricardo Quaresma and Simao Sabrosa. Ironically all three of the attackers moved on from Sporting to Barcelona to make the step up. Ronaldo played the least amount of league games out of the four players for Sporting and left before being able to make such an impact.



At Manchester United he inherited the number 7 shirt. Previous owners include George Best, Bryan Robson, Eric Cantona and David Beckham. Compare the success of the number 7's after Ronaldo left Manchester and it's a very different story (Antonio Valencia, Michael Owen, Memphis Depay, Angel Di Maria & Alexis Sanchez).

Then on to Real Madrid. Ronaldo would ultimately take on the number 7 shirt at the Bernabéu as well, replacing club legend Raul, who at the time of Ronaldo arriving, sat top of the Champions League goals scored for Real Madrid.



Steven Nzonzi – Not many get to say they're the previous Blackburn & Stoke Players of the Year and a World Cup winner



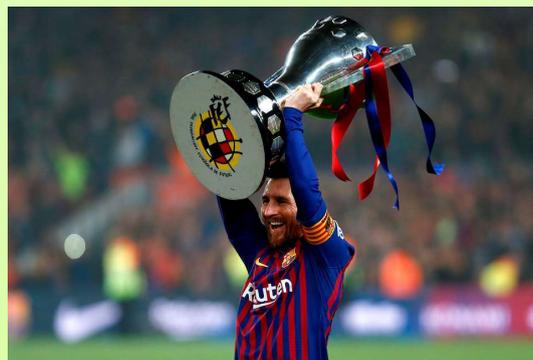
In arriving at Juventus in 2018 there was not so much pressure in replacing previous number 7's, in fact none (Cuadrado, Pepe and Zaza for example) but after spending €100 million on a 33 year old, you are expecting something in return.



Lionel Messi's predecessors at the Nou Camp include Diego Maradona, Hristo Stoichkov, Romario, Rivaldo and Ronaldinho, who all excelled, whereas other number 10's had failed (examples being Giovanni, Litmanen and Riquelme)

So neither player can be judged for not stepping up into the fold and actually improving what was previously there.

Domestically both players are lucky enough not to have had to carry a team or help them become successful. In regards to Ronaldo, before joining Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus, the clubs had won 15, 31 and 34 league titles respectively. Barcelona had won 10 La Liga's before Messi's first. Don't get me wrong, the pair of course have significantly added to their teams success. Ronaldo won 3 Premier Leagues with United, 2 with Real Madrid and one in his first season with Juventus. Messi has 10 league titles with Barcelona since 2005.



Rafael Van Der Vaart – The first ever winner of the 'Golden Boy' award (2003)



Not only have the duo played for extremely successful clubs, but they have played with exceptionally talented team mates. That doesn't make them lesser players of course, but it goes a long way in being a better player when you have world class players play alongside you.

To give that some context, since 2002 (Ronaldo's first team debut) and 2019 the World Footballer of the Year/Ballon D'or winner has been announced 18 times, each year having a first, second and third place.

That is 54 players in that time.

Incredibly Ronaldo and Messi are 24 (44%) of those, with 12 appearances each. In the last 13 years at least one of the duo are in the top 3, and 11 of those years both appear.

Messi has won it 6 times and Ronaldo the recipient 5 times.

In terms of their teammates (to have played with either Ronaldo or Messi at some stage of their career) that makes up a further 16 players. That is 29% of the 54 players.

The remaining 14 (25%) players have never been teammates of the duo, but of the 14, 71% of the players appeared on the list between 2002 and 2006, all before Ronaldo or Messi first appear on the list themselves.

If you take the list from 2007, when both first appeared, it paints a clearer picture.



2007 to 2019 = 39 players
Messi & Ronaldo = 24 appearances (62%)
Messi & Ronaldo teammates = 11 appearances (28%)
Other = 4! (10%)



Massimo Oddo – Champions League winner with Milan (2007) at right back & one of only 3 Italians to play for Bayern Munich



So both players play in good teams, with good players – guessing no major surprises sprung there!

A breakdown of the teammates interesting shows that of the 16 players who have been teammates, it is split by 14 for Messi's and just 2 for Ronaldo.

Both of Ronaldo's won it (Kaka and Modric) whilst all but one of Messi's were in 3rd place.

So we have established both players are able to step up to challenges, both played for successful teams and they've helped maintain that success, and grow it and they play with other successful players. Neither player standing out from the other yet...

What about individual records for each player? There are a ridiculous amount!

La Liga Records (some of them!)

(as at 14/04/2020)

- Most career La Liga league appearances by a foreign player: 456, Lionel Messi
- Most career La Liga league goals: 438, Lionel Messi (Ronaldo is in 2nd place)
- Top scorer in Europe for three consecutive seasons (2016–17, 2017–18, 2018–19), Lionel Messi
 - Most goals scored in a season: 50, Lionel Messi (2011–12)
 - Most league hat-tricks scored in a season: 8, joint record:
 - Lionel Messi (2011–12)
 - Cristiano Ronaldo (2014–15)
 - Fastest 150 league goals: 140 games, Cristiano Ronaldo
 - Fastest 200 league goals: 178 games, Cristiano Ronaldo
 - Fastest 250 league goals: 228 games, Cristiano Ronaldo
 - Fastest 300 league goals: 286 games, Cristiano Ronaldo



Ignazio Abate – Joined AC Milan in 2003 making his debut 6 years later and stayed with the club for 10 years.



- Most hat-tricks scored in La Liga history: **36**, Lionel Messi
 - Ronaldo is second with **34**
- Most goals scored from direct free kicks: **34**, Lionel Messi
- Most goals from penalties in La Liga history: **61**, Cristiano Ronaldo
 - First player to score in 16 consecutive seasons: Lionel Messi
 - Across all leagues, Ronaldo has scored in 17 consecutive seasons
- Only player to score 20+ goals in 11 consecutive seasons: Lionel Messi
- Only player to score 30+ goals in 8 different seasons: Lionel Messi (2004-)
- Only player to score 10+ goals in 14 consecutive seasons: Lionel Messi (from 2006-07 to 2019-20)



- Across all leagues, Ronaldo has scored 15+ goals in **14** consecutive seasons
 - Most assists provided in La Liga history: **174**, Lionel Messi
 - Most wins in La Liga history **347**: Lionel Messi
 - Most opponents scored against in a 38 game season: **19**, joint record:
 - Cristiano Ronaldo for Real Madrid (2011–12)
 - Lionel Messi for Barcelona (2012–13)
- Most consecutive league appearances scored in: **21**, Lionel Messi (33 goals, from matchday 11 to matchday 34, season 2012-13)
- Most consecutive away league matches scored in: **13**, Lionel Messi (20 goals from matchday 8 to matchday 33, season 2012–13)



Marc Muniesa – At the time, his Barcelona debut made him their second youngest ever player (17 years 57 days). Made his mark as he was sent off.



Lionel Messi just about edges the records here, but he has played 474 La Liga games compared to Cristiano Ronaldo's 292 games, so it is not a fair comparison you could argue.

This is the same for the Copa Del Rey records that Messi holds:

- Most finals scored in: **6**, Lionel Messi (2009, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019)
- Most assists provided in finals: **6**, Lionel Messi (1 in 2009, 2 in 2016, 1 in 2017, 2 in 2018)

However Ronaldo in his 1.5 seasons at Juventus has already started his impact on Serie A records:

- Most consecutive Serie A appearances with at least one goal scored in a single season – Joint with **11** goals
- Most consecutive Serie A away appearances with at least one goal scored in a single season – Joint with **9** goals

There are no Premier League individual records for Ronaldo, but this should not be a judgement as the majority previously listed here are goal related, and Ronaldo was bought to the club as a right winger and not a forward.

He didn't do too badly though...

In 2008 his 31 league goals earned him the Premier League Golden Boot, as well as the European Golden Shoe*, which made him the first winger to win the latter award.

In his last year at United, 2009, he became first Premier League player to be named the FIFA World Player of the Year and won the inaugural FIFA Puskás Award, presented by FIFA in recognition of the best goal of the year (Messi has had 7 nominations for this award, but has never won it...)

*The Golden Shoe has been won 10 times in the last 12 years by either Messi (6) or Ronaldo (4)



Phil Foden – The youngest ever winner of the Premier League (replacing Gael Clichy)



The pairs goal scoring statistics are absolutely mesmerising. They are the definition of goal machines. Look at the table below. These numbers are unlikely to ever be rivalled.

Cristiano Ronaldo		Appearances	Goals			Appearances	Goals
Premier League	Manchester United	196	85	Overall	Manchester United	292	118
La Liga	Real Madrid	292	311		Real Madrid	438	450
Serie A	Juventus	53	42		Juventus	75	53
Lionel Messi		Appearances	Goals			Appearances	Goals
La Liga	Barcelona	474	438	Overall	Barcelona	718	627

As of 14/04/2020 Ronaldo, in first team club football has scored 621 goals in 805 games. This includes 450 goals in 438 for Real Madrid. That is a rate of 1.02 goals a game for the Spanish giants!

Messi's haul is perhaps even more impressive with more goals in less appearances, 627 in 718 overall, although we have commented on Ronaldo's positional change being a contributing factor here.



The deadly duo also have a significant liking for the UEFA Champions League. Ronaldo has the joint most final appearances (6) and is the first player to have won the trophy 5 times (Messi has 4 times). He sits second on the list with the most appearances in the competition as well as top of the goal scoring charts (128 goals) with Messi in second place with 114 strikes.

Not to be completely out done, Messi was the first in the competition to score 5 goals in one game, a feat yet to be matched by Cristiano Ronaldo. He can take some comfort however in being the first to score in three separate finals in the Champions League era, and posting a season high 17 goals in the competition in 2013/14 season.



Alessandro Florenzi – Rome born, imagine making your debut coming on for Francesco Totti! 280 appearances later, and still going



The next comparison typically goes down the route of their international careers. At the time of writing, no surprise but both players captain their nations. Lionel Messi is Argentina's talisman and Ronaldo takes that role for the Portuguese nation team.

Ronaldo has won 164 caps and scored a remarkable 99 international goals, comfortably making him the highest international scoring European male player, moving rapidly toward the men's world record of 109 goals (Ali Daei of Iran).

An equally remarkable statistic is the last 38 goals of the 99 have come since 2016 in 34 appearances. So almost 40% of Ronaldo's strikes took place since he was 31 years old.

Lionel Messi has chalked up 138 appearances for La Albiceleste since 2005 making his debut as a 18 year old, and scoring 70 goals, so far.

The results in terms of success are very different. We can compare World Cups together, and suggest we treat the European Championships as the equivalent to the Copa America.

Firstly neither player has won the World Cup, the Holy Grail. Not that this makes you an instantly better player. Would Newcastle United fans prefer Alan Shearer or Stephane Guivarc'h leading their line?

In 2014, Messi captained Argentina to the World Cup final, having a huge influence in the tournament, winning the Golden Ball as a mark of the best player, though that wasn't enough to win the coveted and ultimate trophy.



Abel Taarabt – If Harry Redknapp can't manage you, then you know you're a troublesome character! Incredibly talented but couldn't produce at Spurs or AC Milan



This World Cup final defeat came 9 years after lifting the FIFA U20 World Cup with Argentina as well as winning the Golden Ball in that campaign. In 2008 Messi was pivotal in winning an Olympic gold medal for Argentina in the men's football competition at the Beijing Olympics.

Runner up in a World Cup final is a tough place to be no doubt, as would the failures in the 2006, 2010 and 2018 World Cup finals and that disappointment is mirrored with the attempts at securing victory in the Copa America.

Messi's Argentina have failed 5 times to win the trophy when he has been in the squad. In 2007 he lost in the final, (scant reward of being named the Best Young player.) In 2011 saw a quarter final defeat, and what followed were back to back final defeats in 2015 (player of the tournament, again) and 2016, with a further semi final defeat in 2019.

There is no shortage of effort and quality. Messi is 4th on the list of all time Copa America appearances (27), has the most Man of Match awards (10) and holds the record for most amount of assists (12) but that still doesn't put the trophy in the cabinet.



Andre Cruz – Brazilian centre back, represented Napoli, AC Milan, Torino and Sporting Lisbon as well as the national team, the Selecao



Ronaldo has no World Cup success story either. A semi final appearance in 2006 was his best, followed by group stage knock outs (2014) and round 16 departures (2010, 2018)

Ronaldo's European Championship record is far better. He has a final defeat, on home turf in 2004 (team picture below) followed by a quarter final defeat in 2008 and a semi final defeat in 2012.



In Euro 2016, although Portugal's record shows one win in 90 minutes over the course of 7 games, it pales into insignificance as they were crowned champions with Ronaldo the victorious captain. The semi final saw Ronaldo become the first player to participate in three European Championship semi-finals and his goal saw him equal the most amount of goals scored in finals (9).



Kieran Trippier – First Englishman since Gary Lineker to score for England in a World Cup semi final



Ronaldo's appearance in the final, his 21st at the tournaments (a record) was cruelly cut short by injury and he was subbed after 25 minutes, but the victory is a massive achievement and was Portugal's first international tournament triumph.

This was swiftly followed by their second, as the Ronaldo led Portugal to victory in the inaugural Nations League trophy, defeating The Netherlands on home soil after a Ronaldo hat-trick saw them qualify for the final.



So there you have it – the facts are on the table and we have discussed two of the most successful players (team and individual honours) over the past twenty years, and probably ever.

Ultimately though is this an unwinnable argument? Like the dress on the internet (is it Green or Blue) or does the milk go in the first or the tea bag? Everyone will have their own opinion and this exercise has merely shown just how good both players are. Saviour them, enjoy each record they break and realise the real winners are us being able to witness their greatness, as well as their carpenters, who must revisit them each year to extend their trophy cabinets.

But who are we to judge, we're just fans. Better placed would be Gerard Pique, Henrik Larsson, or Martin Caceres. All three players have been teammates with both players at different times in their careers.

Perhaps the ask should be on Pique and Caceres because as well as the teammate link, they have both had the misfortune of facing them both as opponents as well!!



Patrick Van Aanholt – Followed a well trodden path from Chelsea youth team, loan move, (Vitesse included) and then a Premier League move



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Jesse Lingard – Back in 2013 went on loan to Birmingham City and scored 4 goals on his debut.



TRANSFER SPECIAL



- Strategies

- Try before you buy
- Tried and Tested
- Stab in the dark
- Not good enough for them
- Youth policy



- Is there a formula for Premier League clubs recruitment?

- What works, what doesn't?

- Transfer flops

- Should you join AC Milan after a successful season?
- Newcastle United's flop XI
- Expensive mistakes

- Is signing from one particular club a good tactic?



Manuel Da Costa – Moroccan centre back spending playing time in France, Holland, Italy, England, Russia, Portugal, Greece & Turkey – Journeyman.



It has been said that money can't buy happiness. Well maybe not, but if you have enough of it you could get yourself a World Cup winning goalkeeper, a commanding centre back, a midfield maestro and an absolute goal machine of a striker to bang you in 30 goals a season.....if you are lucky. It doesn't always work out that way. Is there a secret to a successful transfer or is it all up to a bit of good old fashioned luck?

Lets have a look at some strategies in the transfer market.

The try before you buy approach?

- Birmingham City took on players such as Christophe Dugarry, Walter Pandiani and Mikael Forssell all on loan before signing them permanently. All 3 players did distinctly better in their loan spells then they did after signing
- Some clubs get to the end of the loan signings contract and do not look to buy the player. Nicolas Anelka was on loan to Liverpool but management felt the signing of El Hadji Diouf was a better choice...
- Arsenal have faired rather poorly with this approach, notably Kim Kallstrom, Denis Suarez and Dani Ceballos doing nothing of significance to warrant a permanent transfer

But there are successes with this method

- David Bentley on loan to Blackburn from Arsenal before making the switch permanent.
- Providing a full return to fitness, the transfer to Andre Gomes to Everton looks to be a shrewd piece of business at Goodison
- Kylian Mbappe's move to PSG, albeit *probably* more to do with the Financial Fair Play rules then testing his ability, would have to fit into this category



Yuto Nagatomo – With 213 appearances, is the player with the most appearances from the Asia continent to play in Serie A



Premier League Tried and tested?

If you want a footballer to perform in the league you play, why not buy one that has been there and done it? Immediately you are cutting down the risk of failure. Yes you are likely to have to pay above the odds, but isn't the guaranteed output worth the outlay? Sir Alex Ferguson was a master of such a transfer tactic with like likes of:



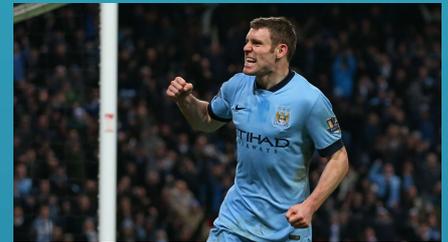
- Dwight Yorke
- Teddy Sheringham
- Michael Carrick
- Andrew Cole
- Rio Ferdinand
- Robin Van Persie &
- Dimitar Berbatov



This began a trend with follow Premier League winners Chelsea and Manchester City with signings such as:



- Ashley Cole
- Cesc Fabregas
- Gael Clichy
- James Milner &
- Gareth Barry amongst others



Of course there are no guarantees, and the well documented failures of Alexis Sanchez to Manchester United and Fernando Torres to Chelsea proves no formula is 100% full proof



Emmanuel Frimpong – I believe the only player to play for Arsenal FC and Arsenal Tula FC (Russian league)



The stab in the dark?

The tried and tested route is expensive and not all clubs have access to those types of funds. So you look for a niche and untapped resource. This tends to always be signing from off our shores, and from the less 'high profile' clubs. Some can be an absolute golden find and live long in the memory, whereas some flop and sadly also live in the memory but for all the wrong reasons.

HITS

Georgi Kinkladze to Manchester City. Plucked from Georgia for £2 million

Marian Pahars to Southampton from Skonto, Latvia for £800k

Zoltan Gera, Ferencváros, £1.5 million

MISSES

Corrado Grabbi to Blackburn from Serie B for a reported £7million

Bosko Balaban to Aston Villa, from Dinamo Zagreb for £6 million

Milton Nunez to Sunderland from POAK for £1.6 million

Not good enough for them, but brilliant for you?

You get some players, who despite great promise and talent, they just can't get to the levels expected of them at certain clubs. Clever scouting and persuasion powers can lead to a transfer to a 'lesser' club with significant dividends, like the below examples;

Roque Santa Cruz at Bayern Munich to Blackburn

Danny Ings at Liverpool to Southampton

Xherdan Shaqiri at Bayern Munich to Stoke City

And at the time of the transfer you could argue

Patrick Vieira at AC Milan to Arsenal



Kostas Mitroglou – Fulham fans look away. Scored goals everywhere he has played apart from Craven Cottage. Played 3 games and no goals after a ~£15 million transfer



Youth policy?

What about the strategy to swoop for the finest young players across the world and blood them in your first team – buying young players from European clubs who are under a certain age means you aren't required to pay significant transfers fees as other countries laws mean under age players can't be contracted.

Many have tried, but not many have succeeded. Liverpool, for example in the past have signed the likes of Anthony Le Tallec, Florent Sinama-Pongolle and Alexander Kačaniklić as youth players, with limited first team appearances that followed and no great sell on fee achieved.

Manchester United in the past have recruited the likes of Paul Pogba, Giuseppe Rossi, Gerard Pique as teenagers with mixed results. Pique left and became one of the world's most successful defenders, whereas Pogba left for nothing, and returned for £100 million and has yet to repay this investment.

Chelsea's use of this strategy has been costly. The signing of youth players such as Gael Kakuta, Michael Woods, Tom Taiwo and Bertrand Traore have led to FIFA rulings, out of court settlements and transfer bans, and not one youth player bought to the club has cemented their place in Chelsea's starting XI.

Finally, Arsenal, the 'poster child' for this strategy under Arsene Wenger's reign, though the success rate for this was actually quite deceptive. A decent run in a League Cup campaign (2006/07) aside, not many gems were unearthed. The stand out is Cesc Fabregas, former captain of the Gunners with over 300 first appearance in 8 years at the club, during which he won just one trophy (FA Cup 2004/05)

Others that won't appear in Arsenal's Hall of Fame include, Svard, Tavaldis, Miquel, Juan, Miyaichi, Merida, Eisfeld, Qwusu-Abeyie, Lupoli or Vela...



Roberto Soriano – German born Italian international, impressed at both Sampdoria and Villarreal



So we've looked at some of the strategies, some of which are successful and some not.

What if we look at a consistent universe for our sample?

Lets take the current Premier League teams and analyse each of their top 5 most expensive signings and what seems common denominators for successes and failures.

For the analyse we've looked at the age of the player when the signed for the club, the amount paid for them, the number of clubs they have previously played for and whether they have played for any English clubs previously. Then we made a judgement as to whether they have been a Hit (green), a Miss (red) or generally OK (orange). If a player has not been at the club long enough, they will default to an orange. We've also included sell on value where the player has since moved on.

After all of that, we've tried to trend the success and failures to see what the common ground is.

Lets take a look.

Arsenal Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans	No of British (first team) clubs played for	Success?	Sell on value
Nicolas Pepe	Lille	France	£72m	24	4	0	3	n/a - still at club
Pierre Emerick Aubameyang	Borussia Dortmund	Germany	£60m	28	5	0	1	n/a - still at club
Alex Lacazette	Lyon	France	£52m	26	1	0	2	n/a - still at club
Mesut Ozil	Real Madrid	Spain	£42m	24	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Shkodran Mustafi	Valencia	Spain	£35m	24	2	0*	3	n/a - still at club
Aston Villa Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans	No of British (first team) clubs played for	Success?	Sell on value
Wesley Moares	Club Brugge	Belgium	£22m	22	2	0	2	n/a - still at club
Tyrone Mings	Bournemouth	England	£20m	26	2	2	1	n/a - still at club
Darren Bent	Sunderland	England	£18m	26	4	4	3	£0m
Douglas Luiz	Manchester City	England	£15m	21	2	0*	2	n/a - still at club
**Stuart Downing	Middlesbrough	England	£12m	24	2	2	1	£20m

* Youth player at another Premier League Club **Other players bought for this fee



Harry Wilson – Youngest ever player to represent Wales, beating Gareth Bale's record – 16 years and 207 days



Bournemouth Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans	No of British (first team) clubs played for	Success?	Sell on value
Jefferson Lerma	Levante	Spain	£25m	23		2	0	2 n/a - still at club
Nathan Ake	Chelsea	England	£20m	22		3	3	1 n/a - still at club
Dominic Solanke	Liverpool	England	£19m	21		3	2	3 n/a - still at club
Jordon Ibe	Liverpool	England	£15m	20		4	4	3 n/a - still at club
Arnaut Danjuma	Club Brugge	Belgium	£13m	22		2	0	2 n/a - still at club
Brighton & HA Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans	No of British (first team) clubs played for	Success?	Sell on value
Adam Webster	Bristol City	England	£22m	24		4	4	1 n/a - still at club
Neal Maupay	Brentford	England	£20m	22		4	1	2 n/a - still at club
Alireza Jahanbakhsh	AZ Alkmaar	Holland	£17m	24		4	0	3 n/a - still at club
Leandro Trossard	Genk	Belgium	£15m	24		4	0	2 n/a - still at club
Jürgen Locadia	PSV Eindhoven	Holland	£15m	24		1	0	3 n/a - still at club
Burnley Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Ben Gibson	Middlesbrough	England	£15m	25		4	4	3 n/a - still at club
Chris Wood	Leeds United	England	£15m	25		11	10	1 n/a - still at club
Robbie Brady	Norwich City	England	£13m	25		3	3	1 n/a - still at club
Matej Vydra	Derby County	England	£10m	26		8	3	3 n/a - still at club
Jeff Hendrick	Derby County	England	£10m	24		1	1	1 n/a - still at club
Chelsea Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Kepa Arrizabalaga	Athletic Bilbao	Spain	£72m	23		3	0	3 n/a - still at club
Álvaro Morata	Real Madrid	Spain	£59m	24		2	0	3 £60m
Christian Pulisic	Borussia Dortmund	Germany	£58m	20		1	0	2 n/a - still at club
Jorginho	Napoli	Italy	£57m	26		3	0	2 n/a - still at club
Fernando Torres	Liverpool	England	£50m	26		2	1	3 End of Contract
Crystal Palace Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Christian Benteke	Liverpool	England	£27m	25		6	2	3 n/a - still at club
Mamadou Sakho	Liverpool	England	£26m	27		2	1	2 n/a - still at club
Patrick van Aanholt	Sunderland	England	£14m	26		7	6	1 n/a - still at club
Andros Townsend	Newcastle United	England	£13m	24		11	11	2 n/a - still at club
Jeffrey Schlupp	Leicester City	England	£12m	24		2	2	2 n/a - still at club



Claudio Marchisio – 19th on the all time appearance list for Juventus, appearing 389 times



Everton Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Gylfi Sigurðsson	Swansea City	England	£40m	27	6	5	2	n/a - still at club
Richarlison	Watford	England	£35m	21	3	1	1	n/a - still at club
Romelu Lukaku	Chelsea	England	£28m	21	3	2	1	£75m
Yerry Mina	Barcelona	Spain	£27m	23	4	0	3	n/a - still at club
Jordan Pickford	Sunderland	England	£25m	23	7	7	2	n/a - still at club
Leicester City Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Youri Tielemans	Monaco	France	£40m	22	2	0	1	n/a - still at club
Ayoze Pérez	Newcastle United	England	£30m	25	2	1	2	n/a - still at club
Islam Slimani	Sporting Lisbon	Portugal	£29m	28	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Kelechi Iheanacho	Manchester City	England	£25m	20	1	1	2	n/a - still at club
James Maddison	Norwich City	England	£22m	21	3	3	1	n/a - still at club
Liverpool Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Virgil Van Dijk	Southampton	England	£75m	26	3	2	1	n/a - still at club
Alisson Becker	Roma	Italy	£67m	25	2	0	1	n/a - still at club
Nabi Keita	RB Leipzig	Germany	£45m	23	3	0	2	n/a - still at club
Fabinho	Monaco	France	£33m	24	4	0	1	n/a - still at club
Mo Salah	Roma	Italy	£33m	25	5	1	1	n/a - still at club
Manchester City Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Rodri	Atlético Madrid	Spain	£62m	23	2	0	2	n/a - still at club
Riyad Mahrez	Leicester City	England	£60m	27	3	1	1	n/a - still at club
Joao Cancelo	Juventus	Italy	£60m	25	4	0	3	n/a - still at club
Aymeric Laporte	Athletic Bilbao	Spain	£57m	23	1	0	1	n/a - still at club
Kevin De Bruyne	VfL Wolfsburg	Germany	£56m	24	4	1	1	n/a - still at club
Manchester United Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Paul Pogba	Juventus	Italy	£89m	23	2	1	2	n/a - still at club
Harry Maguire	Leicester City	England	£80m	26	4	4	2	n/a - still at club
Romelu Lukaku	Everton	England	£75m	24	4	3	1	£70m
Ángel Di María	Real Madrid	Spain	£59.7m	26	3	0	3	£44m
Aaron Wan-Bissaka	Crystal Palace	England	£50m	19	1	1	2	n/a - still at club



Michael Obafemi – Southampton's youngest ever goal scorer in the Premier League



Newcastle United Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Jeolinton	Hoffenheim	Germany	£40m	22	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Miguel Almiron	Atlanta United	USA	£24m	24	3	0	2	n/a - still at club
Michael Owen	Real Madrid	Spain	£18m	25	2	1	3	End of Contract
Alan Shearer	Blackburn Rovers	England	£15m	25	2	2	1	Retired
Georginio Wijnaldum	PSV Eindhoven	Holland	£14m	24	2	0	1	£25m
Norwich City Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Steve Naismith	Everton	England	£9.1m	29	3	3	2	End of Contract
Timm Klose	Wolfsburg	Germany	£9m	27	4	0	1	n/a - still at club
Ricky Van Wolfswinkel	Sporting Lisbon	Portugal	£9m	24	3	0	3	£500k
Alex Pritchard	Tottenham Hotspur	England	£8m	23	5	5	2	£12m
Robbie Brady	Hull City	England	£7m	23	3	3	2	£13m
Sheffied United Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Sander Berge	Genk	Belgium	£20m	21	3	0	2	n/a - still at club
Oliver McBurnie	Swansea City	England	£17m	23	6	6	2	n/a - still at club
Lys Mousset	Bournemouth	England	£10m	23	2	1	2	n/a - still at club
Callum Robinson	Preston North End	England	£8m	24	3	3	2	n/a - still at club
Luke Freeman	Queens Park Rangers	England	£8m	27	5	5	2	n/a - still at club
Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Danny Ings	Liverpool	England	£20m	26	4	4	1	n/a - still at club
Guido Carrillo	Monaco	France	£19m	26	2	0	3	n/a - still at club
Sofiane Boufal	Lille	France	£16m	22	2	0	3	n/a - still at club
Mohamed Elyounoussi	Basel	Norway	£16m	23	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Mario Lemina	Juventus	Italy	£15.4m	24	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Tottenham Hotspurs Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Tanguy Ndombele	Lyon	France	£53m	22	2	0	3	n/a - still at club
Davidson Sánchez	Ajax	Holland	£42m	21	2	0	2	n/a - still at club
Erik Lamela	Roma	Italy	£30m	21	2	0	2	n/a - still at club
Moussa Sissoko	Newcastle United	England	£30m	27	2	1	2	n/a - still at club
Steven Bergwijn	PSV Eindhoven	Holland	£27m	22	1	0	2	n/a - still at club

'n/a still at club' in italics indicates the player is currently out on loan



Eddie Nketiah – As home debuts go, coming on & scoring 15 seconds later & then to score the winner takes some beating.



Watford Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Ismaila Sarr	Rennes	France	£27m	21	2	0	3	n/a - still at club
Andre Gray	Burnley	England	£18m	26	6	6	2	n/a - still at club
Isaac Success	Granada	Spain	£13m	20	1	0	3	n/a - still at club
Roberto Pereyra	Juventus	Italy	£12m	25	3	0	2	n/a - still at club
Gerard Deulofeu	Barcelona	Spain	£11m	24	4	1	2	n/a - still at club
West Ham United Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Sebastien Haller	Eintracht Frankfurt	Germany	£40m	25	3	0	3	n/a - still at club
Felipe Anderson	Lazio	Italy	£27m	25	2	0	1	n/a - still at club
Issa Diop	Toulouse	France	£22m	21	1	0	1	n/a - still at club
Pablo Fornals	Villarreal	Spain	£22m	23	2	0	3	n/a - still at club
Marko Arnautovic	Stoke City	England	£21m	28	4	1	2	£24m
Wolverhampton W Player	From		Cost	Age	No of professional clubs played for Inc Loans previously	No of British (first team) clubs played for previously	Success?	Sell on value
Raúl Jiménez	Benfica	Portugal	£30m	28	3	0	1	n/a - still at club
Jonny Otto	Atletico Madrid	Spain	£18m	24	2	0	1	n/a - still at club
Adama Traore	Middlesbrough	England	£18m	22	3	2	1	n/a - still at club
Daniel Podence	Olympiacos	Greece	£17m	24	3	0	2	n/a - still at club
Pedro Neto	Lazio	Italy	£16m	19	2	0	2	n/a - still at club

So there we have the players and their statistics, but what can we make of it? On the following page we look to show what the best age of a player is to sign, where to sign the best player from, and perhaps more importantly where not to!



Patrice Cutrone – Choses the number 63 squad number as it was the year of his father's birth



Out of the 100 players sampled we believe 30 players to be a **HIT**, 30 players to be **MISS** and 40 players to be **OK** (of those 40, 18 were new signings from the 2018-19 and not yet been able to make an alternative evaluation)

What else to the numbers tell us?

The average age of a **HIT** player is 24.3 years, the average age of a **MISS** player was 23.83 and the average age of an **OK** player was 23.6

The average number of teams played for previously for **HITS**, **MISS** and **OK** was 3.2, 3.0 and 3.15 respectively.

The average number of British teams previously played for **HIT**, **MISS** and **OK** was 1.7. 0.7 and 1.7 respectively.

17 **HIT** purchases were from England and 13 abroad
23 **MISS** purchases were from abroad and 7 from England
19 **OK** purchases were from abroad and 21 from England

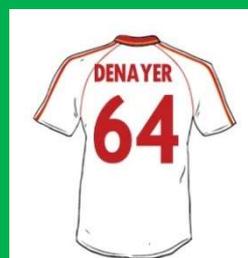
The clubs bought from the most for **HITS** was shared, with 2 and that was Chelsea, Monaco, Norwich and Roma.

The clubs bought from the most for **MISSES** was shared with 4 and that was Real Madrid and Liverpool (Liverpool had one **HIT** player also)

The club where the most **OK** players were bought from was Newcastle, with 3.



Jason Denayer – Youngster at Manchester City but unable to make the grade. Loans followed and now settled at Lyon



That is a lot of number crunching but there is an overriding theme coming out.

Generally speaking, based on the averages that were calculated the following can be said.

If you want to get a **HIT** in the transfer market when spending big you may want to consider the following.

Aim for a player who is 24 years old and has played for more than 3 clubs in their career, and to have played for at least one English club prior to the transfer.

It would be prudent to make the signing from an English club also. It will cost you no doubt (circa £30 million), but out of the 4 HIT players that have been sold on, 3 of them have been for a profit.

If you filter the analysis for a HIT player, who was 24 at the time of the transfer, that has played for over 3 clubs, at least one being in England, and buying them from a English club you get 2 players.

Andrew Webster and **Romelu Lukaku** (the Everton to United version)



Kamil Ahmet Corecki – London born, made the move from Eskisehirspor to Trabzonspor in the Turkish League



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Arda Turan – 6th player to score a Champions League hat-trick for Barcelona following Ronaldinho, Rivaldo, Eto'o, Messi and Neymar – pretty good company



In the analysis we didn't see a team with their top 5 most expensive signing as MISSES (Southampton were close) and of course we understand there is more to just big money signings, and they will be scrutinised the most. One team in the Premier League however does seem to have a tendency to be partial to a transfer flop! This is despite the supposed renaissance under chief scout Graham Carr.

I give you the Newcastle United flop XI.

In 1994, Friedel signed, for free, for Newcastle United under Kevin Keegan but was unable to gain a Work Permit. This is the cheapest flop! Once he got a permit, he went on to make 450 appearances in the Premier League (none for Newcastle)



£8.5 million. 54 apps



£5.8 million. 17 apps



£8 million. 47 apps



£8.5 million. 37 apps



£5 million. 5 apps



£15 million. 13 apps



£9 million. 21 apps



£5.7 million. 9 apps



£18 million. 71 apps



£3.5 million. 4 apps



Francesco Coco – As a left back coming through the ranks at AC Milan in the 1990's it must have been pretty disheartening, as you simply don't replace Maldini



A transfer tactic of, ‘they’ve had a good season so lets buy them’ carries a lot of weight and you can’t argue the approach. A transfer tactic that doesn’t seem to be too effective is the ‘they looked good for a season, so lets buy them but perhaps we won’t play them.’ AC Milan, a club with a great deal of pulling power seemingly mastered this tactic in the late 90’s & early 00’s, buying foreign players who had starred for their domestic clubs, but never really got the chance to shine in Serie A at the San Siro.

Here’s an AC Milan transfer flop XI of players that were definitely good but just not for the *Rossoneri* at the time.



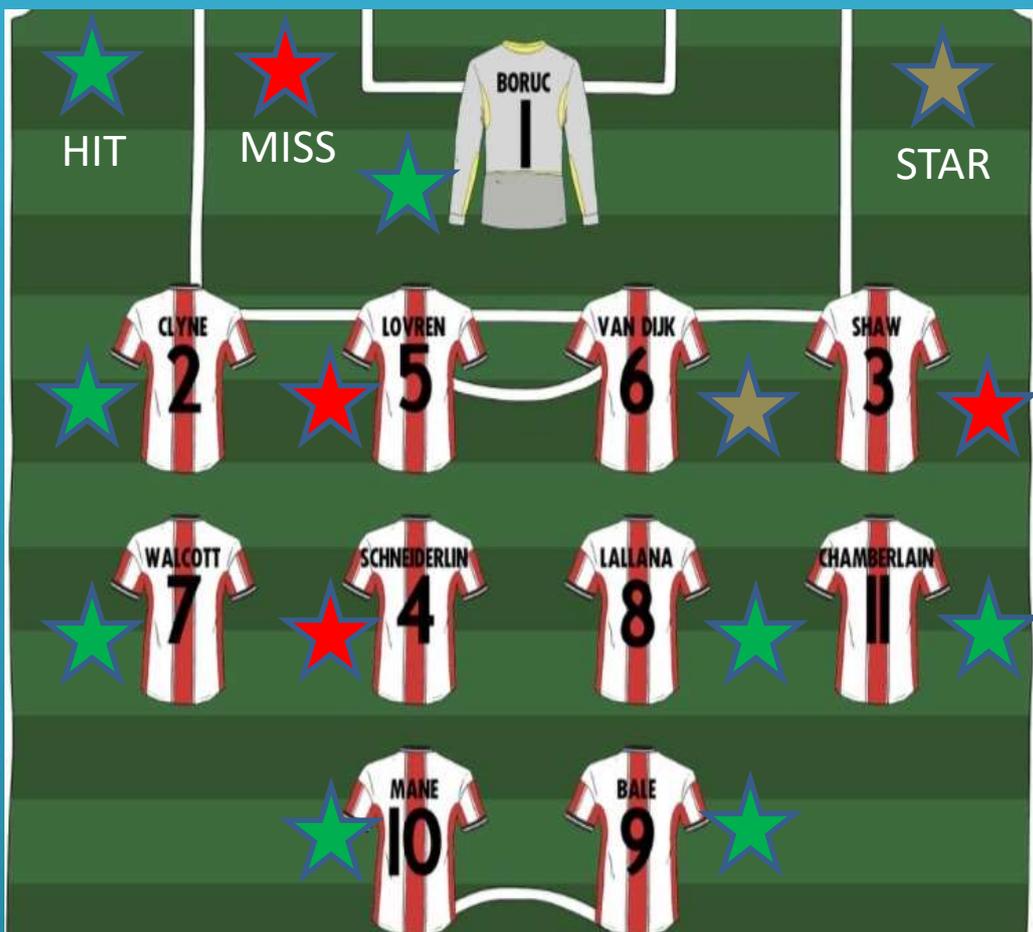
Pedro Chrivella – Captained Liverpool’s youngest ever line up (17 December 2019) in Carabao Cup. Average age was 19 years, 6 months and 3 days)



What about if there is a particular club you could target in order to guarantee a successful transfer Premier League purchase? A signing from Porto or Ajax in the past has proved ever so successful (Carvalho, McCarthy, Pereira, Neves + Overmars, Suarez, Vertonghen, Eriksen), but of course it is not full proof (Postiga, Mangala, Imbula + Klaassen, Babel, Riedewald)

I can't give you a first team XI on those clubs as neither have seen a goalkeeper make the journey directly to the Premier League.

But luckily there are others we can look to, starting on the domestic front.



The Southampton story is well told, and a huge pool of talent has gone through the club, with significant profit from player sales.

The first team XI here also doesn't include Victor Wanyama, Calum Chambers + others.

With the exception of Schneiderlin it's a pretty solid story of successful

transfers from out of the club into the hands of Premier League rivals.



Marco Simeone – Successful at AC Milan despite often playing second fiddle to star signings & also successful in France with Monaco and PSG. Surprisingly only 4 international caps as recognition



Staying in the British Isles, but this time North of the border. Not many hit the dizzy heights of the Premier League via the Scottish Premier, unless they have journeyed through one of the Glasgow Giants. Andy Robertson and a few others will of course want to have a say on that, but here we focus on the players bought from Celtic to the Premier League.

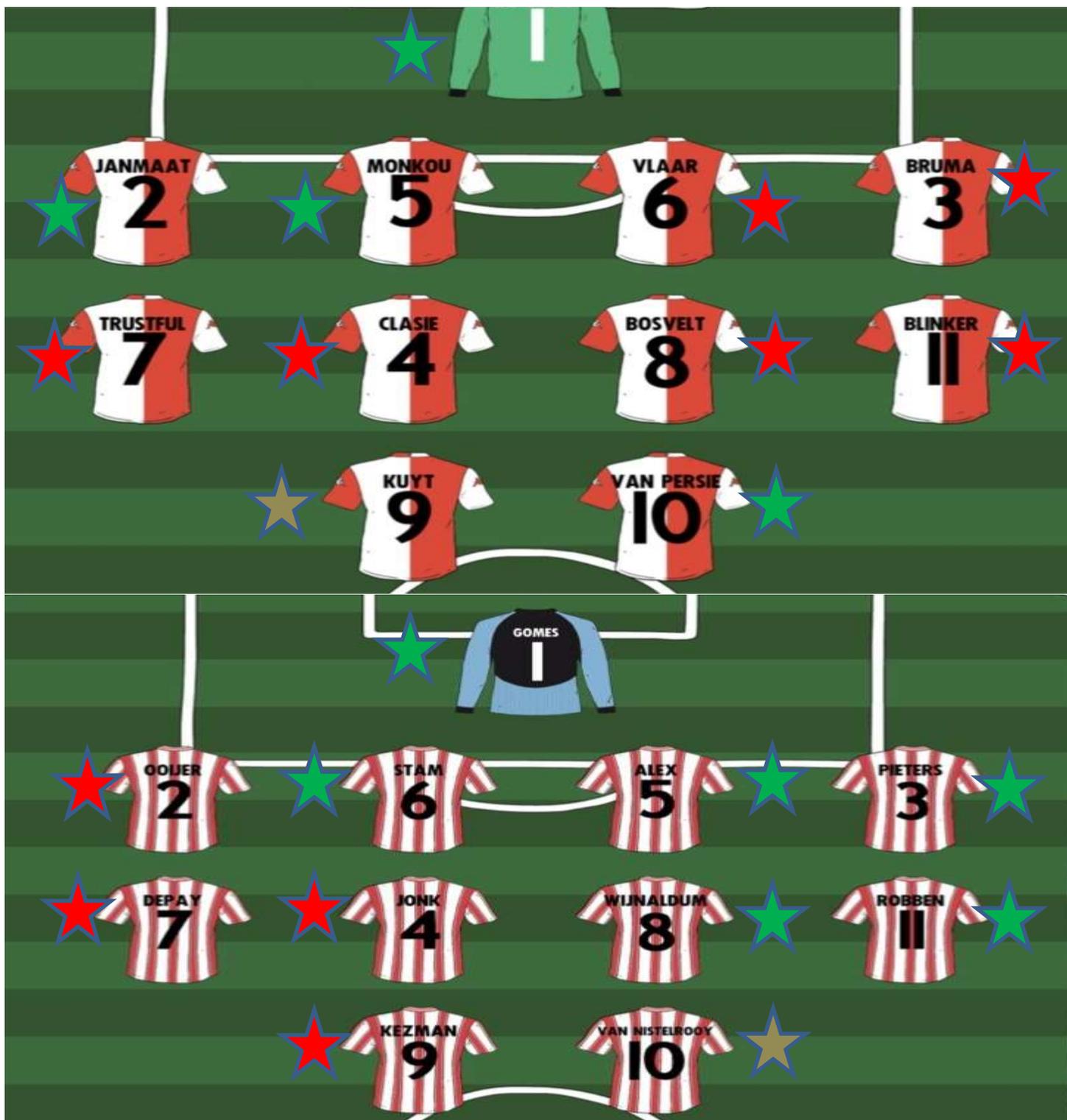
The success rate is not of the Southampton level (though they themselves have benefitted from a few of the players below), and some still in the pending bracket.

Others not to make the XI include a certain Paolo Di Canio, Ki Sung-yueng, Gary Hooper, Kenny Miller and Eyal Berkovic.



Carlos Bacca – 2 seasons at Sevilla and 2 UEFA Europa league titles securing a move to the Italian giants AC Milan for the Colombian





Jeremie Frimpong – Having joined Manchester City at the age of 9, moved on to Celtic in 2019



Ajax we know aren't the only team in the Eredivisie and both Feyenoord and PSV Eindhoven have supplied first team XI's to the Premier League in the past, with mixed results.

For **Feyenoord**, the back 5 is I would say average with no stand out performers, least of all Bruna, who got better with game time away from Chelsea. The midfield 4 would be below average at best, but the marks improve substantially for the forward line of Van Persie and Kuyt.

PSV have some absolute beltors in Stam, Robben and Van Nistelrooy that all excelled in the Premier League whilst others that came to the league did a fine job. Others flattered to deceive, as seen in the previous The Halfway Line issue, e.g., Kezman and Depay.

Missing out are Pelle, Dudek, Kalou and Emerton from Feyenoord and Bergwijn, Locadia, Popescu, Propper and Park from PSV.

In Ligue One, two of the top performing teams of late provide us with the two XI's. No Lyon here, as we couldn't establish two full backs.

Paris Saint-Germain, before the Qatari's arrived provided a regular feed to the Premier League. Some serious talent, like Anelka and Ginola mixed with solid performers and a pinch of below average! What some teams now would do for some signings from the French capitals' club! Missing from the team are Sahko, Moura, Cabeye, and Heinze, amongst others.

Joining the analysis is **Monaco**. There must be some decent persuasive powers used to transfer from the tax haven, sunny Principality, but plenty have done it. The latest wave included Bernardo Silva, Bernand Mendy and Fabinho, joining the path taken previously by the likes of Adebayor and Martial. Those not included are Tielemans, Bakayoko, Carrillo, Ghezzal, Riise, Moutinho and Evra, not forgetting Klinsmann!



Kevin Prince-Boateng – Played in a World Cup game for Ghana against Germany, for whom his brother, Jerome, was playing for





Mikey Johnston – Young Scottish winger entertaining the Parkhead crowd, instead of being a ball boy there, like he used to be



Expensive failures.

Who can say they have never made an expensive purchase they regret – surely we all have one, at least! Football teams are no different, even under the shrewdest of management mistakes are made and they can be costly. We referenced a few in the article already but we've looked wider, across the globe and put together our most expensive flops XI.

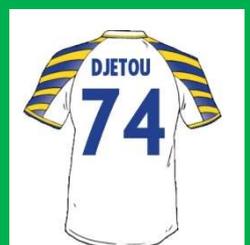
The result, overleaf, in theory should make for a great team. Sometimes things just don't click. It could be the change of environment, the pressure of a weighty price tag, a bad start that you just can't recover from, or you are being asked to play in an unfamiliar position.

We are dealing with some world class players here.

The XI we have picked cost in the region of £325 million with a return value of approximately £10 million from selling on fees! The buying clubs involved here do not have a business model to make profits from transfers, but I am pretty sure their model is to make successful signings, and none of these players tick that box.



Martin Djetou – Monaco to Parma and a French International. No we've already done Thuram. Djetou went on to play for Fulham and Bolton



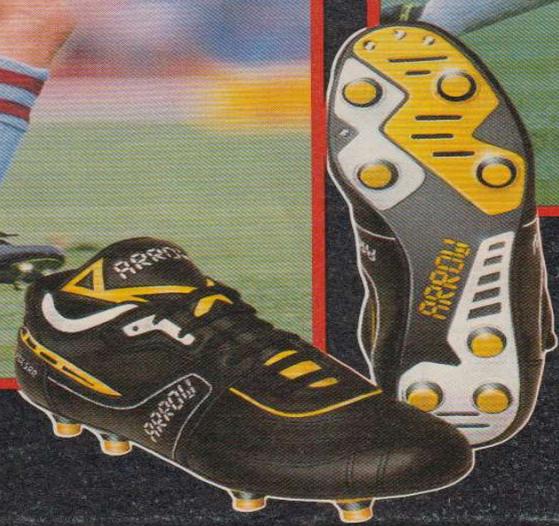
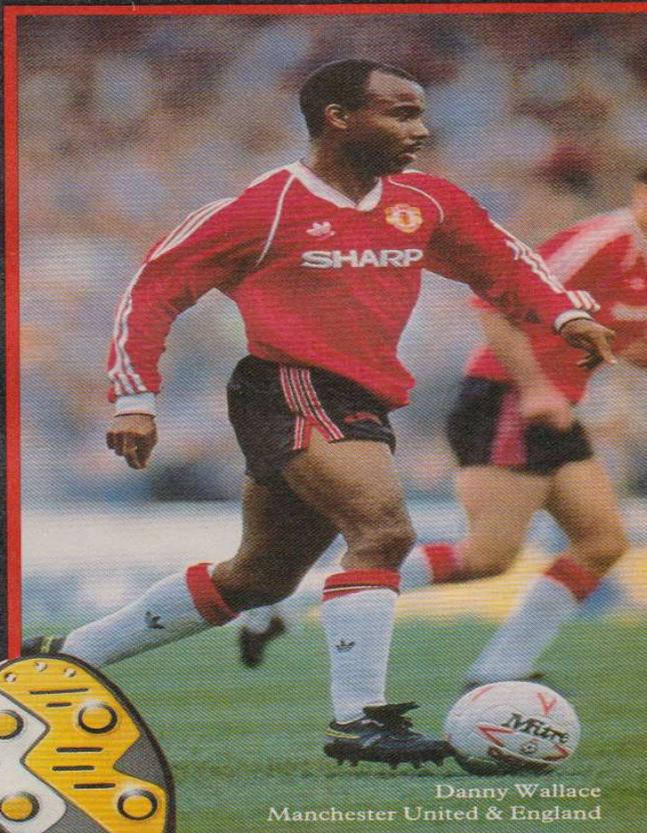


Aleixa Garcia – Young Spaniard with 4 league appearances with Manchester City and loan outings to gain experience



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Mario Yepes – Super Mario was the oldest outfield player at the 2014 World Cup – 38 years old



Historical Line Ups

In this feature we pick a team, be it an International side, or a domestic club team and pick 5 historical line ups to trigger memories of the good, or bad or even ugly times.

In this issue, based on our articles on Debuts and Brits Abroad we thought we'd bring you 5 line-ups of Brits making their full league debuts for a foreign club they had joined.

You will see from the feature on page 90 there were a great deal to choose from but we've gone for a random sample from different leagues and different hype around such moves.

What we find interesting is some of the players these Brits were team-mates with. You'll see some familiar faces...

Take a look at the line ups, remember the players wearing their new kits, look which superstars they played with in the teams and think whether or not their spells at these foreign clubs could be remembered as a success?

- 1) Trevor Steven, Marseille, Ligue 1, 1991
- 2) Des Walker, Sampdoria, Serie A, 1992
- 3) Paul Ince, Inter Milan, Serie A, 1996
- 4) Paul Lambert, Borussia Dortmund, Bundesliga, 1996
- 5) Steve McManaman, Real Madrid, La Liga, 1999



Hernan Crespo – Reached dizzy heights at Lazio, Inter Milan and AC Milan and remains the all time leading goal scorer for Parma (94 goals)





24th AUGUST 1991
MARSEILLE vs NIMES
4 - 2
DESCHAMPS
PELE
PAPIN
PELE
TOURON
BERNADET

OLMETA
BOLI MOZER
AMOROS
DESCHAMPS SAUZEE
STEVEN
PELE PAPIN
WADDLE
+ ANGLOMA
+ DURAND
MANAGER: RAYMOND GOETHALS



M'Baye Niang – Although great promise never kicked on at AC Milan and now finding form at Rennes





6th SEPTEMBER 1992
SAMPDORIA v/s LAZIO
3 - 3
FUJER 0-6
JUGOVIC
MANCINI
SIGNORI
SIGNORI
BUSO 0-6.

PAGLIUCA

MANNINI WALKER VIERCHOWOD LANNA

LOMBARDO JUGOVIC INVERNIZZI SERENA

MANCINI BERTARELLI



+ BUSO
+ CHIESA

MANAGER: SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON



Frank Kessie – Joined AC Milan, initially on loan and offered the 19 shirt, but then it was given to Leonardo Bonucci. When Bonucci left, he was re-offered 19 but refused in case fans had bought shirts with 79 on.





17th AUGUST 1996
BAYER LEVERKUSEN vs BORUSSIA DORTMUND
4 - 2
P. SERGIO
U. KIRSTEN
H. FACH
L. RYOLEWICZ
P. LAMBERT
I. TANKO



JULIO CESAR KOHLER HEINRICH

REUTER

ZORC LAMBERT WOLTERS

MÖLLER

CHAPUISAT

TANKO



- + RICKEN
- + TRETSCHOK
- + HERRLICH

MANAGER: OTTMAR HITZFELD



Colin Kazim-Richards – Bought from Bury to Brighton & Hove Albion after a Coca-Cola competition allowed a fan to give them the transfer money





8th SEPTEMBER 1996
 UDINESE V'S INTER MIAN
 0 - 1
 SFOLZA

PAGLIUCA

FRESI FESTA PAGANIN

ANGLOMA

ZANETTI

SFOLZA INCE DJORKIEFF

BRANCA ZAMORANO

+ BERTI
 + GANZ

MANAGER: ROY HODGSON

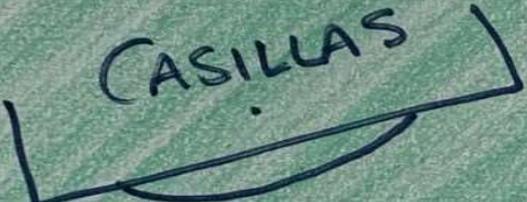


Yuri Zhirkov – At the time of the transfer, CSKA to Chelsea, he was the most expensive Russian transfer of all time (Golovin to Monaco now the record)





12TH SEPTEMBER 1999
 ATHLETIC BILBAO 2 vs REAL MADRID 2
 GUERRERO - McMANAMAN
 GEREMI O.G. - GUTI



HIERRO JULIO CESAR

R. CARLOS

SALGADO

REDONDO

GEREMI

SAVIO

McMANAMAN

RAUL

MORIENTES



+ HELGUERA
 + GUTI
 + ANELKA

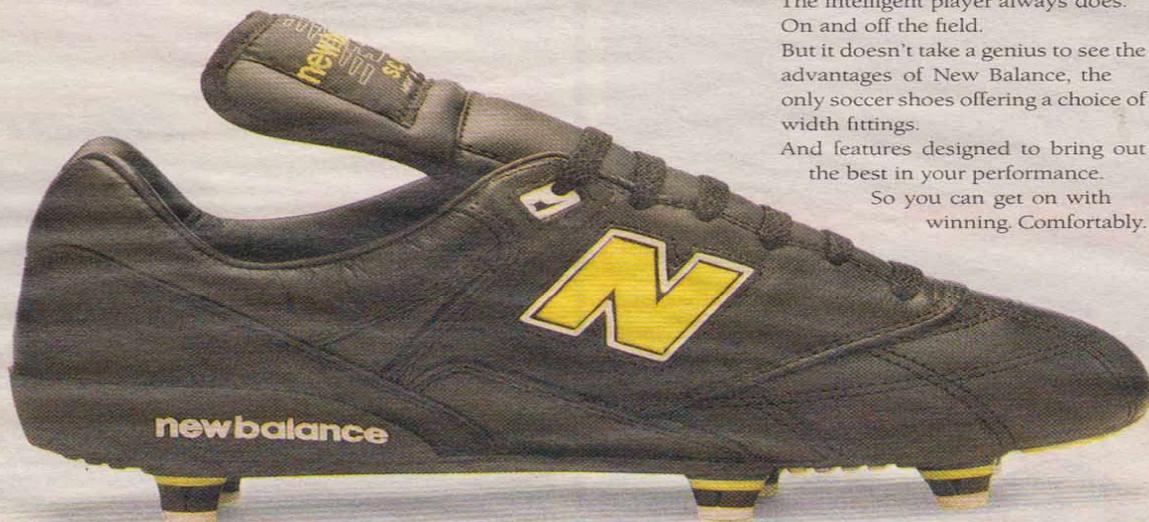
MANAGER: JOHN TOSHACK



Urby Emanuelson – Won Ajax talent of the year in 2006, joint with Thomas Vermaelen



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Rui Fonte – Brother of Jose, started his career at Arsenal. His biggest impact was whilst at Crystal Palace, he played a game after the loan expired and the club were docked a point



The Treatment Room

Anterior cruciate ligament

The anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is one of a pair of cruciate ligaments (the other being the posterior cruciate ligament) in the human knee.

ACL injury is when the anterior cruciate ligament is either stretched, partially torn, or completely torn. The most common injury is a complete tear. Symptoms include pain, a popping sound during injury, instability of the knee, and joint swelling. Swelling generally appears within a couple of hours. In approximately 50% of cases, other structures of the knee such as surrounding ligaments, cartilage, or meniscus are damaged.

When an individual has an ACL injury, they are likely to hear a "pop" in their knee followed by pain and swelling. They may also experience instability in the knee once they resume walking and other activities, as the ligament can no longer stabilize the knee joint and keep the tibia from sliding forward.

Reduced range of motion of the knee and tenderness along the joint line are also common signs of an acute ACL injury. The pain and swelling may resolve on its own; however, the knee will remain unstable and returning to sport without treatment may result in further damage to the knee.

Classification

An injury to a ligament is called a sprain. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons defines ACL injury in terms of severity and classifies them as Grade 1, 2, or 3 sprains. Grade 1 sprains occur when the ligament is stretched slightly but the stability of the knee joint is not affected. Grade 2 sprains occur when the ligament is stretched to the point that it becomes loose; this is also referred to as a partial tear. Grade 3 sprains occur when the ligament is completely torn into two pieces, and the knee joint is no longer stable. This is the most common type of ACL injury

Anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction (ACL reconstruction) is a surgical tissue graft replacement of the anterior cruciate ligament, located in the knee, to restore its function after an injury. The torn ligament can either be removed from the knee (most common), or preserved (where the graft is passed inside the preserved ruptured native ligament) before reconstruction an arthroscopic procedure. ACL repair is also a surgical option. This involves repairing the ACL by re-attaching it, instead of performing a reconstruction. Theoretical advantages of repair include faster recovery and a lack of donor site morbidity, but randomised controlled trials and long-term data regarding re-rupture rates using contemporary surgical techniques are lacking.

The goals of rehabilitation following an ACL injury are to regain knee strength and motion. If an individual with an ACL injury undergoes surgery, the rehabilitation process will first focus on slowly increasing the range of motion of the joint, then on strengthening the surrounding muscles to protect the new ligament and stabilize the knee. Finally, functional training specific to the activities required for certain sports is begun. It may take six or more months before an athlete can return to sport after surgery, as it is vital to regain a sense of balance and control over the knee in order to prevent a second injury.



Artur Boruc – Solid goalkeeper for Celtic, Southampton and Bournemouth and by all accounts a complete fruit loop



COUNTRY FOCUS

At The Halfway Line, we are aware, although it may not seem it, that football is wider than just the Premier League, statistics and transfers within Europe. A new feature will be a country focus on the less fashionable countries around the globe and you can learn a little more about the football, teams and players from the chosen country.

BOLIVIA

The Bolivian Football Federation is the governing body of football in Bolivia. It was founded in 1925, making it the eighth oldest South American federation.

Liga de Fútbol Profesional Boliviano is the top-flight professional football league in Bolivia



There are currently 14 teams in the top division, some with outstanding names for football clubs.

Always Ready, Atletico Palmaflor, Aurora, Blooming, Bolivar, Guabira, Jorge Wilstermann, Nacional Potosi, Oriente Petrolero, Real Potosi, Real Santa Cruz, Royal Pari, San Jose, The Strongest.

The most successful team in the history of the league is **Bolivar**, from La Paz, the legislative Capital city of Bolivia. They have won the league title a record 29 times.

Bolivar's classic rival is The Strongest, also from La Paz and are joint second for the most amount of league titles (15, with Jorge Wilstermann)



The Bolivian National team is nicknamed La Verde (The Green)



Bolivia play their home games at Estadio Hernando Siles, which has an altitude of 3,637 metres (11,932 ft) above sea level, making it one of the highest football stadiums in the world. Many visiting teams protest that the altitude gives Bolivia an unfair advantage against opponents.



Valon Behrami – Joined Genoa in 2020, was the 7th time he has joined a Serie A club. Genoa was also his first, back in 2003



Their only international honour is the 1963 Copa America, which they hosted, and a runners up spot, in 1997, again when they hosted the tournament.

Bolivia have qualified for the World Cup 3 times, 1994 being the last, and have been eliminated at the group stages each time.

The highest capped Bolivian is defender Ronald Raldes, with 102 appearances (the only Bolivian with 100+ caps).

Joaquín Botero is the all-time record Bolivia national team's goal scorer with 20 goals and was the top goal scorer in world football in the 2002 season, with 49 goals scored for Club Bolívar!

Perhaps the 2 most famous Bolivian footballers are Marco Etcheverry and Erwin Sanchez, both now retired.

Etcheverry, nicknamed El Diablo (The Devil) was most successful during his spell in the MLS with DC United, leading the team to three MLS Cups and was named MLS MVP in 1998. In eight years with the team, Etcheverry played 191 league games, scoring 34 goals and registering 101 assists (the games and assists were DC records). He retired at the end of the 2003 season.

Sanchez, dubbed Platini, played most of his professional career in Portugal, amassing 288 matches and 59 goals over 13 seasons mainly representing Boavista and Benfica. He is the scorer of Bolivia's first, and only ever World Cup Finals goal (1994).



Has there been any Bolivian representation in the English Premier League?

Yes, but minimal. To date there have been two; Jamie Moreno (Middlesbrough 1995-96) and Marcelo Moreno (Wigan Athletic, *loan*, 2009-2010), both strikers, same surname, but no relation. Neither scored, meaning no Bolivian has ever scored in the Premier League. Marcelo Moreno sits second behind Botero with 18 strikes for the Greens.



Gelson Fernandes – One of Sven-Goran Eriksson's first signings as Manchester City manager. Never settled and tried again under Sven at Leicester with the same outcome



BARCELONA AND REAL MADRID

BARCELONA AND REAL MADRID

In the previous issue of The Halfway Line, we looked at the sharing of players between rival clubs in Italy, and a brief comparison with leading English clubs. We didn't touch on the Spain link, so we thought we'd just show you some of the brave players in the modern era that have worn the shirt of both El Clásico teams.

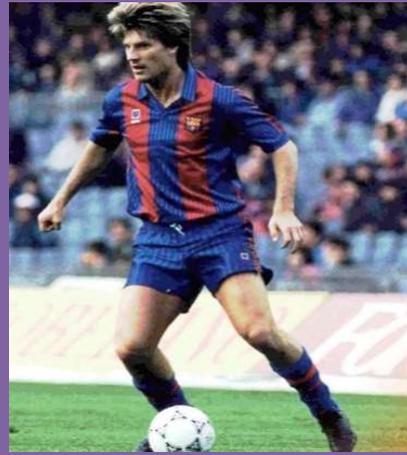


Luis Figo, Samuel Eto'o, Alfonso Perez, Robert Prosinecki and Ronaldo



Bukayo Saka – Lively left winger coming through the ranks at Arsenal, equally at ease at left back. One to watch for the future





Bernd Schuster,
Luis Enrique,
Gheorghe Hagi,
Michael Laudrup,
Javier Saviola and
Albert Celades



Hernanes – Named in 2009 by the Times as the most promising footballer in the world. Played for Lazio, Juventus and Inter Milan



BRITS AND IRISH ABROAD!



The stereotype follows a certain path - Benidorm, hanker-chiefs on bald heads, a fry up at the local Irish bar..... that's your British stereotype for being abroad....

The Premier League open up their doors to literally thousands of talented footballers to showcase their ability and it makes the league a thoroughly entertaining place to be. But who from Britain & Ireland has ventured far to master their trade and become a Brit & Irishman abroad, and looked to buck the trend. This is no means an exhaustive list! There have been quite a few!!!



Stefano Okaka – Youngest goal scorer in Coppa Italiana history when he scored for Roma (2005) at 16 years and 121 days





Gaston Ramierz – Uruguayan play maker, who failed to live up to expectations at Southampton & Hull. Formerly of Middlesbrough until a move back to Serie A with Sampdoria



SPAIN & PORTUGAL

Gary Lineker – Barcelona
Mark Hughes – Barcelona
Steve McManaman – Real Madrid
Michael Owen – Real Madrid
David Beckham – Real Madrid
Jonathan Woodgate – Real Madrid
Mark Draper – Rayo Vallecano
Dalian Atkinson – Real Sociedad
John Aldridge – Real Sociedad
Kevin Richardson – Real Sociedad
Jermaine Pennant – Real Zaragoza
Ryan Gould - Sporting Lisbon*

Kieran Trippier - Atletico Madrid
Alan Hutton – Real Mallorca
Vinny Samways – Las Palmas
Brian Deane – Benfica
Alan Mahon – Sporting Lisbon
Steve Harkness – Benfica
Phil Babb – Sporting Lisbon
Eric Dier – Sporting Lisbon
Scott Minto – Benfica
Dean Saunders – Benfica
Michael Thomas – Benfica

*indicates played for more than one team in the country

JAPAN & SOUTH KOREA

Gary Lineker – Nagoya Grampus Eight
Jay Bothroyd – Jubilo Iwata *
Jamie Cureton - Busan I'Cons
Niall McGinn - Gwangju

MEXICO

Ravel Morrison - Atlas

FRANCE

Mick McCarthy - Lyon
Joey Barton - Marseille
David Beckham – Paris Saint-Germain
Tony Cascarino - Marseille
John Collins – Monaco
Michael Hughes - Strasbourg
Trevor Steven - Marseille
Chris Waddle - Marseille
Chris Makin - Marseille
Steven Fletcher - Marseille
Joe Cole - Lille

USA & CANADA

David Beckham – LA Galaxy
Robbie Keane – LA Galaxy
Steven Gerrard – LA Galaxy
Ashley Cole – LA Galaxy
Wayne Rooney – DC United
Frank Lampard – New York City
Liam Ridgewell – Portland Timbers
Nedum Onuoha – Real Salt Lake
Bradley Wright-Philips – New York Red Bulls*
Shaun Wright-Philips – New York Red Bulls
Darren Huckerby – San Jose Earthquakes
Jermain Defoe – Toronto FC
Darren O’Dea – Toronto FC
Nigel Reo-Coker – Vancouver Whitecaps*
Kevin Doyle – Colorado Rapids

SWEDEN & FINLAND

Teddy Sheringham – Djurgardens IF
Peter Crouch – IFK Hassleholm
Ravel Morrison - Stetsons
Marlon Harewood - Haka



Esteban Cambiasso – Scored in a 2006 World Cup
finals game for Argentina against Serbia &
Montenegro, finishing off a 26 pass move



ITALY

Franz Carr - Reggiana
Nathaniel Chalobah - Napoli
Joe Hart - Torino
Micah Richards - Fiorentina
Danny Dichio – Lecce*
David Platt – Bari*
Des Walker - Sampdoria
Paul Gascoigne - Lazio
Paul Ince – Inter Milan
David Beckham – AC Milan
Ravel Morrison - Lazio
Trevor Francis – Sampdoria*
Graeme Souness - Sampdoria
Ray Wilkins – AC Milan
Luther Blissett - AC Milan
Mark Hateley – AC Milan
Ben Wilmott - Udinese
Lee Sharpe - Sampdoria
Robbie Keane – Inter Milan
Ian Rush - Juventus
Tony Dorigo – Torino
Ashley Cole - Roma
Chris Smalling - Roma
Jay Bothroyd - Perugia
Ashley Young – Inter Milan
Aaron Ramsey – Juventus

INDIA

Robbie Keane - ATK
Wes Brown - Kerala Blasters
Stephen Pearson – ATK *
Aaron Hughes - Kerala Blasters
Roger Johnson – FC Pune City
Jermaine Pennant – FC Pune City
David James – Kerala Blasters
Michael Chopra – Kerala Blasters
Darren O’Dea – Mumbai City
Ryan Taylor – Atlético de Kolkata

GERMANY

Alan McInally – Bayern Munich
Mark Hughes – Bayern Munich
Ade Lookman – RB Leipzig
Emile Smith-Rowe - RB Leipzig
Jordan Sancho – Borussia
Dortmund
Paul Lambert – Borussia
Dortmund
Reiss Nelson - Hoffenheim
Owen Hargreaves – Bayern
Munich
Reece Oxford – FC Augsburg*
Michael Mancienne - Hamburg
Scott Booth – Borussia Dortmund

TURKEY

Les Ferdinand - Beşiktaş
Barry Venison – Galatasaray
Mike Marsh - Galatasaray
Dean Saunders – Galatasaray
Scott Carson - Bursaspor
Kenny Miller - Bursaspor
Kris Boyd - Eskişehirspor
Steven Caulker - Alanyaspor
Daniel Sturridge – Trabzonspor
Anton Ferdinand – Antalyaspor
Allan McGregor - Beşiktaş
Kevin Campbell - Trabzonspor
Darius Vassell – Ankaragücü
Dalian Atkinson - Fenerbahce

HOLLAND

Scott Booth – Twente *
Mike Higdon – NEC Nijmegen
Michael Ball – PSV Eindhoven

GREECE & CYPRUS

Matt Derbyshire – Olympiacos
& Omomia
Luke Steele - Panathinaikos
Roy Carroll - Olympiacos
Jason Puncheon - Pafos

AUSTRALIA

Robbie Fowler – Perth Glory
Emile Heskey – Newcastle Jets
Andy Keogh – Perth Glory
Roy O’Donovan – Newcastle Jets*
Charlie Miller – Brisbane Roar
Bob Malcolm – Brisbane Roar
Ross McCormick – Central Coast Mariners
Brian Deane – Perth Glory
Damien Duff - Melbourne City
Liam Miller – Melbourne City *
Aaron Hughes – Melbourne City
Francis Jeffers – Newcastle Jets
Michael Bridges – Newcastle Jets
Joe Ledley – Newcastle Jets
Wes Hoolahan – Newcastle Jets
Adam Le Fondre – Sydney FC

RUSSIA

Aiden McGeady – Spartak Moscow
Garry O’Connor – Lokomotiv
Moscow*
David Bentley – FC Rostov



Martin Vydra – File with David Nugent & Jordan Rhodes as a complete Championship player, perhaps the Premier League a step to far



Quiz time

Try your luck with the following questions and find out the answers next month, or email me at Stan@thehalfwayline.com to submit your answers

- 1) 13 foreign players (outside Britain and ROI) played on the opening day of the Premier League – 4 of them were goalkeepers – name them?
- 2) Only 5 clubs have only ever had one manager in the Premier League – name the club and the manager?
- 3) Harry Redknapp as managed 5 Premier League clubs. List them in order of games actually managed (highest first)?
- 4) The top 5 goal scoring French players in the Premier League had represented all but two of the Premier League clubs that have qualified for the Champions League – name the players and the 2 clubs not represented by them.
- 5) Name a player to have played for all the following: a City, a Hotspur, a Rangers, a Palace, a Villa and a United?
- 6) What is highest fee paid for a domestic transfer, the player, and the two clubs involved?

Team mates

- 1) I have been a team mate of David Beckham, Rio Ferdinand, Michael Carrick, Darren Ferguson, Laurent Blanc & Dimitar Berbatov – **BUT I HAVE NEVER PLAYED FOR MANCHESTER UNITED** and I have been a team mate of Gus Poyet, Demba Ba, Ashley Cole, Wayne Bridge, Fernando Torres and William Gallas, **BUT I HAVE NEVER PLAYED FOR CHELSEA**. Who am I?
- 2) My team mates include Wilfried Zaha, Robin Van Persie, Louis Saha, Cristiano Ronaldo, Patrice Evra and Carlos Tevez, **BUT I HAVE NEVER PLAYED FOR MANCHESTER UNITED**. Who am I?
- 3) My team mates include Mario Mandzukic, Granit Xhaka, Nemanja Vidic, Marko Arnautovic, Lukas Podolski and Mohamed Salah. Who am I?
- 4) My team mates include Ben Tal Haim, Shinji Kagawa, Dimitri Payet, Cesc Fabregas, Gabriel Paulista and Patrick Van Aanholt. Who am I?
- 5) My team mates include Luis Figo, Jimmy Floyd-Hasselbaink, Xabi Alonso, Samir Nasri and Jordan Henderson. Who am I?

What club links the following players?

- 1) Fabinho, Fernando Morientes, Javier Saviola and Claude Makelele?
- 2) David Trezeguet, Nicklas Bendtner, Thierry Henry and Nicolas Anelka?
- 3) Stan Collymore, Peter Beardsley, Danny Murphy and Andy Cole?
- 4) Eyal Berkovic, John Hartson, Ian Wright and Dion Dublin?
- 5) John Carew, Milan Baros, Jean Il Makoun and Jordan Veretout?
- 6) Christian Karembeu, Geremi, Alvaro Negredo and Antonio Barragan?
- 7) Bixente Lizararu, Benjamin Pavard, Jean-Pierre Papin and Franck Ribery?
- 8) Giovane Elber, Pierre Emerick-Aubameyang, Sokratis Papastathopoulos and Kevin Prince-Boateng?



Ante Rebic – Clocked as the fastest player at the 2018 World Cup, along with Ronaldo, 34 km/h.



Last Issues Quiz answers

- 1) Name 6 foreigners (not inc ROI) who played in the Premier League and then managed a team they never represented (also they can't have managed the team they played for) I.e., Gullit or Di Matteo, Solskjaer not correct. **Remi Garde, Gustavo Poyet, Gianfranco Zola, Paolo Di Canio, Roberto Mancini & Slaviša Jokanović**
- 2) Player started FA cup final in 1997/98, lost, also started the 2014/15 cup final and lost – both times against the same team. The player won a fa cup medal in between the 17 years, but didn't play – Who? **Shay Given**
- 3) More English or Scottish managers for Blackburn in EPL ? **English**
- 4) Since the Premier League started, Arsenal, Liverpool, Everton and Aston Villa have all had a player play for them with the same surname – What is the surname? **Wright**
- 5) Who was the only player to score a goal in an FA Cup final for a losing team between 1994 and 2005? **Freddie Ljungberg**
- 6) Name a player to have played for all the following, an Argyle, a Rovers, a City, a Rangers, an Athletic, a Palace, a Villa and an Albion. **Scott Sinclair**

Team mates

- 1) I have been a team mate of Jean Tigana, Mark Schwarzer, Neil Ruddock, Niall Quinn & Steve Nicol - Who am I? **Chris Waddle**
- 2) I have been a team mate of Gianluca Vialli, Ruud Gullit, Nicolas Anelka, Zvonimir Boban, Dwight Yorke & John Terry - Who am I? **David Platt**
- 3) I have been a team mate of Rui Costa, Ruud Van Nistelrooy, Michael Owen, Francesco Totti, Gaizka Mendiata and David Beckham – Who am I? **Abel Xavier**
- 4) I have been a team mate of Ronaldo (Bra), Dean Holdsworth, Scott Parker, Samuel Eto'o, Djimi Traore, and Luka Modric – Who am I? **Eidur Gudjohnsen**
- 5) I have been a team mate of Gabriel Batistuta, Nayim, Pierluigi Casiraghi, Brian Laudrup and Christian Ziege – Who am I? **Gustavo Poyet**

What club links the following players

- 1) Julio Baptista, Ludovic Giuly, Walter Samuel and Ivan Helguera - **AS Roma**
- 2) David Vaughan, Dalian Atkinson Kevin Richardson & John Aldridge - **Real Sociedad**
- 3) David Beckham, Ronaldinho, Gabriel Heinze and George Weah – **Paris Saint-Germain**
- 4) Diego Forlan, Antonio Valencia, Guiseppe Rossi and Giovanni Dos Santos - **Villarreal**
- 5) Kevin Prince-Boateng, Lee Young-Pyo, Steven Pienaar and Marc Ziegler – **Borussia Dortmund**
- 6) Artur Numan, Michael Ball, Marcus DeBeasley and Jan Wouters – **PSV Eindhoven**
- 7) Clarence Seedorf, Juan Sebastian Veron, Ariel Ortega and Jurgen Klinsmann - **Sampdoria**
- 8) Yuri Djorkaeff, Hakan Suker, Jay Bothroyd and Dino Baggio – **Blackburn Rovers**



Jeremy Menez – Journeyman across France and Italy.
Worth googling his back heel goal against Parma
when at AC Milan



Forgot they played for them?

They'll always be a healthy chat when it comes to naming your favourite player to represent your club. For some clubs obvious candidates will dominate (top goal scorer or club captain) and perhaps some fans will have a random favourite who is their choice for special reasons. (Scored in first game you went to)

But for a selection of Premier League teams it is also possible to name a starting line up of players that it is very easy to forget they actually played for the club, let alone become a fan favourite.

Looking at clubs that have had a significant presence in the Premier League era, Fulham, and former champions Leicester City and Blackburn Rovers we've selected 11 players each to make up a team of forgettable's.

Have a look at the line ups and see if you remember them pulling on the shirt.



Alessandro Bastoni – Young Italian centre back on Inter's books destined for a strong career. One to watch



Fulham



4 years! How did I miss this one!



1 game



3 years
10 games
0 point.



Played, and managed them!



Aeroplanino piloted 10 games



Davide Calabria – Another fine young Italian at the San Siro, but with AC Milan – Solid defender at a club that tends to stick with their Italian defenders.



Leicester City



Bruno!



Nobby
13 games



4 games
0 goals

The forcefield

Loan Rangers



Edmundo – Temperamental character, highly talented. Signed for Vasco da Gama on 5 separate occasions throughout his career



Blackburn Rovers

2 games,
1994, no
medal



Bayern,
Barca and
Blackburn!



1 game

World Cup
finalists!



Kevin Davies'
make weight



Daniel Maldini – Debut for AC Milan in 2020
following in the footsteps of his Grandad and Father,
Cesare and Paolo



Page number glossary: Shows player and season they wore the associated number

1	Iker Casillas	Real Madrid	2001-2015	51	Kieran Trippier	Manchester City	2009-2010
2	Dani Alves	Barcelona	2009-2013	52	Patrick Van Aanholt	Chelsea	2009-2010
3	Ashley Cole	Arsenal	2000-2006	53	Jesse Lingard	Manchester United	2011-2012
4	Ruud Gullit	Chelsea	1995-1998	54	Manuel Da Costa	Sampdoria	2008-2009
5	Carles Puyol	Barcelona	2002-2014	55	Yuto Nagatomo	Inter Milan	2010-2018
6	Xavi	Barcelona	2001-2015	56	Emmanuel Frimpong	Arsenal	2008-2009
7	Raul	Real Madrid	1995-2010	57	Kostas Mitroglou	PSV Eindhoven	2019-2020
8	Steven Gerrard	Liverpool	2004-2015	58	Roberto Soriano	Sampdoria	2008-2009
9	Alan Shearer	Newcastle United	1996-2006	59	Harry Wilson	Liverpool	2016-2017
10	Pele	Brazil	1957-1971	60	Claudio Marchisio	Juventus	2005-2006
11	Neymar	Barcelona	2013-2017	61	Michael Obafemi	Southampton	2018-2019
12	Marco Van Basten	The Netherlands	1987-1989	62	Eddie Nketiah	Arsenal	2017-2018
13	Alessandro Nesta	Lazio	1994-2002	63	Patrick Cutrone	AC Milan	2016-2019
14	George Weah	AC Milan	1997-1998	64	Jason Denayer	Galatasaray	2015-2016
15	Lillian Thuram	France	1995-2008	65	Kamil Ahmet Corekci	Eskisehirspor	2013-2017
16	Roy Keane	Manchester United	1994-2006	66	Arda Turan	Galatasaray	2006-2009
17	Steve McManaman	Liverpool	1993-1996	67	Francesco Coco	Inter Milan	2002-2003
18	Ivan Zamorano	Inter Milan	1998-2001	68	Pedro Chrivella	Liverpool	2019-2020
19	Gilberto Silva	Arsenal	2002-2008	69	Marco Simone	AC Milan	2001-2002
20	Ole Gunnar Solskjaer	Manchester United	1996-2008	70	Carlos Bacca	AC Milan	2015-2017
21	Andrea Pirlo	Italy	2004-2015	71	Jeremie Frimpong	Celtic	2019-2020
22	Diego Milito	Inter Milan	2009-2014	72	Kevin Prince-Boateng	AC Milan	2015-2016
23	Robbie Fowler	Liverpool	1993-1996	73	Mikey Johnson	Celtic	2016-2019
24	Lorenzo Insigne	Napoli	2012-2020	74	Martin Djetou	Parma	2001-2002
25	Pepe Reina	Liverpool	2005-2013	75	Aleix Garcia	Manchester City	2015-2017
26	Christian Chivu	Inter Milan	2007-2014	76	Mario Yepes	AC Milan	2010-2013
27	Brian Deane	Leicester City	2001-2004	77	Hernan Crespo	Parma	2009-2010
28	Franck Ribery	Galatasaray	2004-2005	78	M'Baye Niang	AC Milan	2013-2014
29	Rio Ferdinand	Leeds United	2000-2002	79	Franck Kessie	AC Milan	2017-2020
30	Claudio Taffarel	Parma	2001-2002	80	Colim Kazim-Richards	Galatasaray	2010-2012
31	Ansu Fati	Barcelona	2019-2020	81	Yuri Zhirkov	Zenit St. Petersburg	2015-2017
32	Theo Walcott	Arsenal	2005-2008	82	Urby Emanuelson	Roma	2014-2015
33	Patrice Evra	Juventus	2014-2017	83	Rui Fonte	Benfica	2014-2015
34	Nigel De Jong	Manchester City	2008-2013	84	Artur Boruc	Fiorentina	2010-2011
35	Mancini	Roma	2001-2002	85	Valon Behrami	Fiorentina	2010-2012
36	Mark Viduka	Newcastle United	2007-2009	86	Gelson Fernandes	Sporting Lisbon	2012-2013
37	Martin Skrtel	Liverpool	2007-2016	87	Bukayo Saka	Arsenal	2018-2019
38	Javi Capdevila	Benfica	2011-2012	88	Hernanes	Inter Milan	2013-2016
39	Toni Kroos	Bayern Munich	2010-2014	89	Stefano Okaka	Roma	2008-2009
40	Andrej Kramaric	Leicester City	2014-2015	90	Gaston Ramirez	Sampdoria	2017-2018
41	Jan Oblak	Benfica	2013-2014	91	Esteban Cambiasso	Olympiakos	2015-2016
42	Steven Nzonzi	Roma	2018-2019	92	Martin Vydra	Udinese	2013-2014
43	Rafael Van Der Vaart	Ajax	1999-2000	93	Ante Rebic	Fiorentina	2017-2018
44	Massimo Oddo	AC Milan	2006-2008	94	Jereny Menez	Roma	2009-2011
45	Ignazio Abate	AC Milan	2003-2004	95	Alessandro Bastoni	Inter Milan	2019-2020
46	Marc Muniesa	Barcelona	2008-2009	96	Davide Calabria	AC Milan	2014-2017
47	Philip Foden	Manchester City	2017-2020	97	Edmundo	Napoli	2000-2001
48	Alessandro Florenzi	Roma	2012-2013	98	Daniel Maldini	AC Milan	2019-2020
49	Abel Taarabt	Benfica	2018-2020	99	Antonio Cassano	Sampdoria	2007-2011
50	Andre Cruz	Sporting Lisbon	2000-2001	100	Martin Jorgensen	Denmark	1997-2010



Antonio Cassano – Bari to Roma (2001) he became the world's most expensive teenager. Also surprisingly Italy's joint top goal scorer in the European Championships competition



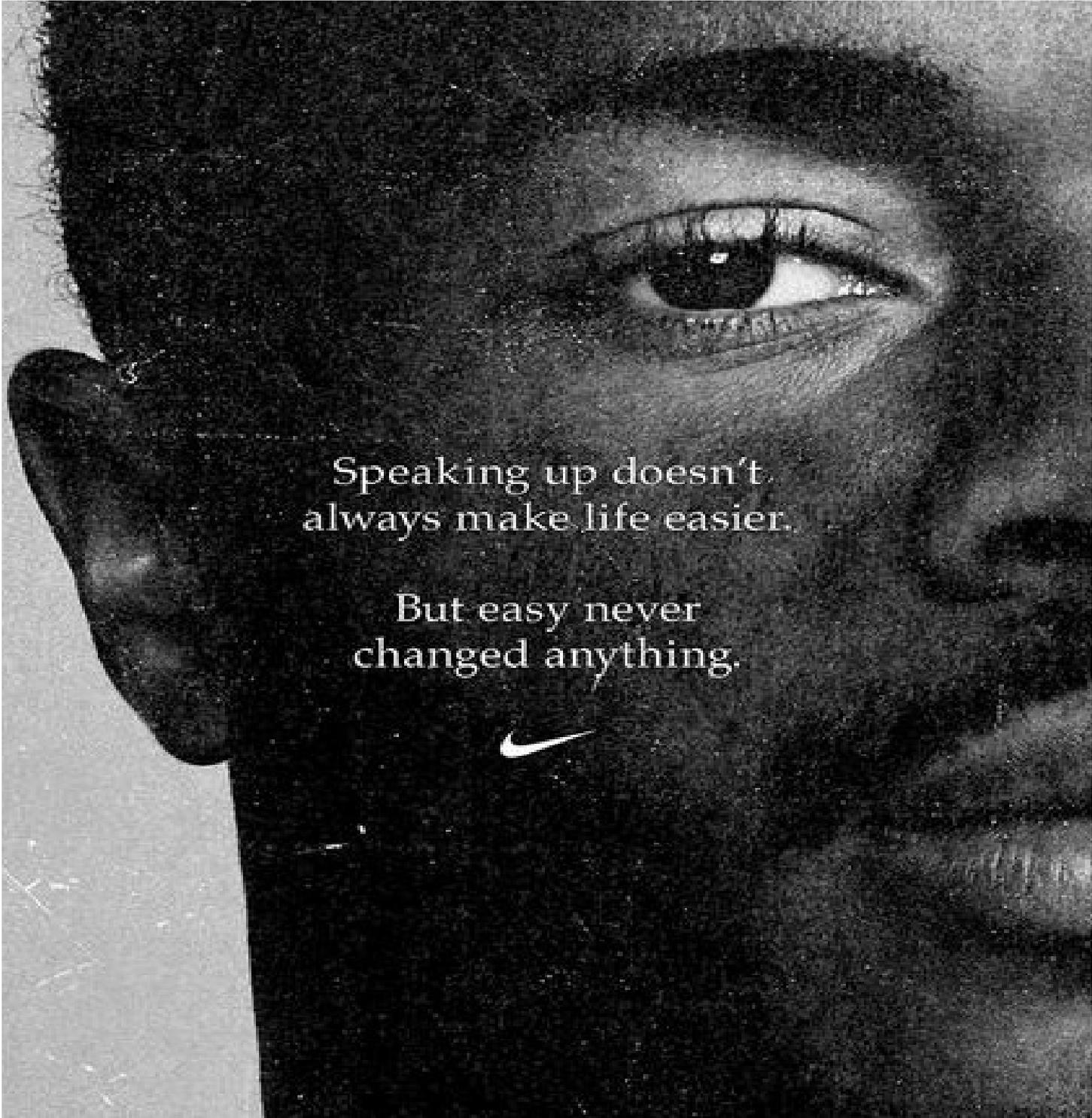
What's coming up in the next issue of The Halfway Line?

- Who are the most successful players, ever?
- Cult Heroes around the globe
- Goal scoring goalkeepers!
- Quirky happenings in the world of Football
- Number 9's & the very best of them
- When underdogs rewrite the rules
- The Boot Room
- More best foreign XI's in the Premier League
- The greatest XI never to....
- Country focus
- More Classic Kits
- More Historical line ups
- And much much more!!



Martin Jorgensen – Over 100 caps for Denmark and wore the number 100 shirt for the 100th game





Speaking up doesn't
always make life easier.

But easy never
changed anything.



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