

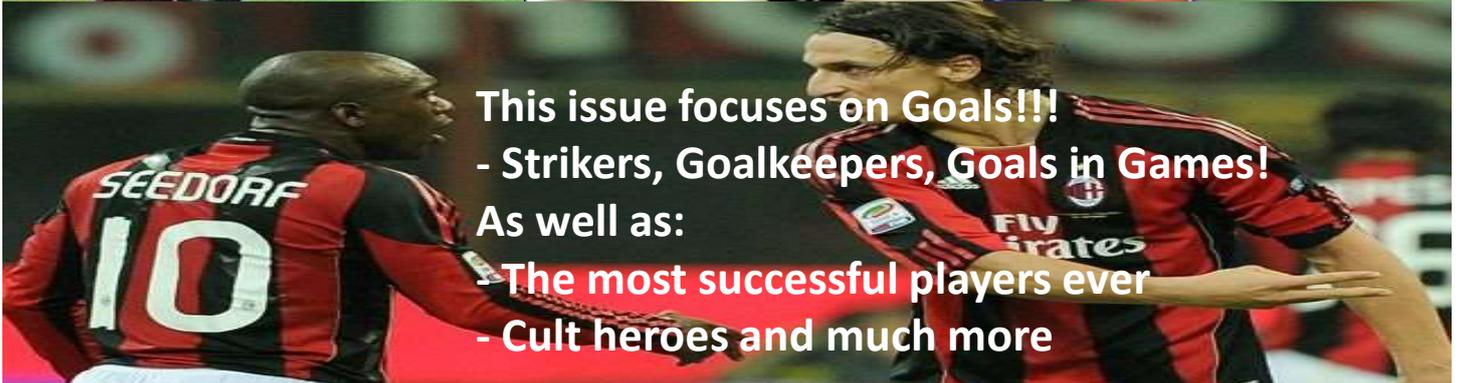
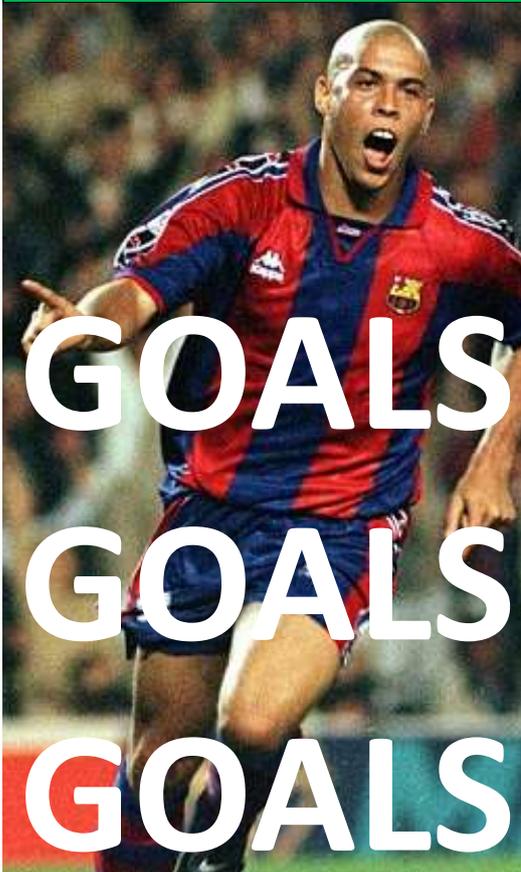
June 2020 Issue 3

The



Halfway Line

GOALS
GOALS
GOALS



This issue focuses on Goals!!!

- Strikers, Goalkeepers, Goals in Games!

As well as:

- The most successful players ever

- Cult heroes and much more

Editors note: Pre-match pep talk



We are back again! Third time around, like a 1993 Cup Final between Arsenal and Sheffield Wednesday. We are feeling a great deal more Andy Linighan than Steve Morrow right now being able to deliver you some more great content in this issue.

This issue focuses on goals!!!

Think of a roast dinner without Yorkshire Puddings, or drunken karaoke without Come on Eileen. Doesn't sound right does it? Well nor does a 90 minute game of football without goals. Tactical management and the parking of the bus is all good and well on occasion, but goals make you scream with excitement and the sight and sound of the ball smacking the back of the net is unrivalled. Surely no one has an all time favourite nil-nil, but I bet you have a favourite goal or at least a favourite goal scorer.

In this issue we look at those favourite goal scorers and we also look at the more bizarre characters with the desire to hit the back of the net – goalkeepers!

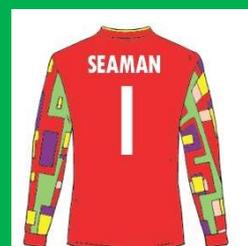
Goal scoring keepers sound slightly heroic and on that theme we look at some of the cult heroes of the game that aren't so familiar on these shores and why they are held in such high esteem.

We at The Halfway Line strive to be the best we can and we take inspiration from the most successful players in our era, and we take a look at the best of the best in this issue. All that, plus loads more new content as well as the usual features such as Best Nations XI, Forgotten XI, Classic Kits, the Treatment room and loads more.

Take a seat, put your Panini swapsies down, turn off Championship Manager 97/98 and hit the back of the net with Issue #3.



David Seaman – The second most capped English goalkeeper (75 Caps). Won every domestic trophy with Arsenal.



The Halfway Line Up

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Gary Neville – Won 8 Premier League titles, 3 FA Cups, 2 Champions Leagues, an Intercontinental Cup, a FIFA Club World Cup and 2 League Cups.



GOAL SCORING GOALKEEPERS!

You know the feeling: Your team are a goal down, and the game is into the last minute of the 90. You have been banging on the door, peppering the goal but no break through as yet. You lose this game and you're out the cup or title race, or perhaps worse, heading for the doom of relegation. One more attack and it's out for a corner. Your goalkeeper, who is hovering by *the halfway line* looks over to the bench, looking for the nod of approval. The manager looks at his watch, then up at the scoreboard, the crowd are screaming for the authorisationthere is a moment of silence...he nods! The crowd roars with excitement! The goalkeeper begins his jog up to the penalty area. The defending Centre back screams at his attacker to mark the on coming keeper. The buzz of excitement in the stadium is contagious and the TV commentator is losing his marbles with mystic meg style predictions of the outcome.

The ball is floated in, there is a knock on, and.....time stands still.

It's either Hollywood, or dead wood.

Lets be honest, we know the answer 99% of the time. The flick on his caught by the defending goalkeeper. He has a 5 second moment when he, and the crowd think if he launches it, he can score himself as the goal he sees is undefended!!

Sanity prevails, the goalkeeper makes a slightly exaggerated grab of the football, and falls to his knees in a further action to defend the ball.

30 seconds are killed, the ball is then launched into the air and the referee blows the final whistle. The dream is over.

(The 1% is Jimmy Glass and is worth an article in itself, a Hollywood production and an Oscar at least!!)



That for me describes the stereotypical scenario played out when I think about a goal scoring goalkeeper. However that is in stark contrast to what actually happens in reality, certainly in the Premier League at least.



Roberto Carlos – At Real Madrid he won 4 La Liga's and 3 Champions Leagues. With 125 caps he has made the second most appearances for Brazil.



In the Premier League, there have been 5 occasions where a goalkeeper has scored.

The first 'keeper ever to achieve the feat was **Peter Schmeichel** playing for Aston Villa in October 2001. As expected, he was up for a corner in the 90th minute, and he connected sweetly with a volley. However Villa were 3-1 down at the time and this only narrowed the margin of defeat. No stranger to hitting the back of the net, Schmeichel scored 11 times in his career including a goal for Manchester United in a European tie and a strike for the Danish national team, in a friendly against Belgium in 2000.

The second goalkeeper to score in the Premier league also did it in the 90th minute with his team chasing the game. **Brad Friedel**, having played over 650 career clubs games, picked his moment equalising for Blackburn Rovers against Charlton Athletic, at the Valley in February 2004. Friedel's side footed finish looked to have secured a 2-2 finish for Rovers, but amazingly Charlton went down the other end to score a winner.

So the first 2 goalkeeper goals were last minute goals, but neither rescued their teams. The three that followed were also pretty undramatic, none were in the final minutes and they didn't even have the common courtesy to get into the opponents half, let alone the oppositions penalty area. **Paul Robinson**, **Tim Howard** and **Asmir Begovic** all struck long distance 'punts' that made there way into the goal in 2007 for Tottenham Hotspur, 2012 for Everton and 2013 for Stoke City respectively.



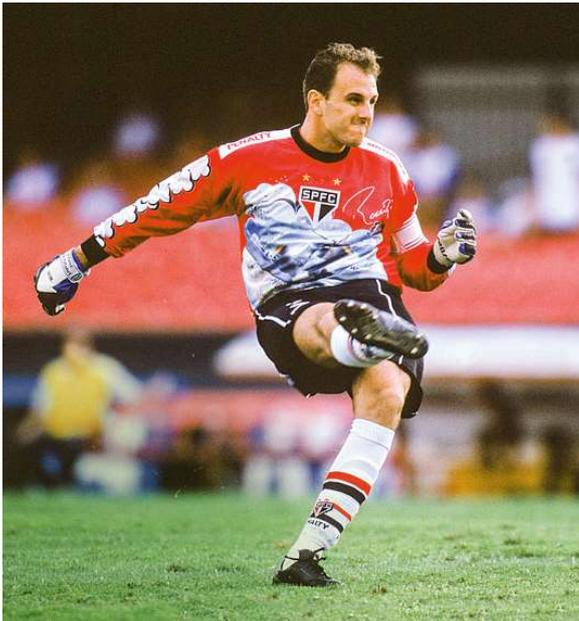
Paul Robinson does get a second mention. He once scored a 90th minute equaliser for Leeds United in a League Cup fixture, against Swindon that forced extra time and penalties, in which he contributed saves in, meaning Leeds progressed to the next round.

Slightly more Hollywood, but none of these guys are even close to what we have to come.



Javier Zanetti – The foreign player with the most appearances in Serie A (615) and 4th on the overall Serie A appearance list.





Rogério Ceni

The Brazilian Rogério Ceni, who lists a World Cup Winners medal under his honours, is quite the footballer.

In his 25 years as a professional (he retired in 2015) he racked up a reported 1,234 games! We are no historians but our research suggests only fellow goalkeeper Peter Shilton played more (1,390).

Shilton managed one goal in his career, but Ceni beats him on that list, and everyone else for that matter.

Ceni, a free-kick and penalty expert scored an incredible **129** goals in his career!!!

The enigmatic shot stopper, and of course goal scorer, holds other records as well. Most goals scored ever by a goalkeeper, which of course is why he is featured in this article, as well as the number of games played for the same club and number of times as captain. He once donned the number 618 shirt on the back of his shirt to commemorate the number of games he had played for Sao Paulo.

At the time this was the highest number ever worn in professional football match until 2015 (see page number 25).

All but 20 of his club career games were played for Sao Paulo, and he also holds the record of the most amount of wins for one club, over taking a certain Ryan Giggs in the process.

In a 3 season spell between 2005 and 2007 Ceni scored an incredible 47 times in 210 games. In the 2005 season he scored a career high 21 times! Not a fair comparison as the competition structure is different in South America but in his entire career Michael Owen never once broken the 20 league goals barrier.

He won the lot with Sao Paulo, and they retired his '01' shirt upon his retirement. He managed only 16 international caps for Brazil and his goal scoring feats for club were never matched on the international stage, but a true legend for his achievements and goals.



Sergio Busquets – He and Carles (his father) became the 3rd father/son combo to have both won Europe's top competition playing for the same team. (Barcelona)
(Sanchis for Madrid and Maldini for Milan and now the Zidane's for Madrid)



Jose Luis Chilavert



The aged old saying, you have to be mad to be a goalkeeper may well be one of the more accurate sayings in football, and Jose Luis Chilavert did nothing to try and break the mould. El Bulldog ("The Bulldog") shared similar traits to Ceni. Both were actually very good goalkeepers, but both also could hit a mean dead ball. Chilavert too, was a free kick and penalty specialist.

Chilavert was also very successful in his career, alongside a few flirts with controversy but that was part of his personality. Chilavert scored an impressive 67 goals. What sees him differ from Ceni is this was across South America, Europe and internationally. Chilavert scored goals during his (brief) European adventure with Real Zaragoza and Strasbourg, but was far better known in his native Paraguay and in Argentina, where he won the Copa Libertadores with Velez Sársfield in 1994.



Whilst at Velez, he managed to score a hat-trick in one game (all penalties) and a pretty memorable goal, a direct free kick from his own half, against rivals River Plate (worth a google).

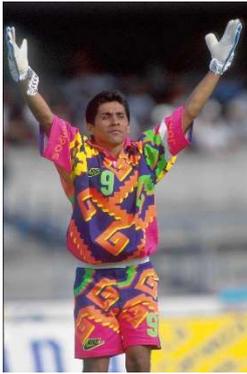
He also managed to score 8 goals for Paraguay (7 in World Cup qualifiers) and was agonisingly close to becoming the first goalkeeper to score in a World Cup final tournament.

Some conciliation he was named in the FIFA Team of the tournament for the 1998 competition, adding to his title of South American Footballer of the year 1996.



Franco Baresi – Won Serie A with AC Milan in 1987/88 conceding only 14 goals and one it again in 1993/94 conceding only 15 goals!





Jorge Campos



So we have covered the top goal scoring goalkeepers, who got goals through their ability at dead ball situations. Next up is the colourful Jorge Campos. The Mexican didn't just like to score goals, but he actually thought himself as a striker! So much so when he was not a first choice No.1 he would make himself available for the number 9 shirt! Even on occasions when he was in goal, if his team were struggling, management would put Campos up front in order to get a goal!

Campos, when called upon, managed a respectable 34 goals in his career. No mean feat whatsoever. You can see from the pictures top right and bottom left, he even took the number 9 jersey at times. It was the jersey that also defined Campos' career as he was quite often more know for his colourful choice of goalkeeper 'outfits' as opposed



to his goalkeeping skills and with the sponsorship deal with sports giants Nike he was often part of the company's advertising campaigns.

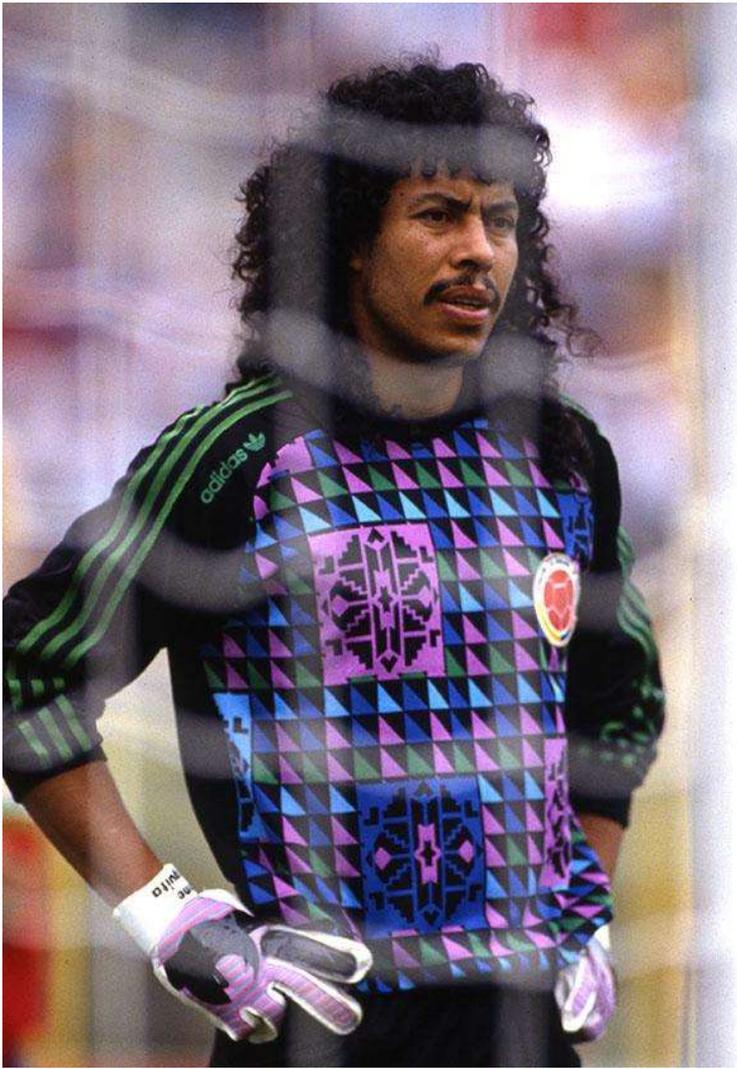
Take nothing away from Campos however as you don't win 130 international caps and play in 2 World Cups if you aren't a great footballer.

Despite his relatively small frame Campos was an acrobatic goalkeeper who's eccentric approach to the game was somewhat refreshing and a welcome change to the 'norm.'



Son Heung-min – When signing for Tottenham Hotspur in 2015 from Bayer Leverkusen for £22million he became the most expensive Asian player ever.





Rene Higuita

Spot the common theme? North American & South American goalkeepers take this goal scoring malarkey quite seriously!

We've covered dead ball specialists and split personality positional players, but with Rene Higuita, 'El Loco' (the madman) we have the original Sweeper Keeper. Manuel Neuer has nothing on the Colombian!!

Higuita had no issue roaming from his 18 yard box, quite often spending time out of the penalty box waiting to break up attacks and more often than not, starting his own team's attack.

Higuita spent the majority of his career in his native Colombia, venturing briefly to Spain to play for Real Valladolid.

When playing in Colombia, and for the Colombian national team, Higuita struck an impressive **41** times.

Though it is not always the goals that spring to mind when remembering Higuita's career. His first time in the world's limelight was during the 1990 Italian World Cup finals. In first round of the knock out stages, attempting his usual sweeper style, he was dispossessed by Cameroon's Roger Milla, who promptly scored and knocked Colombia out of the competition.

Some five years later, at Wembley Stadium, in an international friendly, Higuita cleared an English cross with the now famous 'Scorpion Kick' and further cemented his name in football folk law.



Teddy Sheringham – Holds the record as the oldest outfield player to appear in a Premier League match (40 years, 272 days) and oldest to score.



So we have covered the Premier League, the World's best, (covering North and South America in the process) but what about the rest of Europe? Are there hidden goal scoring goalkeepers that you didn't know of?

One we would assume yes and one perhaps no...



Hans-Jorg Butt, the German shot stopper was a mean marksman from 12 yards out.

Throughout his career he managed to slot home 32 career goals from the spot. 3 of those penalties were in the European Champions League, a record for a goalkeeper in that competition and by an odd twist of fate, they were all scored against Juventus, notching twice past Gianluigi Buffon and once past Edwin Van Der Sar.



The leading European goal scoring goalkeeper and seemingly forth on the all time list of scoring number 1's, is a certain **Dimitar Ivankov**. The Bulgarian played and scored for Levski Sofia, Kayserispor and Bursaspor during his career and totalled 42 goals, being a regular scorer from the penalty spot.



Luis Suarez – Has won 2 European Golden Shoes, an Eredivisie Golden Boot, a Premier League Golden Boot and the La Liga equivalent, the Pichichi.



Jimmy Rimmer uses 'UHLSPORT' gloves.

Jimmy Rimmer

Obtainable from your
local sportshop.



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Lothar Matthaus – Holds the record for the most World Cup matches played by a single player – 25 games, across 5 FIFA World Cups (a joint record also).



Most Premier League appearances

Player	Apps
G Barry	633
R Giggs	532
F Lampard	600
D James	572
G Speed	535
E Heskey	516

Played no games
Premier League stars XI



Pavel Nedved – Won the Ballon d’Or in 2003, the first Czech player to receive the honour since the break up of Czechoslovakia.



No Premier League Game stars XI

To qualify for this XI, the player must have signed for a Premier League club in the past but for some reason never played a Premier League game for them. Players may have previously played, or gone on to play Premier League games but not for the clubs featured here that they signed for.

Richard Wright – Manchester City: 2012 - 2016. Signed having left Preston North End (no appearances due to home sickness), he signed for Manchester City and made a total of zero league appearances for the entire 4 years at the club.

Rob Jones – West Ham United: July 1999 – August 1999. The former Liverpool and England right back joined West Ham United in the July of 1999 then sadly had to retire the following month with a recurrence of a knee injury, ultimately ending his career.

David Unsworth – Aston Villa: July 1998. Left West Ham United in the summer of 1998 to move closer to Merseyside for family reasons. Lasted less than a month, as moved to be even closer to Merseyside and re-signed for his old club Everton before the season had even started.

Slobodan Rajkovic – Chelsea: 2007 - 2011. Highly thought of Serbian defender, signed for £2million as a 16 year old. During his Chelsea career he remained ineligible for either a work permit or an EU passport and never made an appearance.

Robert Jarni – Coventry: July 1998. Moved to Coventry City after the World Cup, signing for £2.6 million from Real Betis, however when Real Madrid decided they wanted the player, they successfully bought him for £3.4 million in the same month with Jarni having made no appearances whatsoever for Coventry City.

Aaron Mooy – Manchester City: 2016-2017. Manchester City signed Mooy from a 'sister club' Melbourne City and then immediately loaned out the player, whose successful spell at Huddersfield Town resulted in a permanent transfer some 12 months later.

Saphir Taider – Southampton: August 2014 – September 2014. Loan swap with Dani Osvaldo to Inter Milan, who then left the club less than a month later without making a single first team appearance having failed to live up to the high levels of commitment expected.

Dietmar Hamann– Bolton Wanderers: 11th July 2006 – 12th July 2006. He joined Bolton for less than one day before a move to Manchester City after a change of heart!

Joey Beauchamp – West Ham United: July 1994 – August 1994. Decided he couldn't stand the traffic travelling from Oxford each day and a mere 58 days later he was signed by Swindon Town, the club that had sold him!

Wellington Silva – Arsenal: 2010 – 2016. Six years at the club. Having waited 5 years to get a work permit, he finally got one and as a reward was sent to Bolton Wanderers on loan, and when he came back, he was sold back to Brazil with not a single Arsenal appearance made.

Matias Vuoso – Manchester City: 2002-2004. – Signed for £3.5 million to strengthen the Manchester City attack in their return to the Premier League and promptly moved back on loan the following season without featuring for the first team and never did.



Bryan Robson – Moved to Manchester United from West Bromwich Albion for a British record transfer fee in 1981, for a fee of £1.5 million.





THE BOOT ROOM

Some footballers are synonymous with a particular club, or a football kit and some even a particular tournament. But some, certainly here at The Halfway Line, can be associated with a pair of football boots. Hell, if you are good enough you may even get a football boot made after you.

Warriors go into battle and arm themselves with a weapon. Footballers are no different and some of the weapons of choice are absolute things of beauty.

Everyone will have their favourites, and some will even go a little off-piste and away from the popular choices.

*

For every Adidas wearer (David Beckham) there is a Diadora wearer (Roberto Baggio)

*

For every Nike wearer (Francesco Totti) there is a Mizuno wearer (Rivaldo)

*

And for every Puma wearer (Paul Gascoigne) there is a Reebok wearer (Ryan Giggs)

We are simply going to pick our favourites for this issue and if the desire is there, we can make this a feature for our readers going forward.



Thomas Muller – Was the joint top goal scorer at the 2010 World Cup with 5 goals and won the Golden Boot with 3 assists also. (Was 2nd top scorer in 2014)



We shall make no apologies for our choices.

Take us to McDonald's and we'll order a Big Mac. At the Ice Cream van we are ordering a Mr. Whippy. We are old school and our first football boot choices reflect this, and we are cheating as well by including 2 within 1.

The Adidas World Cup and the Adidas Copa Mundial



The Copa Mundial (Spanish for World Cup) football boot was released in 1979. They were designed for the 1982 FIFA World Cup held in Spain. Variations to the boot include the Adidas World Cup, which has screw-in studs for soft ground.

The simple design is so effective and makes such an attractive boot to look at, modelled here by Franz Beckenbauer.



José María Gutiérrez Hernández – 'Guti' played over 500 games for Real Madrid, yet surprisingly only won 13 international caps for Spain.



The Halfway Line's second submission into the Boot Room is a more modern boot, but we are still staying in the 20th century. We are also staying with simple but effective approach.

The Nike Tiempo.



The 1994 version of this classic were first seen during the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the United States. Nike supplied boots to ten of the players in the final between Italy and Brazil, including to Paolo Maldini and Romario seen bottom left. As with the Copa Mundial boot, the design is so simple but effective. The Nike Swoosh and over sized fold over tongue the 2 stand out features of this timeless classic.



Gareth Barry – Made 653 Premier League appearances for Aston Villa, Manchester City, Everton and W.B.A, this is the record number of appearances.



The Premier League Greatest XI Nationalities

Featured here are the greatest line ups that only include players from one nation. In the this issue we are looking at Republic of Ireland, Holland, Belgium and Portugal.



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 the 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. It should be noted, the feature sticks to a rigid 4-4-2 formation and won't be changed to fit in players of the same position.

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



Fabian Barthez – Is France's most capped player at the World Cup finals (17) and holds the joint record for most clean sheets (10) at the tournament.



REPUBLIC OF IRELAND XI

The Emerald Isle has given the Premier League a huge amount of talent since it's inception in 1992. Selecting just 11 of them has proved challenging. Some positions have taken care of themselves, whereas others have caused some of the more lengthy debates amongst friends in this feature.

In goal the debate was actually short. As you could argue was Shay Given for a goalkeeper. Solid Premier League career and hugely impressive shot stopper, saw in excess of 350 appearances at club level and 134 caps for Ireland. No great challengers to Given in goal, aside perhaps Alan Kelly in the early years.

Analysing the defence and you see what depth the nation side had at right back. Gary Kelly, Steve Finnan, Stephen Carr and Jeff Kenna all performed at the highest level, but the starting berth goes to Seamus Coleman who must also feature in the top Premier League bargains! The centre back pairing of Paul McGrath and Richard Dunne were hard pressed against the likes of John O'Shea, Kenny Cunningham and Gary Breen, but ones class, and ones consistency were enough to securing starting spots. Left back goes to Mr. Consistency Denis Irwin, beating off the free-kick specialist Ian Harte.

Right midfield was tough, and perhaps because no clear outstanding candidate. Aiden McGeady and Ray Houghton offered inputs at very different times in the League, but we are going with Jason McAteer, massively influenced by his strike against the Dutch (2001).

Who to play alongside Roy Keane in the middle of the park is no easy task. Matty Holland and Lee Carsley were sturdy if not crowd pleasers, but Andy Townsend gets the 8 shirt. Wing wizard and Premier League winner Damien Duff plays left and supplies the front two of Robbie Keane and Niall Quinn.

John Walters, Shane Long & Kevin Doyle did a job, but the top 2 pick themselves.



Pedro Rodriguez – In the 2009-10 season he become the first player in history to score in 6 different official club competitions in one season.





Paul Scholes – With Manchester United he won 25 trophies including 11 Premier League titles, the most for any Englishman.



HOLLAND XI

In the last issue we argued the French XI was world class, and I see the Dutch XI giving them a close battle. Some of those to grace our shores have set the bar in terms of performance levels.

In goal, perhaps the only frustration was the time it took him to join a top English team. Edwin Van Der Sar finally saw Sir Alex Ferguson replace Peter Schmeichel. Giant of a player in every sense.

The full backs are perhaps the weakest links in the team. Mario Melchiot takes the right back spot ahead of the likes of Michael Reiziger and Daryl Janmaat and Patrick Van Aanholt's goal threat puts him ahead of Daley Blind and the sadly injury prone Gio van Bronckhurst at left back.

The 2 centre backs, at the time of their peaks could argue at being the best in the world in their position. Jaap Stam and Virgil Van Dijk were/are the definition of defensive rocks. No one comes close, unless perhaps you play a sweeper and allow Ruud Gullit to play.

On the wings you can only express sympathy for the defending full backs. Arjen Robben and Marc Overmars had the pace and goal threat to challenge the very best of them. Both headed to Spain '*too quickly*' for our liking.

Defensive midfield is held by George Boateng who's total number of league appearances may surprise you, but his total bookings count will not. Nigel De Jong a challenger here, along with Gigi Wijnaldum.

Attacking centre midfield goes to Dennis Bergkamp. Traditionally a number 10, and at complete ease as a striker but either or, an absolute genius of the game and that *Newcastle goal* will live forever in the memory. Rafael Van Der Vaart's cameo at Spurs was impressive, but no one beats the iceman.

Up front there are oodles of choices, but I think the purists will agree on the two selected. Robin Van Persie, the 2 time golden boot winner beats another 2 time winner in Jimmy Floyd-Hasselbaink. The rocket of a left foot and timely move to Manchester United puts him alongside another Old Trafford great, Ruud Van Nistelrooy, perhaps the most natural goal scorer to have graced the Premier League.

So ruthless and unforgiving in front of goal and this puts him ahead of other contenders such as Dirk Kuyt and Bryan Roy.



Paul Gascoigne – 'Gazza' went to the 1990 Italian World Cup with England without ever previously having started a competitive international game.





Miguel Ángel Ferrer Martínez - 'Mista' signed for Valencia in 2001, and was a member of the successful sides that won two league titles and the 2004 UEFA Cup, where he scored the second goal in the 2–0 win against Marseille.



BELGIUM XI

The Belgium XI would look remarkably different if not for the influx of players post 2008, and the emergence of the Red Devils as one of the best international teams at the time of writing.

In goal it has to be Thibaut Courtois. Simon Mignolet excelled at Sunderland with the reward of a move to Anfield, but the stature of Courtois is the mould for the modern game goalkeeper.

The flat back four is exactly that! 4 centre backs, where the full backs take their positions as they do for the national team due to their superiority from competition. Toby Alderweireld and Thomas Vermaelen, who are both excellent centre backs and have proved that in their time in North London, perhaps benefit from the Ajax up bringing and fill in at full back to accommodate the 2 monsters in the middle. Vincent Kompany, another in the absolute bargain category has captained Manchester City to 4 league titles and firmly established himself as a club and Premier League legend, and lines up alongside Jan Vertonghen who holds the countries international caps record. The old guard of Philippe Albert can feel hard done by, even if it is based entirely on a chip over Peter Schmeichel from 25 yards.

Kevin Mirallas ousts Nacer Chadli for the right midfielder spot. It always felt that he was one season away from a move to a top 5 club, but it never materialised. The central midfield partnership of Marouane Fellaini and Mousa Dembele means opponents will seldom win aerial or ground battles! Youri Tieleman's start at Leicester City sees him as a real contender for future XIs. Attacking in from the left could be the Premier League's best player right now in Kevin De Bruyne. Can dictate a game at his own pace and his ability to pick out an assist is 'devilish.'

Up front you have another 2 former Chelsea players in Romelu Lukaku and Eden Hazard. The former has seen Premier League clubs spent over £100 million on his services with a return of 113 goals in just over 250 games, and the latter carried the baton of the best footballer in the league for the majority of his tenure in West London.

Fellow attackers, the likes of Origi, Benteke, Batshuayi and Januzaj could only dream of such outputs and contributions.



Philipp Lahm – Captained Germany to their first World Cup Finals victory since their reunited state. Their first 3 victories were as West Germany.





Gael Clichy – One of only 10 players to have won the Premier League with 2 different clubs. Was the youngest winner of the Premier League before Phil Foden won it.



PORTUGAL XI

Wolverhampton Wanderers promotion in 2018 was very timely in respect to this particular XI. They currently have 8 Portuguese first team players in their squad, with an additional 2 out on loan.

Wolves actually do not feature that prominently, but they do provide the goalkeeper. Rui Patricio has looked the real deal between the sticks at Molineux although there is not a great deal of competition.

As with the Republic of Ireland XI earlier on, right back you could argue is the strongest in terms of depth. Competition reads Abel Xavier, Ricardo Pereira, Cedric and Jose Bosingwa but the position goes to Paulo Ferreira, the quiet but effective full back during Jose Mourinho's most successful period at Chelsea.

Joining him in the team at centre back for the same reasons is Ricardo Carvalho, a calming presence alongside John Terry during his tenure at the Bridge. He plays alongside Jose Fonte, who performed admirably at Southampton, deserving his chance having joined the club as a League One side. At left back there is not a great deal of choice but take nothing away from Nuno Valente who played at Everton for 4 seasons.

The wide men in the midfield are Nani and Bernardo Silva. Two different players from both sides of Manchester but you wouldn't be shy of assists with these 2 in the side. In terms of longevity, Luis Boa Morte can feel hard done by not to get a starting berth.

Ruben Neves, of Wolves, plays ahead of club team mate Joao Moutinho who we feel could have offered the league a great deal more had he joined earlier in his career. Pedro Mendes takes the second central spot ahead of the more attacking Deco. Mendes, a key player in the Portsmouth revival did the jobs the flair players don't like doing. Also see Tiago, but just not as consistent.

Up front the question is who plays alongside Cristiano Ronaldo? Not just because his standard is so high, but there is an extreme lack of options!

Eder was on the books of Swansea City when he hit the winning goal in the Euros, but he never scored a goal in the Premier League.

Helder Postiga was woeful during his time at Spurs, Jorge Cadete never turned up for Bradford City and Paolo Futre did at West Ham but only to take John Moncur's shirt number!

As we did at the start, we'll revert to Wolves, and play Diogo Jota upfront to play the support role for CR7.



Sol Campbell – In 2006 he became the only player to have represented England in 6 consecutive major tournaments, playing in the 1996, 2000 & 2004 Euros and the 1998, 2002 & 2006 World Cups.





Ali Daei – He is currently the world's all time leading goal scorer in the history of men's international football with 109 goals scored for Iran (how long to go Cristiano?)



Quirky happenings in the world of football.



Alvin Martin – In 1986 the West Ham centre back achieved quite the unique hat-trick. The 3 goals he scored against Newcastle United were all against different goalkeepers!!!



April, 1997, Chelsea turned up to Highfield Road to take on Coventry City, oblivious to the fact their kit would clash with Coventry's. With no spare on the team coach, they wore the home teams away kit for the fixture!!



Colombian playmaker Giovanni Hernández playing for Junior F.C. at the time, wore the number 800 in 2012 to commemorate his 800th appearance in professional football, against Independiente Medellín. He scored the only goal in a 1–0 win. This now stands as the highest number worn in an official competitive match.

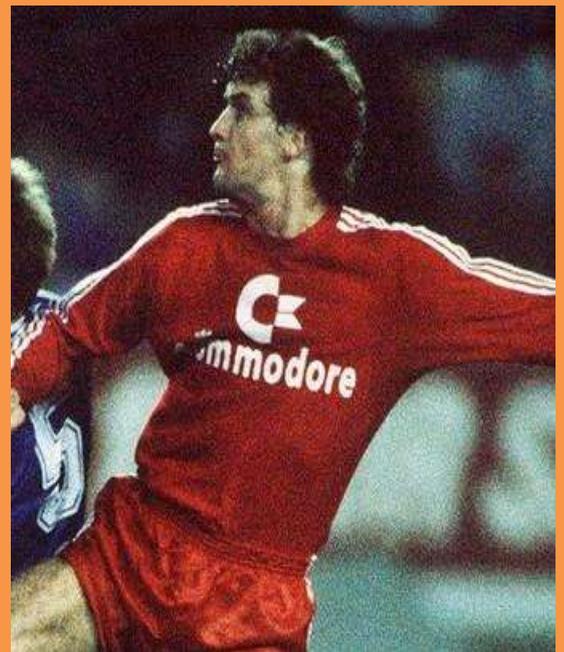


Peter Crouch – One of an elite group of players to have scored 100 or more Premier League goals and holds the record for most number of headed goals in the Premier League.



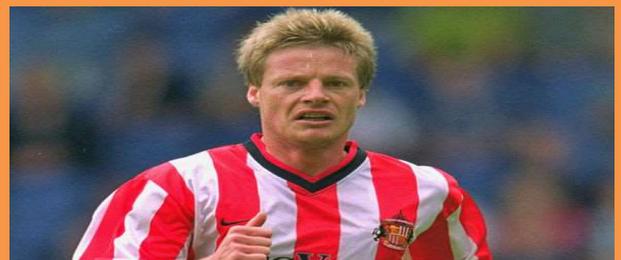


On 11 November 1987 Mark Hughes played matches for Wales **and** Bayern Munich in two countries on the **same day**. An important qualifier for Wales was on the same day as a cup match for Bayern to which he travelled to by private jet and came on in the second half!



In a team building effort and a show of comradery, the Romanian World Cup squad in 1998 upon qualifying for the knock out stages died their hair bleach blonde. 2 observations from The Halfway Line on this. Firstly we don't think it worked, as they were knocked out in the last 16 game and secondly, did the follicly challenged keeper mind?

When Stefan Schwarz signed for Sunderland, the club became aware he was interested in space travel, and therefore placed a clause in his contract forbidding him travelling into space whilst employed by the Black Cats!!



Riyad Mahrez – Along with Gael Clichy and 8 others, has won the Premier League with 2 different clubs, becoming the second African to achieve this, after Kolo Toure.



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 have a slightly retro kit make and design and focusing on two makes in particular.



Kappa and Hummel



Is there anything more satisfying on a football kit then seeing the Hummel arrows pointing down on the shirt sleeve, or the repetitive pattern of the Kappa sign down the arms of the shirt combined with the side of the shorts? No, we quite agree there isn't.

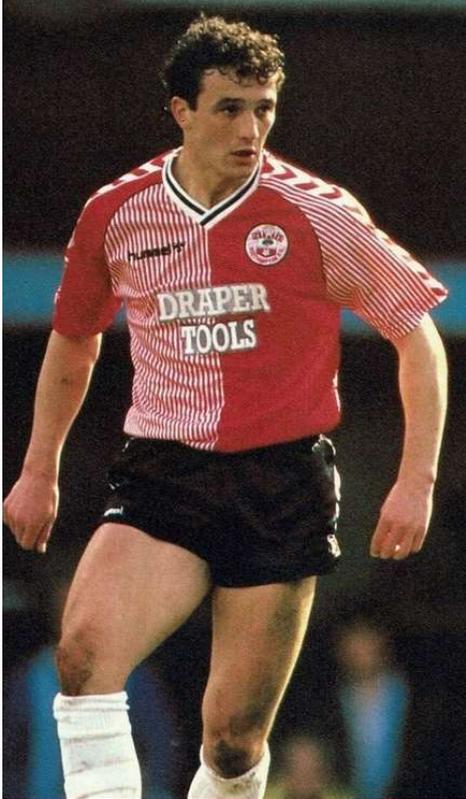
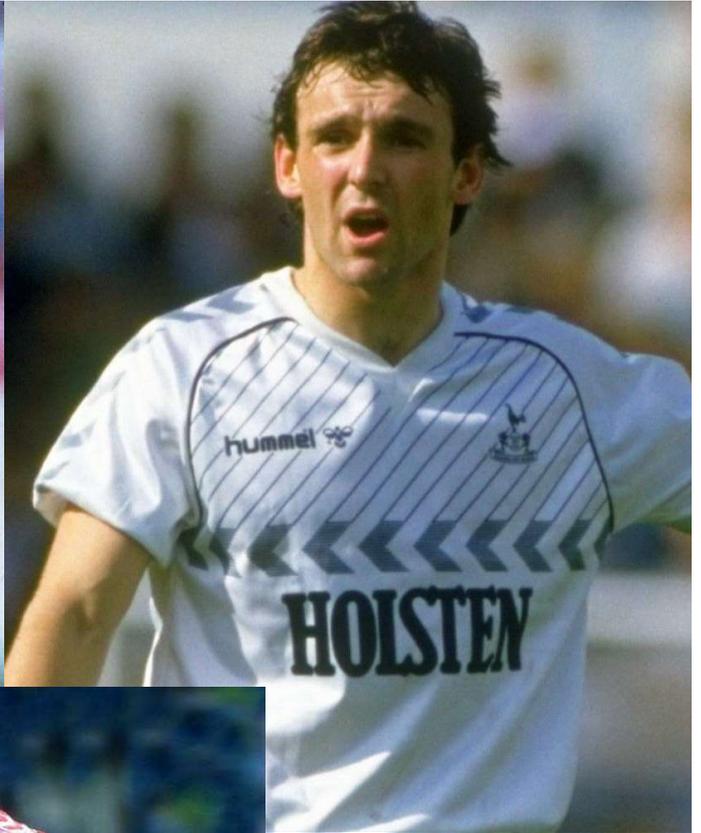
Hummel in the 1980's was rife, and we see it in the following examples of the Danish nation team, English club sides like Tottenham Hotspur, Southampton, Aston Villa, Sunderland, Wimbledon and Coventry City and of course European giants Real Madrid. The style was adapted in the early 1990's, again seen with Denmark and also examples shown with Benfica and Feyenoord, with less arrows but equal impact.

Kappa came later to the football kit scene, but took centre stage with the likes of Barcelona, Porto, Monaco and Juventus in terms of big European club names. Add the likes of Vasco Da Gama, Red Star Belgrade and Manchester City and the kit maker had a global presence. They sponsored more, for example Feyenoord, Roma and the Italian national team, but not with the style that we here at The Halfway Line fell in love with. See and enjoy the selection over the following pages.....



Fabio Quagliarella – In May 2019 he became Italy's all time oldest goal scorer at the age of 36 years and 54 days.





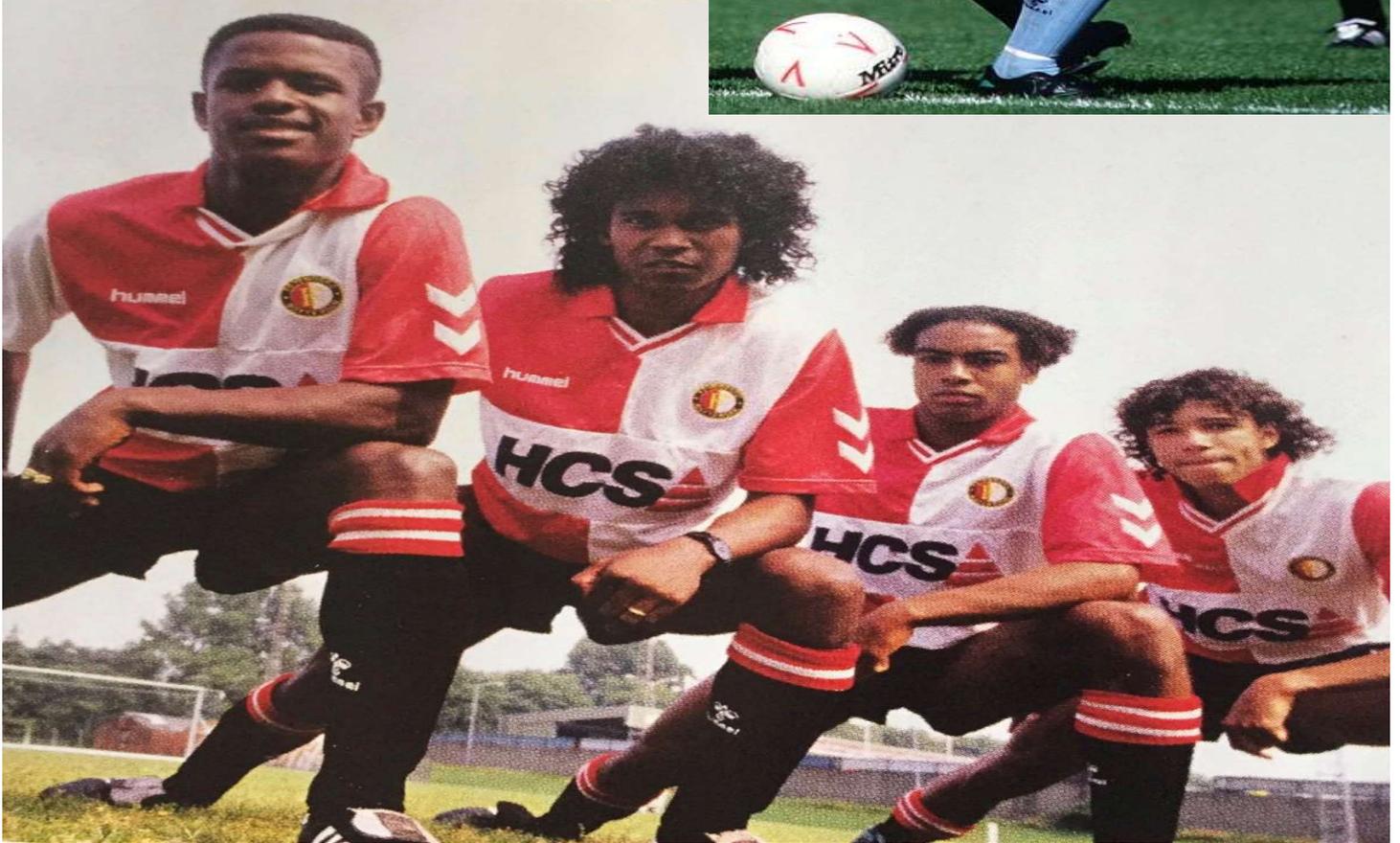
Jesper Blomqvist – Played in the 1999 Champions League final in Paul Scholes' absence but never played again for Manchester United. So one season, 38 games and a treble!



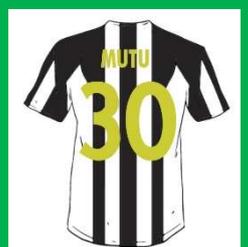


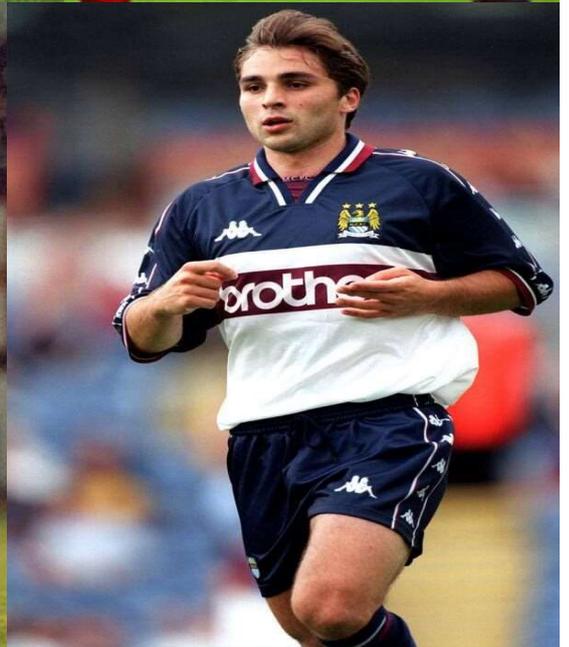
Alvaro Morata – The 17th Chelsea player to score a hat-trick in the Premier League.





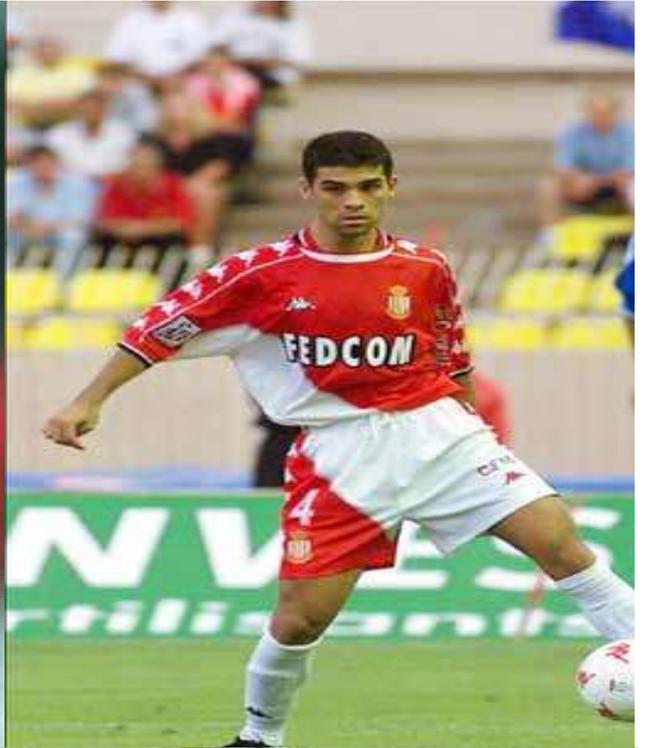
Adrian Mutu – Played 77 times for Romania and scored 35 goals, a national record, joint with a Gheorghe Hagi.





Ederson – He holds the Guinness World Record for Longest football drop kick, which he achieved after kicking the ball, 75.35 m (247 ft 2 in) across the ground.



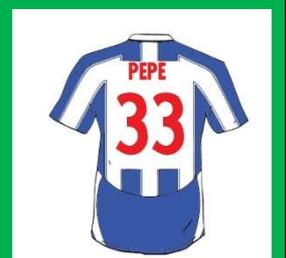


Christian Vieri – Incredible statistic that Vieri moved clubs 15 times over his career, only staying with one club for more than one season, that being Inter Milan.





Pepe – Carried with him a reputation as a dirty defender, but statistics show he never received a straight red card in his 10 year La Liga career whilst at Real Madrid.



Trevor Francis, our final test.

When we set out to design the adidas World Cup '78, we knew that we would have to create a shoe capable of meeting the demands of top professional footballers like Trevor Francis.

We knew that he would demand a shoe that was light. At 8.4 oz* it is.

The sole would have to have maximum flexibility, good running characteristics and un-matched traction. Characteristics that only two unique polyamide plastics, a special foot-bed construction and wider stud positioning could provide.

It would have to have better ball contact than ever before. So we used soft natural kangaroo leather.

We asked Trevor Francis to put the World Cup '78 to the test. The result: full marks on every count.

The adidas World Cup '78: one of the worlds best soccer shoes.

*Men's size 8 1/2.



adidas World Cup '78 and adidas Adi.

The Adi is identical to the World Cup '78 except for the uppers which are made from strong top quality oxhide.

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Andy Van Der Meyde - In 2002–03, playing alongside the likes of Mido, Zlatan Ibrahimović, Rafael van der Vaart, Wesley Sneijder, Steven Pienaar and Cristian Chivu – scored a career-best 11 goals, while also helping Ajax to the quarter finals in the UEFA Champions League.



GOAL SCORERS!



We have seen in this issue the flamboyant style of goal scoring goalkeepers and in issue #2 of The Halfway Line we went through the phenomenal goal scoring achievements of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, but here we want to profile the very best goal scorers, in the traditional sense of the word, of our era. My goodness we are blessed in the category of great number 9's and so in order to give them the coverage they deserve we have split our choice of strikers into separate categories.

We are looking at:

- The Artist
- The Poacher
- The BANG
- The All Rounder
- The Power
- The Pace
- The Tournament specialist
- The Machine
- The Master Finisher



Steven Defour - Joined Standard Liege in 2006 being appointed team captain at the start of his second year at just 19 years old. He received the Belgian Golden Shoe at the end of the season in the process, leading the *Reds* to their first league title in 25 years.





THE ARTIST

We can all draw right? We can all, in theory, play the guitar. But there are some who do it with finesse, skill and it is so easy on the eye/ear. An Artist in their field.

The same with scoring a goal on the football pitch. A born gift and the chosen ones can indeed create masterpieces.

The contenders in this category we list as Luis Suarez and Davor Suker, but the complete artist for us is Hernan Crespo.

The hugely talented Argentine arrived in Italy fresh from top scoring at the 1996 Summer Olympics and despite a slow start to his Parma career his creativity in the opponent's penalty box soon shone through. The side foot finish as the ball passes by the instep of the opposite standing foot, or the agility and grace of the overhead kick, he perfected them all. Our favourite finish of Crespo's was his first touch stabbed dink over Jerzy Dudek for his second goal in the 2005 Champions League final against Liverpool, sheer artistic class.

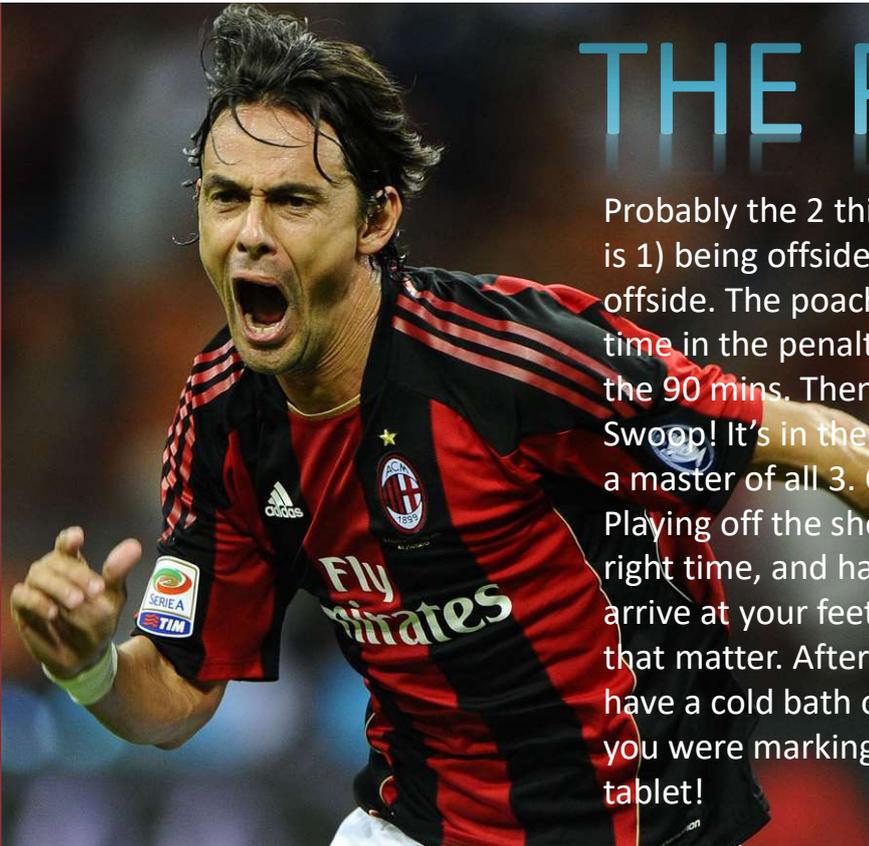


Dean Richards – Signed by Tottenham Hotspur from Southampton in 2001 for £8.1 million, a significant sum at the time for an uncapped Englishman.



THE POACHER

Probably the 2 things most associated with a Poacher is 1) being offside and 2) moaning about being caught offside. The poachers, aka the predators, spend their time in the penalty box, hibernating for large parts of the 90 mins. Then the ball comes alive in the box, and Swoop! It's in the back of the net. Filippo Inzaghi was a master of all 3. Offside, moaning and scoring! Playing off the shoulder, being in the right place at the right time, and having the knack for the ball to just arrive at your feet, head, shoulder, thigh or bum for that matter. After games of football, the players may have a cold bath or a massage, but I am guessing if you were marking Inzaghi you'd first have a headache tablet!



The pretenders to his crown I list as Mario Gomez and Hugo Sanchez. Yes, Sanchez had more to his game (loved an overhead kick) but its worth mentioning in the 1989/90 season he scored 38 league goals for Real Madrid, remarkably with all 38 being with first time finishes! That is incredible poacher like skills, but with Inzaghi's passion shown when even scoring a 1-yard tap in he is our serial goal poacher.



Roberto Pereyra - Began his career in Argentina with River Plate, then he joined Italian club Udinese in 2011, where his performances earned him a move to Juventus in 2014.



THE BANG

When it connects, you know. The striker knows, the crowd knows and the goalkeeper knows. All that's left is the net to bulge. No-one did this better than Gabriel Batistuta. A fellow Argentine to Crespo and held in even greater acclaim in Serie A. Batistuta terrorised Italian defences for more than a decade and the quality of goal, thud, whack, or strike was just about 10/10 every time. The likes of Tony Yeboah and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink are in the gang, but they are not getting close to Batistuta.



His dominance in Italy as a frontman with Fiorentina was rewarded with a move to Roma in 2000 and in partnership with Francesco Totti took home his first and only Serie A title. Although a real bang for his buck he was not just the 100mph shot man. 2 hat-tricks in 2 separate World Cup Finals put him firmly in the elite bucket and for those in doubt, ask David Seaman and Mark Bosnich what a Batistuta rocket sounds like when it whizzes by them. Both great goalkeepers beaten in home European Cup ties with absolute thunder blasters from Batistuta.



James Milner – Holds the record number of appearances for the England national under-21 football team (46) & second youngest player to score in the Premier League.

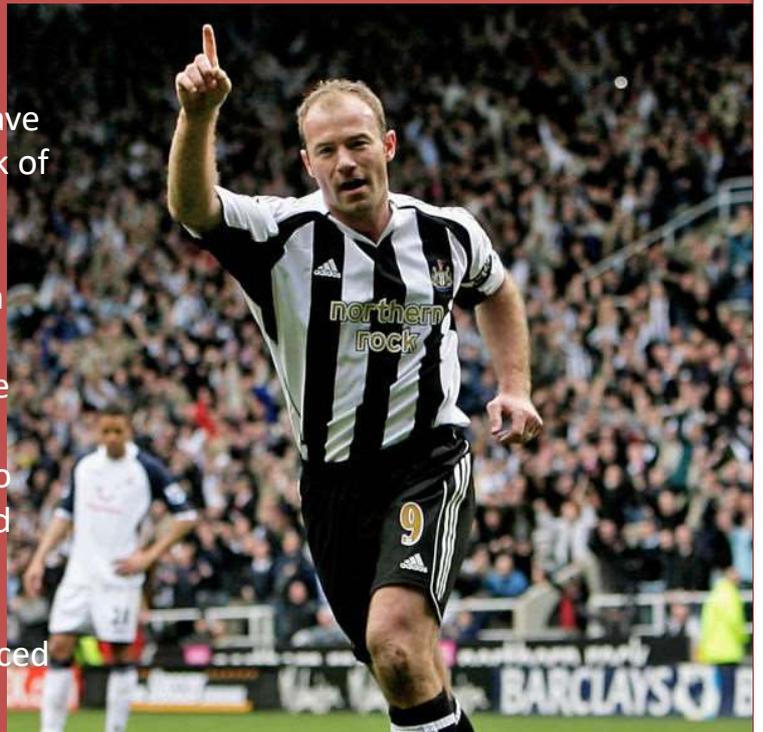


THE ALL ROUNDER



A variation from the Italian league and we make our way to the English Premier League, and the league's highest ever goal scorer, Alan Shearer. Born in the North East of England he had to earn his way back there, and he did it with incredible goal scoring prowess with Southampton, and Blackburn Rovers, firing the latter to Premier League title success, before arriving at Newcastle United. He enjoyed hero status at both Rovers and the Magpies and his goal scoring rate at the clubs was exceptional.

260 Premier League goals plus another 23 league strikes for Southampton. It should be remembered that in 1997, in what should have been his prime, Shearer missed a large chunk of the season with a serious ankle injury. We would surely be looking at a + 300 goals marksman if not for that injury. A talisman, a leader and a scorer of every type of goal. He had the mix of power, certainly the bang, the pace (pre-injury) and the artistry of a fine finisher, along with the selfishness needed to be a poacher. The likes of Edinson Cavani and Didier Drogba are fellow all-rounders. The opening game for Blackburn Rovers in the Premier League stands out for as he announced himself with two absolute crackers.



DJ Campbell – One of 9 Campbell's to have graced the English Premier League since 1992.



THE POWER

The players listed so far have predominately achieved their success in Serie A, Italy and Christian Vieri was no different albeit from a storming season in La Liga with Atletico Madrid in 1997/98. 29 goals in 32 games saw him bought right back to Italy. The build and athleticism of Vieri was striking. You could not knock him off the ball.



The strength was there in abundance through the left foot, the movement and the heading ability. In fact, his heading ability seemingly unrivalled as no other player has scored more with their head in Serie A. Known as Il Toro, the Bull, he had the ability to strike fear into defences, as of course did other power strikers like former Inter Milan front men Zlatan Ibrahimović and the Brazilian Adriano. The goal that epitomises Vieri, was for Inter Milan at the San Siro in 1999 against Parma. Simply unsavable.



Hector Bellerin – Made his debut for Arsenal in the League Cup as a substitute coming on for Mikel Arteta, who is now his manager at the club.





THE PACE

Ronaldo, the original, the ‘Phenomenon.’ Arguably the best and most naturally gifted finishers of our time. He graced football pitches with the ability to make it look as though he was playing against statues. From his arrival in Europe with PSV Eindhoven in 1994 he was the best in the world. His goals to games ratio in Holland was 0.94 and somehow, he bettered this playing in Spain for Barcelona under the guidance of the great, late Sir Bobby Robson.

Such was his pace and ability there were times it felt like he was passing to himself!! A world record move saw him switch to the notoriously tough and defensively tactical minefield of Serie A with Inter Milan. Defenders simply couldn’t cope. The only thing to beat Ronaldo was injury. A cruel double blow to his knees, saw Ronaldo miss the best part of 3 seasons. This robbed the watching football world of the best player of his generation. He came back, he won the World Cup and headed back to Spain, this time to Barcelona’s great rivals, in the Galactico era of Real Madrid. The class again shone through (see the Champions League hat-trick away to Manchester United in 2003) but he was playing probably not more than 80% of what he could have been. There is not a player we would pick above Ronaldo in a one on one with a goalkeeper. Calmness personified. He had ice in his veins. Pacey strikers, like a Thierry Henry or a Michael Owen in their prime, alongside Ronaldo won games of football for their clubs, because no one could actually catch them!



Gerard Deulofeu – In February 2019 he became the first Watford player to score a hat-trick in the Premier League.





THE TOURNAMENT SPECIALIST

Miroslav Klose is the record holder for the most goals scored at the World Cup finals. 16 goals scored across 4 World Cup tournaments. He was no slouch at club level either, with creditable goal scoring seasons at Werder Bremen securing him a move to Bundesliga giants Bayern Munich and he enjoyed an Indian summer with Lazio in Serie A (5 goals in one game as an example), but where he really came alive was at the World Cups he played in.

2002 – 5 goals. 2006 – 5 goals. 2010 – 4 goals. 2014 – 2 goals.

He won the World Cup in 2014 after a second place in 2002 and third place in 2006 & 2010.

In the 2002 tournament he became the first player to score 5 headed goals in a finals; in 2006 he won the Golden Boot; in 2010 he even managed to get sent off; and in 2014 he became only the third player to score in 4 different World Cups. After he won it in 2014, he retired and took with him the record number of goals, replacing the Brazilian Ronaldo. As he hung up his boots he did so as the highest international goal scorer for the Men's German national team, with 71 goals.

Fellow Germans' Jurgen Klinsmann and Thomas Muller (World Cups), and Portuguese striker Nuno Gomes (European Championships) excelled at multiple international tournaments but Klose gets our nod as the best in this class.



Jason Puncheon - Has scored in all of the top four divisions of English league football, scoring for Barnet in League Two, MK Dons and Southampton in League One, Millwall in the Championship and Blackpool, Southampton and Crystal Palace in the Premier League.



THE MACHINE

But for a volcanic ash cloud, our choice of player may not have made this feature. After scoring prolifically in his native Poland, Robert Lewandowski was due to fly to England and discuss a transfer to Blackburn Rovers. Planes were grounded due to an Icelandic volcano eruption and so Lewandowski stayed on the Rovers' list of near-misses, alongside Zinedine Zidane.



This didn't stop Lewandowski. Arriving at Borussia Dortmund instead, he started scoring and in reality, he hasn't stopped doing so since! The Bundesliga and the Champions League have become his playground and the efficiency and regularity of him hitting the back of the net is robotic like. The man himself describes his goal scoring like an addiction and luckily, he is seemingly programmed to score, score and score! The same computer programme must have been installed in the likes of Ruud Van Nistelrooy and Jardel in their prime. Lewandowski once famously scored 4 goals for Dortmund to knockout Real Madrid in the Champions League. That would usually be a claim to fame, but no, not for a robot. Not when you can score 5 goals in 9 minutes in a league game after coming on as a substitute some 6 minutes beforehand.



Andy Reid – He completed his move from Nottingham Forest to Tottenham on the last day of the January 2005 transfer window. He was joined by Michael Dawson for a combined fee of £8 million.



THE MASTER

In May 2007 Romario supposedly scored the 1000th goal of his career. Perhaps stating the obvious but not many have achieved this. There was an element of controversy about the total number, but when thinking about it, who cares. Let's focus on what we do know. Romario was a monster of a goal scorer. All the players we have featured or suggested as contenders all had one very obvious attribute which they shared. They scored goals, and we are talking bucket loads. Our 8 previous categories totalled over 2800 career goals winning endless games.



For us at The Halfway Line, Romario's ability to get on the scoresheet was almost alien like and that is what makes him the master. There was also something to be said where not only was he one of the best to score goals, he was also one of the best in assisting other forwards to score goals. He oozed goals and it was contagious.

From a European football fan point of view, the regret is the time, or lack of it, he spent in the 'big' leagues on this continent.



Kostas Manolas – Greek international defender was voted into Roma's team of the decade, now plying his trade for Napoli.



In the 1993/94 season, prior to the USA World Cup, Romario played 33 league games for Barcelona. In the nine seasons he was contracted to European football clubs, that is the sole occasion he broke the 30 league appearances barrier. The goal tally was never far off the appearance number, you will not be surprised to hear. For example, in those 33 La Liga games, he bagged 30 goals.

In the USA World Cup of 1994 he was player of the tournament, scored in the opening 3 games, and twice in the knock out rounds, including the winner in the semi-final. The fact they even qualified for the tournament in the first place was a direct result of Romario's goals in a qualification game against Uruguay.



Romario was agile, strong in spite of his small stature, his chest puffed out as he ran and often glided by his opposition. His quick bursts of acceleration were a feature of his career and his technique of toe-pokes taking goalkeepers by surprise a constant and successful attribute. His goal scoring record in Holland, Spain and the Brazilian national team contributed significantly to the + 1000 goals, but his majority came for Brazilian club sides. Vasco Da Gama (x4), Flamengo (x2) and Fluminense the beneficiaries with almost half of his career total scored at the 3 Rio clubs, and he sits in the top 4 top scorers ever for Vasco and Flamengo.

It is said the term legend is over used, but the master Romario is indeed that, and be it 999 goals, 1001 goals or 1000 on the nose the goal scoring prowess of the diminutive Brazilian is one to be admired, learnt from and you'd question if there'll ever be another like him.



Aleksandar Mitrović - In 2016, playing for Newcastle United, he became the sixth player in Premier League history to score a goal, assist a goal and get sent off in the same match.



RED STRIKE GOALS

In The Halfway Line Goals issue we have tried to think of inventive ways to show case great goals, which in today's world is dominated by social media and video platforms. A still frame picture does not always do a goal justice, but can capture a single moment that the reader can relate to, remembering for good or bad reasons! We have tried a different take on reliving some of our personal favourites, by simply using the Paint application on the computer! We have attempted to capture the main elements of the goal, but clearly have had to dumb some of the detail down.

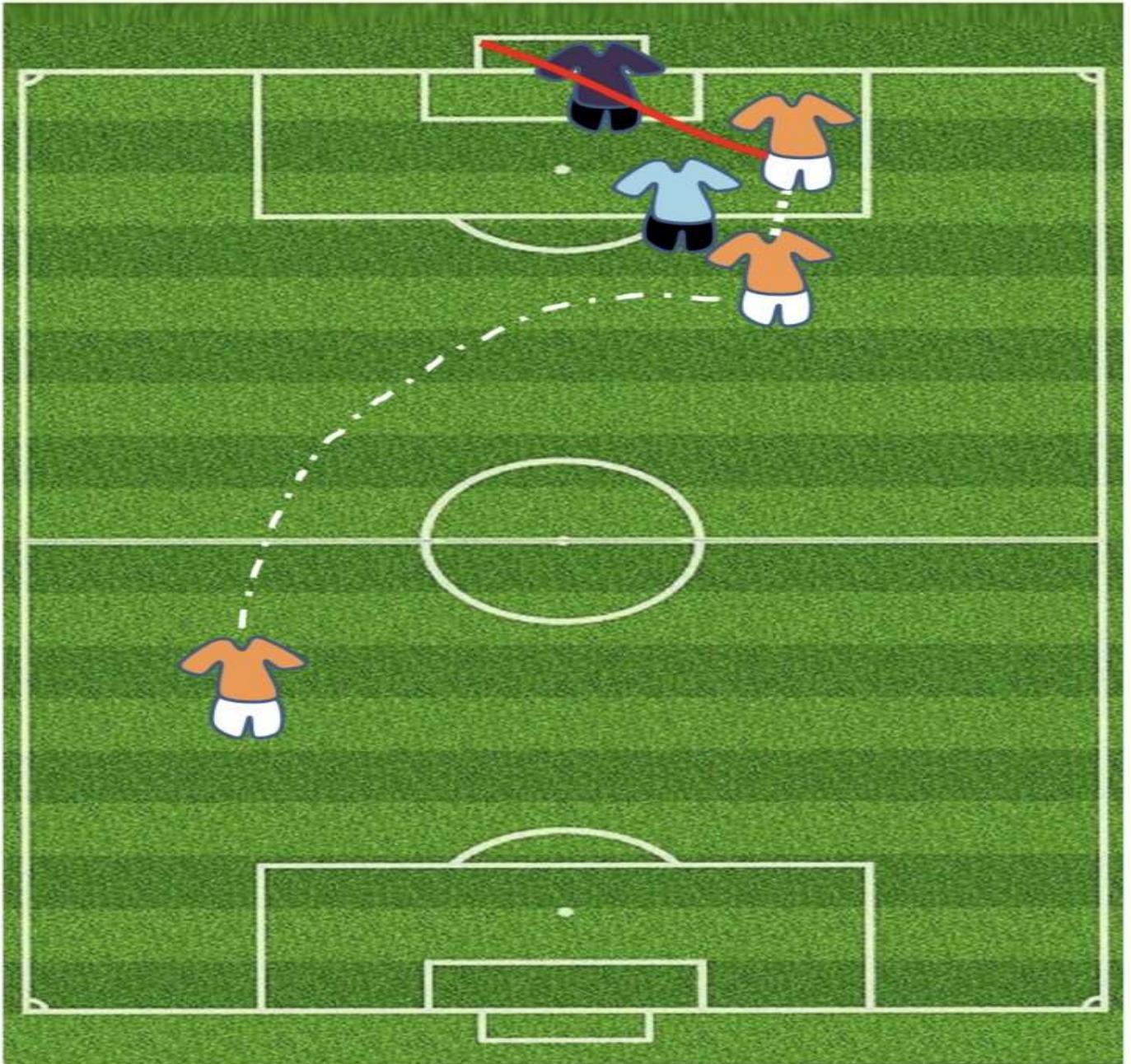
The red line in the picture represents the strike on goal that resulted in that creation of memories.

The still photos here show what the readers would normally see in the reports of the game and goals.



Barry Bannan - Began his career at Celtic before making his senior debut in 2008 for Aston Villa. In 2013, he signed for Crystal Palace, and after a brief loan to Bolton Wanderers, moved on to Sheffield Wednesday.





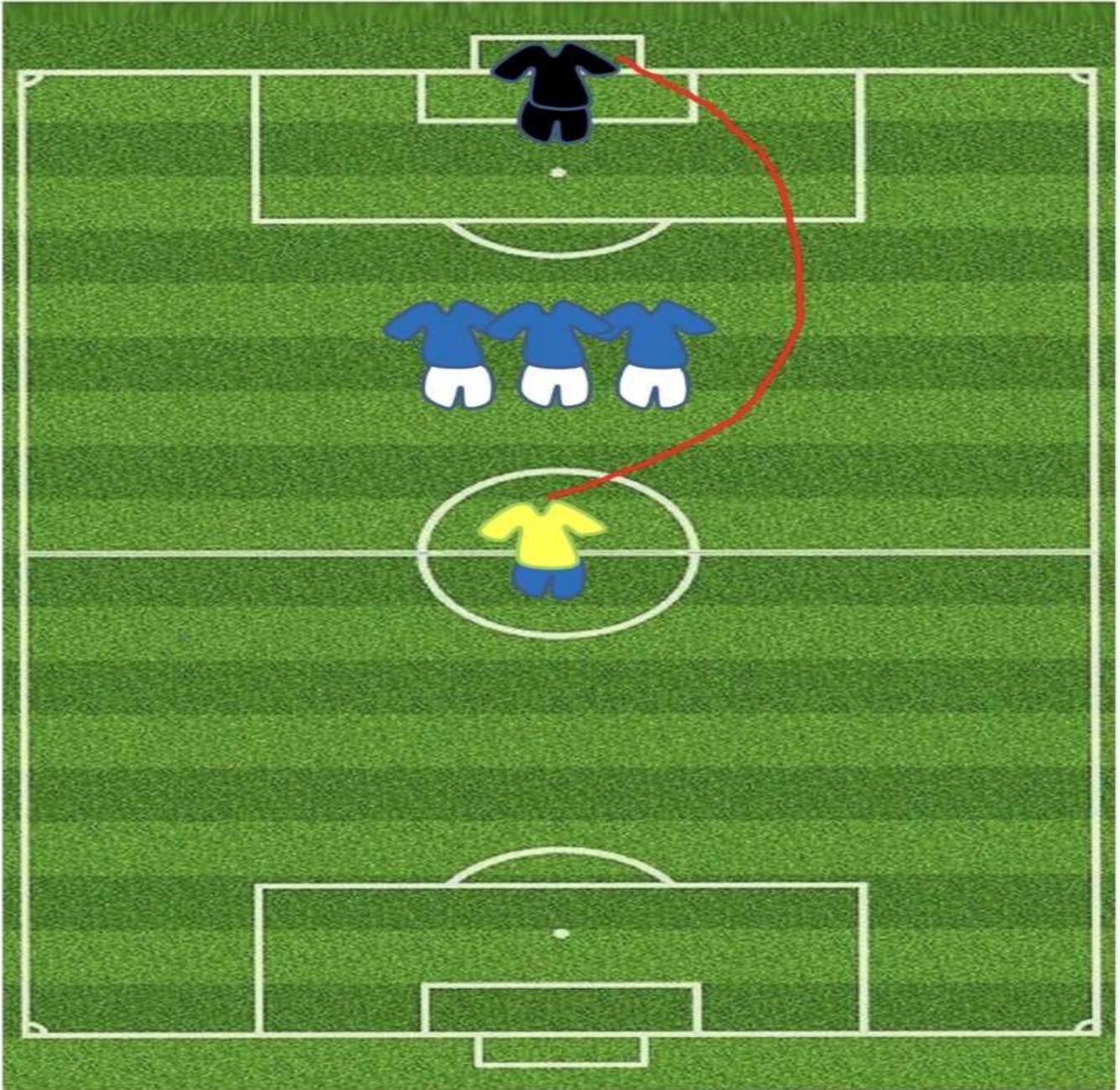
DENNIS BERGKAMP

HOLLAND VS ARGENTINA 1998



Ciaran Clark - In the season 2010/11 he became the only player in Premier League history to be booked in six successive appearances within the same season.





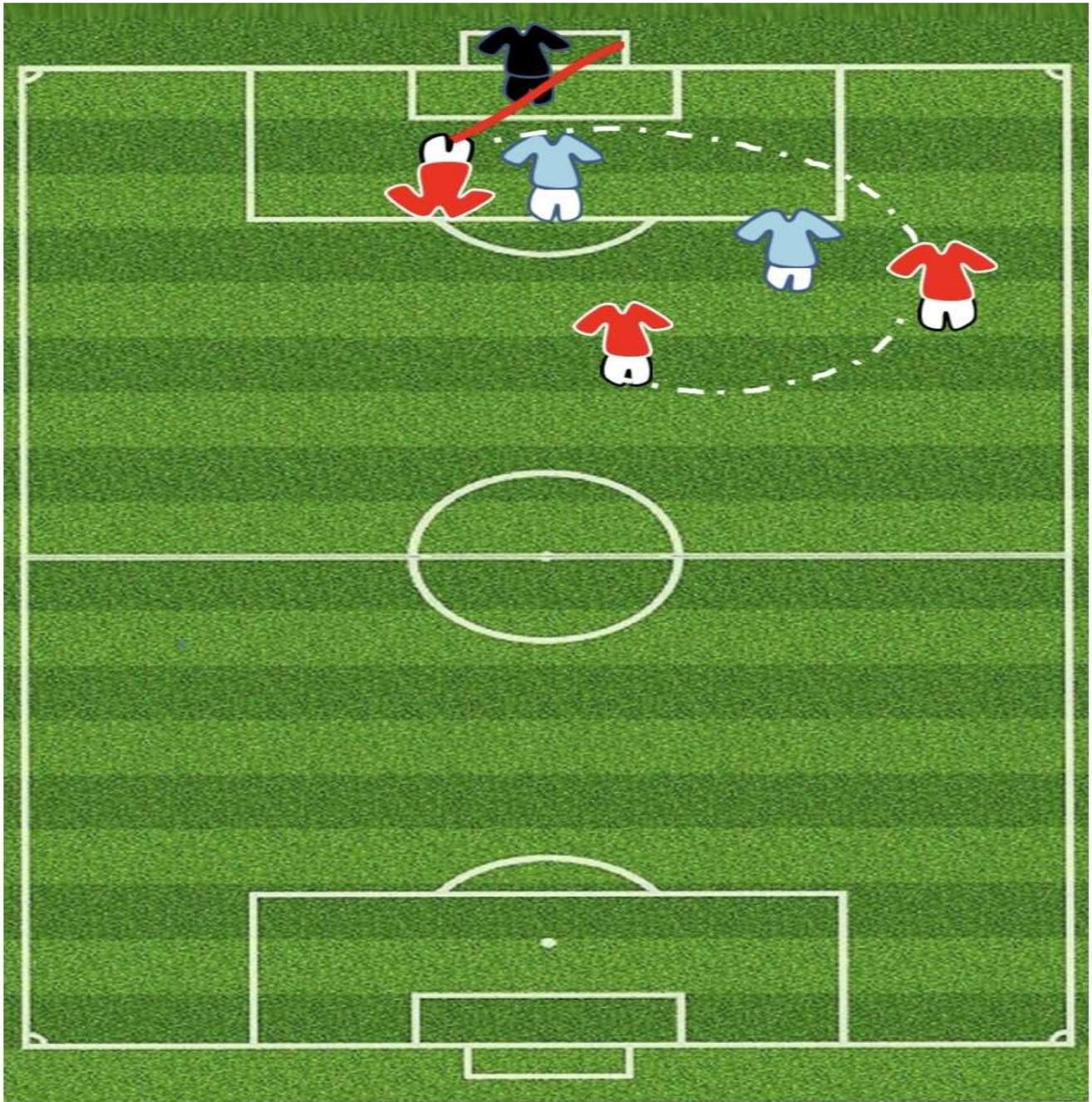
ROBERTO CARLOS

BRAZIL VS FRANCE 1997



Emiliano Insua – Journeyman left back playing in Argentina, England, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Germany and now the USA.



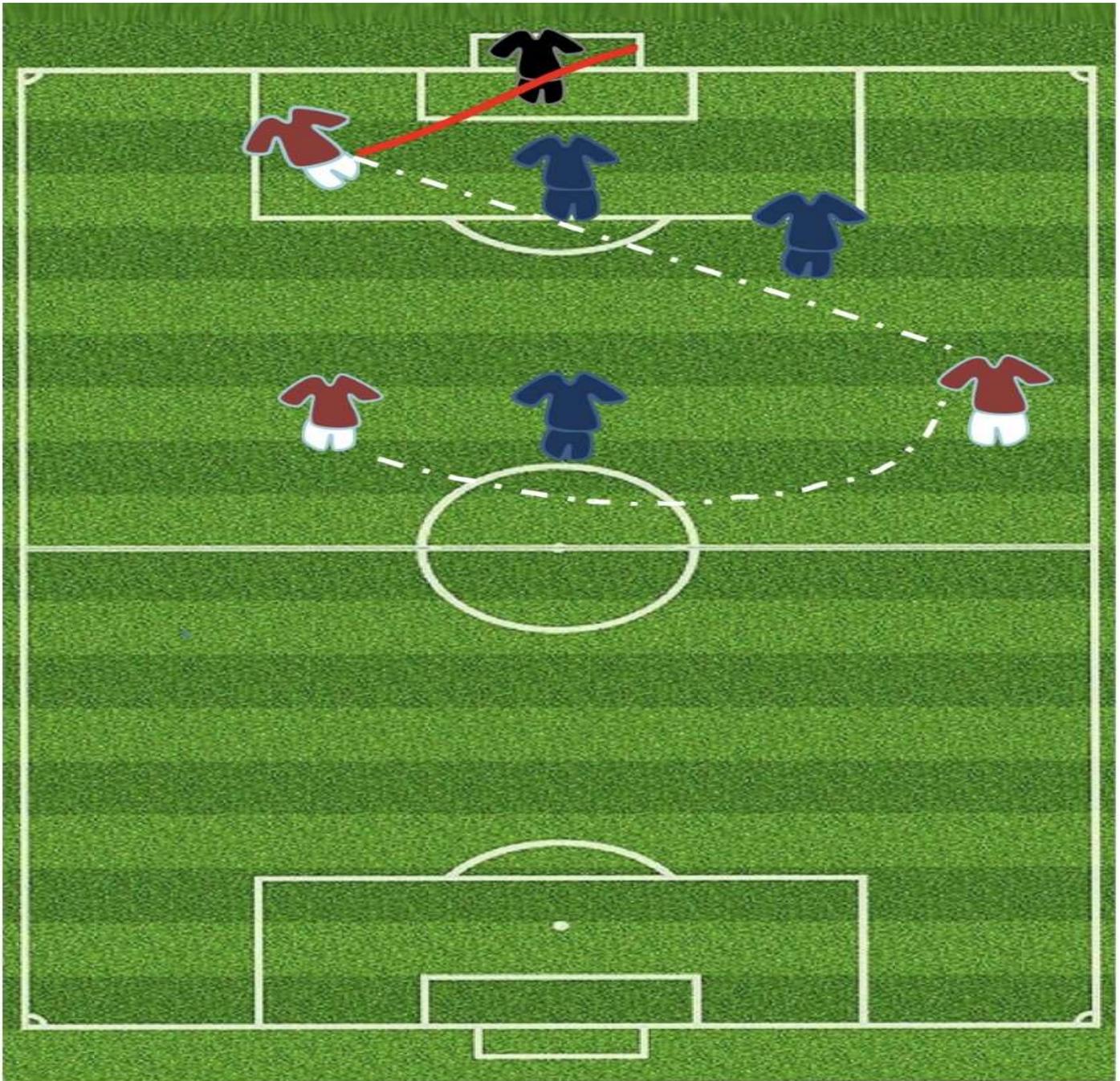


WAYNE ROONEY
UNITED VS CITY 2011



Ryan Babel – Has fitted in playing in England, Germany, Turkey and Abu Dhabi as well as signing for Ajax on 3 separate occasions.





PAOLO DI CANIO
WEST HAM VS WIMBLEDON 2000



Robert Earnshaw – The only player to have scored a hat-trick in the Premier League, the Championship, League One, League Two, the FA Cup, the League Cup and an international match.



FUN GOAL FACTS

The highest number of goals scored in an international match by one player is **13!** Archie Thompson (below) struck thirteen times in an international match for Australia as they beat American Samoa, 31-0 in 2001.



The most goals scored by one player in a league game is, I think, Olympos Xylofagou striker Panagiotis Pontikos. He once scored an astonishing **16** goals as his side thrashed SEK Ayios Athanasios 24-3 in the Cypriot third division in 2007!

The most goals scored by one player in an entire season is Jimmy Jones. In the 1956-57 season the Glenavon striker bagged **74** goals!

Lionel Messi was one goal away from matching this feat in 2011-12 when he scored 50 league goals, 3 Cup goals, 14 international goals and 6 in other competitions.

To help him avoid disappointment, in the 2012 calendar year Messi scored a remarkable **91** goals, which is a record in itself.



Christian Eriksen – He became only the second player after David Beckham to record 10+ assists in four successive Premier League seasons.



FUN GOAL FACTS

The player to have scored goals for the most amount of Premier League teams is Marcus Bent, who has done it for 7 different clubs!
Crystal Palace, Blackburn Rovers, Ipswich Town, Leicester City, Everton, Charlton Athletic and Wigan Athletic the beneficiaries.

Only two players have scored hat-tricks in the Premier League, Serie A and La Liga. Step up as always, Cristiano Ronaldo alongside Alexis Sanchez.

On Boxing day, 1963, it would have been a great evening to be able to watch Match of the Day. An incredible 66 goals scored in the fixtures, detailed on the left.

The highest scoring match of football ever is a story of sheer madness.

The score line reads **149 – 0**.

In 2002, Madagascan champions AS Adema thrashed their arch-rivals Stade Olympique l'Emyrne 149-0 in a top national league game.

Reports suggest that Olympique began banging the ball into their own net after their coach Ratsimandresy Ratsarazaka lost his temper with the referee.

First Division – Dec 26, 1963	
GAMES 10, GOALS 66. GOALS PER GAME 6.6	
BLACKPOOL .. (0) 1 Durie	CHELSEA..... (4) 5 Bridges 2, Murray, Houseman, Venables 17,163
BURNLEY..... (2) 6 Lochhead 4, Morgan 2	MAN UTD(1) 1 Herd 35,764
FULHAM..... (5) 10 Cook, Leggat 4, Howfield 3, Robson Mullery	IPSWICH(1) 1 Baker
LEICESTER..... (1) 2 Keyworth 2	EVERTON..... (0) 0 30,004
LIVERPOOL.... (1) 6 St John, Hunt 4 Arrowsmith	STOKE.....(1) 1 Ritchie 43,385
NOTIM FOREST(3) 3 Wignall, Vowden Moore	SHEFF UTD (0) 3 Jones 2, Allchurch 23,800
SHEFF WED... (2) 3 Dobson 2, Pearson	BOLTON (0) 0 31,301
WEST BROM.. (2) 4 Kaye, Clarke, Fudge, Howe	TOTTENHAM.... (3) 4 Greaves 2, Smith, Jones 34,500
WEST HAM.... (1) 2 Byrne 2	BLACKBURN.... (4) 8 Pickering 3, Douglas, McEvoy 3 Ferguson 34,500
WOLVES..... (0) 3 Wharton, Crawford 2	ASTON VILLA.. (0) 3 Pountney, Crowe, Hateley 27,569



Bobby Zamora – One of only 3 players to have played for 4 London clubs in the Premier League. (Scott Parker and Paul Konchesky are the others)



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the sparkling
GLUCOSE
drink

A sparkling, refreshing drink which supplies *glucose* - the best of all energy foods - in a pleasant-tasting easily-assimilated form



Lucozade
REPLACES LOST ENERGY QUICKLY... DELICIOUSLY
FROM CHEMISTS AND STORES

June 30, 1951



Simone Romagnoli – Not to be confused with the current captain of AC Milan, Alessio who arrived at the club from Roma in 2015 for a fee of €25 million.



The most successful players ever!

If I take my own lunch to work, I consider it a massive success and achievement if I haven't eaten it by 10:30am. Sad isn't it. What about achievements and success for the modern footballer.

We wanted to explore who at club level is the most successful player ever?

However to get a mention in this article, you can't have been successful at just one club, as we fear we'd be writing an article on Barcelona players from 2006-2016! We all know the likes of Lionel Messi, Sergio Busquets and Xavi won it all, and a lot, at the Nou Camp. Long serving club legends like Ryan Giggs, Gary Neville, Phillip Lahm and Paolo Maldini, all won a vast number of trophies and were hugely successful at their respective clubs but nowhere else, so they are out of scope.

Sadly, for Oleksandr Shovkovskiy, the goalkeeper for Dynamo Kiev, his 14 domestic titles and 10 Ukrainian cups will not qualify him for this short list either, as they were all won solely with the Ukrainian giants.

We wanted to explore winners who have done it with an element of variation, and in the spirit of that we've looked at a variety of categories to define success.



Mason Greenwood – Made his first start for Manchester United in 2019 in a UEFA Europa League match against Astana, in which he scored becoming the club's youngest ever goal scorer in European competition at the age of 17 years, 353 days.



Champions League

Quiz question favourite and one of The Halfway Line's much-loved players, **Clarence Seedorf**.

He remains to date the only player to win the Champions League trophy with 3 different clubs. Ajax in 1995, Real Madrid in 1998 and twice a winner with AC Milan in 2003 and 2007.

There are a number of double winners, and even those that did so in consecutive years with different clubs like Marcel Desailly, Paulo Sousa, Samuel Eto'o and Gerard Pique but no one yet can challenge Seedorf's magic number, 3.

He didn't do badly domestically either. League titles in 3 different countries with the 3 teams he was victorious with in the Champions League.

What about incredibly successful seasons? Only 4 players have ever won the Champions League and the World Cup in the same season! Quite the achievement and feel good factor.

1998 – Christian Karembeu (Fra)

2002 – Roberto Carlos (Bra)

2014 – Sami Kheirdra (Ger)

2018 – Raphael Varane (Fra)

Seemingly very useful to play for Real Madrid.

Looking to South America and you find even fewer double winners. Only 3 players have won the Copa Libertadores Finals and the World Cup in the same year.

In 1986 River Plate were victorious as were Argentina in the World Cup meaning Hector Enrique, Nery Pumpido and Oscar Ruggeri had seasons to never forget.



Emile Smith-Rowe – The first Arsenal player born after the year 2000 to score for the club.





Two players worth noting here to lay claim to having an incredible successful anecdote to share. For 10 days in 2013, Juan Mata and Fernando Torres were the holders of the World Cup (from 2010), the European Championship (from 2012), the Champions League (from 2012) and the Europa League (from 2013).



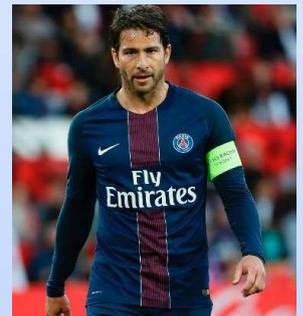
Ryan Smith – He made his Arsenal debut against Rotherham United in the League Cup in October 2003 at the age of 16, as did a certain Cesc Fabregas.



League titles

We've wracked our brains here at The Halfway Line and we've come up with the most league titles won in different countries by a player is 4. It could be 5 with an element of controversy, that we'll look at below.

Zlatan Ibrahimović, Arjen Robben, Mark Van Bommel and Maxwell have all won 4 league titles in what we would consider one of the 'big' European leagues. They have all tasted victory in 4 of a combination of the Eredivisie, La Liga, Serie A, The Bundesliga, Ligue 1 and the Premier League.



Casting the net wider, to include some of the lesser recognised leagues, and venturing outside of Europe, you have 4 league winners from separate countries that include David Beckham, Wesley Sneijder, Jiri Jarosik, Carlos Tevez and Javier Saviola to name a few.

Some significant names in the pot with the four league medal achievement and their trophy cabinets are significantly bolstered with other domestic, European and Continental competition wins as well.

The slight controversy sits with Mateja Kezman. Firmly on the list with 4 league titles after successes with Partizan Belgrade, PSV Eindhoven, Chelsea and Fenerbahce. In 2011 Kezman signed for BATE Borisov and played 6 league games. BATE won the Belarusian league 13 times in a row from 2006 to 2018, so there was a pretty high chance Kezman would be successful, and he was as they clearly won it in 2011. The question remains though does 6 league games qualify you for a winners medal?



Marvin Emnes – Dutch striker whose reward for a fruitful loan spell at Swansea City was a permanent move that saw a return of zero league goals in 3 years.

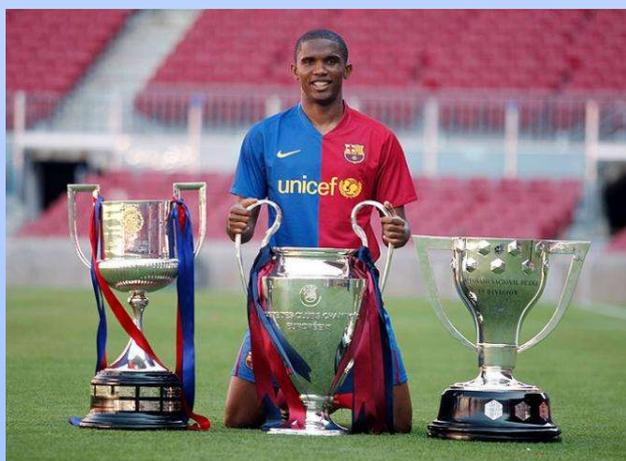


We've covered a variety of leagues to win here, but what about a variety of trophies to have been won? (we have sneaked in some international glory for this one)

Nwankwo Kanu has won the English Premier League, the Eredivisie, the Champions League, the UEFA Cup, the FA Cup and an Olympic gold medal!! That is some trophy haul!



Samuel Eto'o boasts an Olympic gold medal too in an ever so packed trophy cabinet that also includes African Cup of Nations winners medals as well as back to back triple winning seasons with different teams (Barcelona 2009 & Inter Milan 2010).



Samir Handanović - He is one of only four non-Italian keepers to be named Serie A Goalkeeper of the Year, winning the honour three times. During the 2010–11 Serie A season he saved a total of six penalty kicks, equalling an all-time league record set in the 1948–49 season.



The most successful..

So who is the most successful ever, trophy laden footballer, not to have won it all with one club.

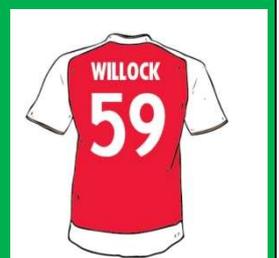
The fact Andres Iniesta won the Emperor's Cup (the Japanese FA Cup equivalent) in 2019 with Vissel Kobe means he is now part of the discussion! 1 trophy with Kobe along with 32 for Barcelona puts the Spaniard very high up on the list with 33.

In similar fashion, Gerard Pique's 3 trophy haul at Manchester United sees him on the list with 31, having scooped 28 trophies with Barcelona.

Vitor Baia, the former Barcelona goalkeeper but from a very different era to the players above, complimented his 5 trophies with the Catalans with 25 trophies playing for the Portuguese giants FC Porto, taking home a total of 30.



Chris Willock – Has two brothers, Matty and Joe, who are also footballers. All three brothers shared a pitch when Chris played for Manchester United in a reserve game against Arsenal in May 2017.



Partners in crime Zlatan Ibrahimović and Maxwell, were both successful wherever they played. Zlatan has an impressive **31** trophies (this excludes the 2 Serie A titles stripped from his time at Juventus) across five different countries, but doesn't include a Champions League victory that has eluded the Swede throughout his career. Maxwell's heist of **33** trophies, also across five countries sees him share third spot with Iniesta, but we place him higher due to the variation of clubs he has been successful with.



The player in second place, and finally one not to have played for Barcelona is Hossam Hassan. An Egyptian centre forward, who played the majority of his football in the domestic league of Egypt. He, like his brother, Ibrahim, won a total of 36 club trophies. Unlike Ibrahim, he did this with more than one club. He won the Egyptian league 14 times with 2 clubs, a UAE league in between and multiple Cup victories in a career that spanned over 23 years, and saw him win a remarkable 176 international caps for Egypt.



John Guidetti – When on loan to Feyenoord from Manchester City he scored a hat-trick in 3 successive home fixtures, becoming the second player in the history of the Eredivisie to achieve this after Cees Groot did this in 1963.



The player at the top of the list of course has played for Barcelona, but he had significant success before and after his time at the Nou Camp.

The Brazilian full back **Dani Alves** has amassed a total of **37** club trophies during his career to date in Brazil, Spain, Italy and France.

Cup success at first club Bahia and in Spain with Sevilla (5) was followed by a very respectable haul at Barcelona with league and cup successes (23). A move to Italy with Juventus saw a league and cup double in his one and only season there and then a move to Paris Saint-Germain that saw a further 6 trophies added as they continued their domestic dominance.



Despite the small element of the theatricals, and aside from the remarkable 37 club trophies, Dani Alves plays the game with a smile on his face, and ahead of the trophies that may be the biggest success of them all.



Numan Curuksu – Formerly of Osmanlıspor, now captaining Giresunspor in the Turkish First Division. All Osmanlıspor games in the 2009–10 season were cancelled and awarded 3–0 to Osmanlıspor's opponents by default. Osmanlıspor was expelled from the Turkish leagues.



DANI ALVES TROPHY HAUL

Bahia

Copa do Nordeste: 2002

Sevilla

Copa del Rey: 2006–07

Supercopa de España: 2007

UEFA Cup: 2005–06, 2006–07

UEFA Super Cup: 2006

Barcelona

La Liga: 2008–09, 2009–10, 2010–11, 2012–13, 2014–15, 2015–16

Copa del Rey: 2008–09, 2011–12, 2014–15, 2015–16

Supercopa de España: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013

UEFA Champions League: 2008–09, 2010–11, 2014–15

UEFA Super Cup: 2009, 2011, 2015

FIFA Club World Cup: 2009, 2011, 2015

Juventus

Serie A: 2016–17

Coppa Italia: 2016–17

Paris Saint-Germain

Ligue 1: 2017–18, 2018–19

Coupe de France: 2017–18

Coupe de la Ligue: 2017–18

Trophée des Champions: 2017, 2018



Harry Winks – Tottenham Hotspur midfielder who has represented England at U17, U18, U19, U20, U21 level and the senior men's national team.



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This scheme applies to the United Kingdom and Eire only.



on sale Friday 21 January

A great soccer gift in

Shoot!

Andreas Weimann - Plays as a forward for Championship club Bristol City and the Austrian national team. Weimann was signed by Aston Villa as a sixteen-year-old from Rapid Vienna.



GAMES FULL OF GOALS



You know the smug feeling when you get 7 McNuggets in a Box of 6 nuggets from the Golden Arches? You walk with an extra spring in your step if you get a Kit Kat that is purely thick chocolate and no waffle? Kinda feel you are 1-0 up in life right?

Imagine being luckily enough to have gone to one of the matches detailed here. 0-0's are rubbish. They are boring, they are last on Match Of The Day and ruin betting slips. Pointless, and indeed goalless. We've selected 6 games, all from different leagues that produced double digit goals. That is what you call value for money.



Can you remember the score line?



- 1) Serie A - Fiorentina versus AC Milan
- 2) Premier League - Portsmouth versus Reading
- 3) La Liga – Real Madrid versus Rayo Vallecano
- 4) The Primeira Liga – Benfica versus Nacional
- 5) The Bundesliga – Bayern Munich versus Hamburg
- 6) Ligue 1 – Lyon versus Marseille



Pietro Pellegri - At the age of 15 years and 280 days, he equalled the record as the youngest ever Serie A debutant, held by Roma's Amedeo Amadei since 1937. In September 2017, he became the first 16-year old to score twice in a single major European league game.



Serie A - Fiorentina versus AC Milan
 Sunday 4th October 1992



Fiorentina 3 – 7 AC Milan

GK- A. Mannini
 DEF – M. Faccenda
 DEF – D. Carnasciali
 DEF – S. Carobbi
 DEF – R. Verga
 MID – F. Di Mauro
 MID – M. Orlando
 MID – S. Effenberg
 FOR – F. Baiano
 FOR – B. Laudrup
 FOR – G. Batistuta



Team line
 ups & goal
 scorers

GK – F. Antoniolo
 DEF - M. Tassotti
 DEF – A. Costacurta
 DEF – F. Baresi
 DEF – P. Maldini
 MID – F. Rijkaard
 MID – D. Albertini
 MID – G. Lentini
 FOR – R. Gullit
 FOR – D. Massaro
 FOR – M. Van Basten



In the 1992 season, AC Milan's opening 10 games yielded 28 goals scored and 12 goals conceded. The following season they conceded only 15 in the entire campaign!



Ben Sheaf - English footballer who plays as a midfielder for club Doncaster Rovers on loan from Arsenal. He has represented England at youth level.



Premier League – Portsmouth versus Reading
 Saturday 29th September 2007



Portsmouth 7 – 4 Reading

GK – D. James

DEF – G. Johnson

DEF – S. Distin

DEF – S. Campbell



DEF – H. Hreidarsson

MID – P. Bouba Diop



MID – S. Muntari



MID – N. Kranjcar

MID – S. Davis

FOR – J. Utaka



FOR – M. Benjani



Own Goal

Team line
 ups & goal
 scorers

GK – M. Hahnemann

DEF – G. Murty

DEF – I. Ingimarsson

DEF – M. Duberry

DEF – N. Shorey

MID – L. Rosenior

MID – B. Gunnarsson

MID – J. Harper

MID – S. Hunt



FOR – K. Doyle

FOR – D. Kitson



Sub

FOR – S. Long



Own Goal



The 11 goals scored at Fratton Park is the record amount of goals scored in a Premier League game, with 10 goals being scored on 5 separate occasions.



Ruben Dias – Voted Man of the Match in the UEFA Nations League final for Portugal against Holland in 2019.



La Liga – Real Madrid versus Rayo Vallecano Sunday 20th December 2015



Real Madrid 10 – 2 Rayo Vallecano

GK – K. Navas



DEF – Danilo

DEF – Pepe

DEF – S. Ramos

DEF – Marcelo

MID – T. Kroos

MID – J. Rodriguez

MID – L. Modric



FOR – G. Bale



FOR – C. Ronaldo



FOR – K. Benzema

Team line
ups & goal
scorers

GK – Yoel

DEF – Amaya

DEF – **Tito**

DEF – Nacho

DEF – Ze Castro

MID – **R. Baena**

MID – Trashorras

MID – P. Hernandez

MID – Jozabed

MID – A. Bangoura

FOR – J. Guerra



The season prior to this game, 2014/15, Real Madrid won 3 home fixtures at the Bernabéu with the score lines 8-2 against Deportivo, 9-1 against Granada and 7-3 against Getafe.



Helder Costa – When joining Leeds United, he took the number 17 shirt, that had previously been retired due to a superstition of the club's chairman!



The Primeira Liga – Benfica versus CD Nacional

Sunday 10th February 2019



Benfica 10 – 0 CD Nacional

GK – O. Vlachodimos



DEF – A. Grimaldo



DEF – R. Dias

DEF – A. Almeida



DEF – Ferro

MID – Gabriel

MID – A. Samaris



MID – H. Seferovic



FOR – Pizzi



FOR – R. Silva



FOR – J. Felix

Sub



FOR – Jonas

Team line
ups & goal
scorers

GK – Daniel

DEF – F. Ferreira

DEF – Kalindi

DEF – L. Rosic

DEF – Julio Cesar

MID – I. Alhassan

MID – S. Marakis

MID – Camacho

MID – V. Goncalves

FOR – S. Rashidov

FOR – A. Palocevic

Incredibly this result is not Benfica's record league win. That stands at 13-1 against Sanjoanense in 1947.



Andrea Fulignati – A former Palermo player, whose other ex-players include Edinson Cavani, Javier Pastore, Paulo Dybala and Kyle Lafferty!



Bundesliga – Bayern Munich versus Hamburg Saturday 30th March 2013



Bayern Munich 9 – 2 Hamburg

GK – M. Neuer

DEF – J. Boateng

DEF – Dante

DEF – J. Martinez

DEF – P. Lahm

 MID – X. Shaqiri

MID – L. Gustavo

 MID – B. Schweinsteiger

MID – T. Kroos

  FOR – A. Robben

    FOR – C. Pizarro

Sub

 FOR – F. Ribery

Team line
ups & goal
scorers

GK- R. Adler

DEF – D. Dieckmeier

DEF – H. Westermann 

DEF – J. Bruma 

DEF – D. Agog

MID – T. Rincon

MID – M. Badelj

MID – R Van Der Vaart

MID – P. Skjelbred

FOR – A. Rudnevs

FOR – H-M. Son

In the 2012/13 season, Bayern broke an incredible 30 records including the best ever goal difference which finished at +80!!



Joe Willock – The youngest of the Willock brothers, and the only one to date to have featured for the Arsenal first team, with the others having moved on.



Ligue 1 – Olympique Lyon versus Olympique Marseille

Sunday 8th November 2009



Lyon 5 – 5 Marseille

GK – H. Lloris

DEF – Cris

DEF – A. Cissokho

DEF – L. Gassama

MID – J. Toulalan



MID – M. Pjanic

MID – Ederson

MID – J. Makoun

MID – K. Kallstrom



FOR – L. Lopez



FOR – S. Govou

Sub



MID - M. Bastos

GK – S. Mandanda

DEF – Hilton

DEF – G. Heinze

DEF – S. Diawara



DEF – L. Bonnart

MID – B. Cheyrou



MID – S. M'Bia

MID – A. Abriel

FOR – Brandao



FOR – M. Niang

FOR – B. Kone



Own Goal



Team line
ups & goal
scorers

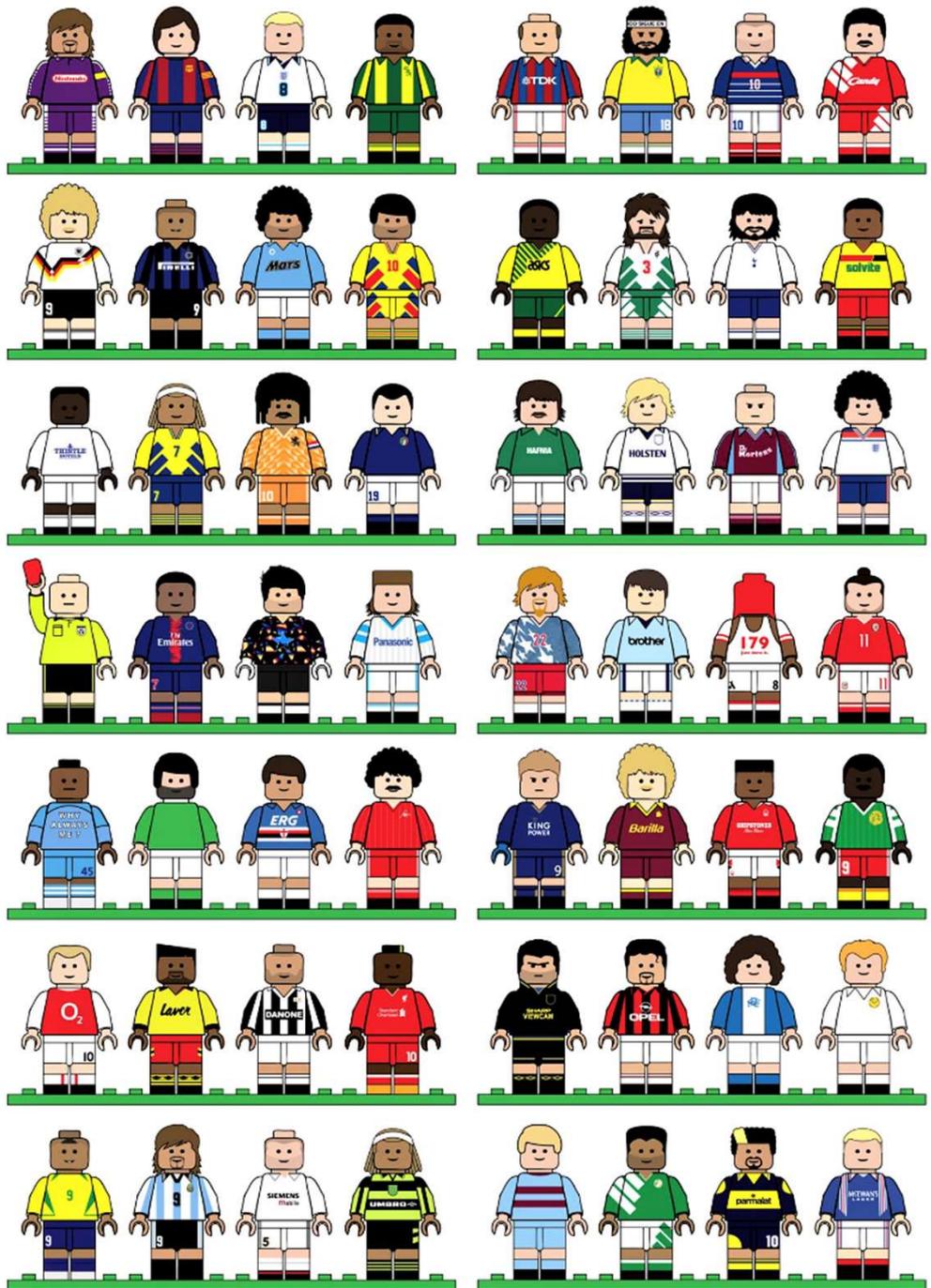
The forlorn figure of number 28 above is that of Jeremy Toulalan, who had just put through his own net to level the score 5-5 in the 90th minute of the game, with Lyon having previously fallen behind 4-2 with 9 minutes to play before taking the lead.



Massimo Taibi – In 2001, he scored a goal for Reggina against Udinese in a 1–1 draw. With the goal, Taibi became only the second goalkeeper to score from open play in Serie A history after Michelangelo Rampulla in 1992.



At The Halfway Line we spend a lot of time on the Internet researching articles and fun facts and looking for inspiration to write about our beautiful game. Every so often we stumble across some great finds and we can't wait to share them with you. Check out this poster from Brickballer.com who have created Lego characters based on some of the most iconic footballers and fans favourites.



BrickBallers.com /100



Grigoris Georgatos - An offensive fullback who was known for his crossing ability and his combative style at left back earned him the nickname, "the Greek Roberto Carlos."



Underdogs

The number of underdog achievements is slowly dying a death in football as the gulf between the elite and even the mediocre sides is getting bigger & bigger. Though what can be certain is everyone loves an underdog upsetting the odds and beating a significantly superior side.

We at The Halfway Line have picked three underdog upsets that rocked the world of football and even when looking back at them now it is remarkable they ever took place.

The World Cup

The World Cup opening games in 1990 and 2002 were games involving the defending champions and one of the tournament favourites versus African nations, one playing only their second World Cup finals and the other debuting in the competitions finals.

In 1990 champions Argentina, under the captaincy of the world's best player at the time, Diego Maradona, took on Cameroon at the San Siro in Milan. Added to the story plot, Maradona plied his trade in Italy for Napoli and had just won their second Serie A title since the 1986 winning World Cup campaign, which of course he was instrumental in winning as well. Of Maradona's teammates, 6 of them also played their football in Serie A and the squad included 7 players that were in the 1986 winning squad. The expectation was a comfortable victory for the South Americans.



Josip Ilić – In March 2020, he scored all of Atalanta's four goals in the Champions League match against Valencia. He also became the first player in the history of the competition to score four goals in an away tie of a knockout stage match, and the oldest player to score four goals in a single match in the competition at the age of 32 years, 41 days .



The Cameroon squad was made up with half of their 22 players playing domestically in the Cameroon league and their attacking options included a 38 year old front man.

The unimaginable happened and despite 'The Indomitable Lions' ending the game with 9 men, they won 1-0, sending shockwaves across the tournament and the watching world.

Cameroon sprung that surprise and more, as they progressed to the quarter finals of the tournament and provided many a highlight as they went.



Argentina recovered from the shock of the defeat and made their way to the final in a bid to retain the World Cup trophy, that ultimately ended in failure and a defeat to West Germany.



Salvatore Fresi - Is a former Italian footballer who played as a centre-back for Inter Milan and Juventus amongst others.



The parallel to 2002 is scarily similar. Reigning World Cup holders and at the time the current European Champions, France took on World Cup newcomers Senegal from Africa. The French national team also, at the time, had the best player in the world playing for them, but the twist here was Zinedine Zidane was ruled out of the game with an injury.

Senegal's squad of 23 had 21 players playing at the time in the French leagues, so fair to say the team knew their opposition. Senegal's most experienced player held 42 international caps going into the game. As well as Zidane, (fresh from 'that' goal in the Champions League final), the French squad included the experience of 10 players that all had more than 42 caps, and also included Thierry Henry, generally considered one of the best strikers in the world.

So of course the exactly the same result happened and Senegal won the game 1-0!

Unlike Argentina in 1990, the French team did not recover and they exited the tournament at the group stages without even registering a goal in the finals. This was the worst performance by a defending nation since 1934 when Uruguay refused to partake in the finals.



Julio Cruz - He played for clubs in Argentina, the Netherlands and Italy before retiring in 2010. The longest spell of his career was spent with Inter Milan, with whom he won four consecutive Serie A titles.



The FA Cup

The game that stands out for us, and I am sure multiple others, is the 1992 FA Cup third round tie with Wrexham, at the time the 4th division Welsh side, against the reigning English Champions, Arsenal. Such was the divide, the previous season as Arsenal were crowned champions, losing just one league game in the process, Wrexham finished very bottom of the entire football league. They only avoided relegation out of the league due to a planned expansion to increase the number of teams for the following year.

The Arsenal line up consisted of England internationals David Seaman, Lee Dixon, Nigel Winterburn, David Rocastle, Paul Merson and Alan Smith, There was no major squad rotations taking place in 1992.

It was Smith who opened the scoring in the 43rd minute and the assumption was the floodgates would open. They didn't. In fact the only thing to open then was the trap door, and Arsenal fell firmly through it.

In the 82nd minute Wrexham equalised through an absolute rocket of a freekick from Mickey Thomas and before the crowd had settled themselves, 2 minutes later Wrexham went ahead with a fumbled finish from Steve Watkin,



Arsenal pressed for an equaliser, but the Welsh side hung on for a famous victory. Arsenal that day were wearing their now cool retro bruised banana kit. Forget that, it was bruised egos that day.

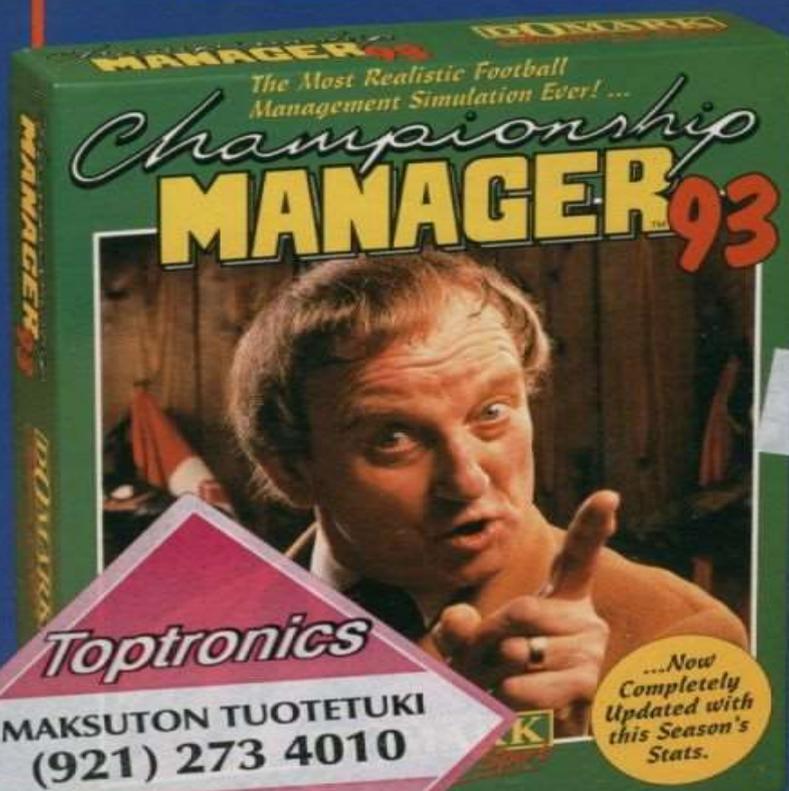


Anselmo Robbiati - A former left footed attacking midfielder, he is best remembered for his time with Fiorentina during the 1990s.



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Kerlon - Became well known for his trademark skill, named the "drible da foquinha" or seal dribble, where the ball is bounced continuously on the forehead while running.



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, we are going back in time to August 1992, and we are picking 5 teams in the Premier League, that were present on it's opening weekend that have gone on to win the competition at least once in the following 28 years!

In a remarkable twist of fate, the 5 teams who have won the league that took part in the inaugural weekend failed to win their opening game in the competition!

Take a look at the line ups, remember the players wearing their new kits for the new revamped season, and whether they are household names, or disappeared off the face of the earth.

Worth remembering how different the Premier League was back in 1992. There were only 13 'foreign players that played in the opening weekend, which is in stark contrast to the number in the modern day.

- 1) Arsenal versus Norwich City
- 2) Chelsea versus Oldham Athletic
- 3) Crystal Palace versus Blackburn Rovers
- 4) Sheffield United versus Manchester United
- 5) Manchester City versus Queens Park Rangers



McDonald Mariga - Made history as the first Kenyan footballer to play in the Champions League, for Inter Milan.





Luciano Zauri – Former Atalanta and Lazio player, who played as a full back or wide midfielder on either flank, who won 5 international caps.





Vladimir Weiss - Scored the opening goal in a Euro 2016 win against Russia, and thus became the first player to score at the Euros whilst playing for a non-European club.





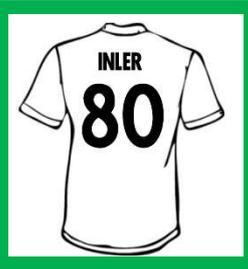
15th AUGUST 1992
CRYSTAL PALACE 3 V'S BLACKBURN ROVERS 3
BRIGHT - RIPLEY
SOUTHGATE - SHEARER
OSBORN - SHEARER

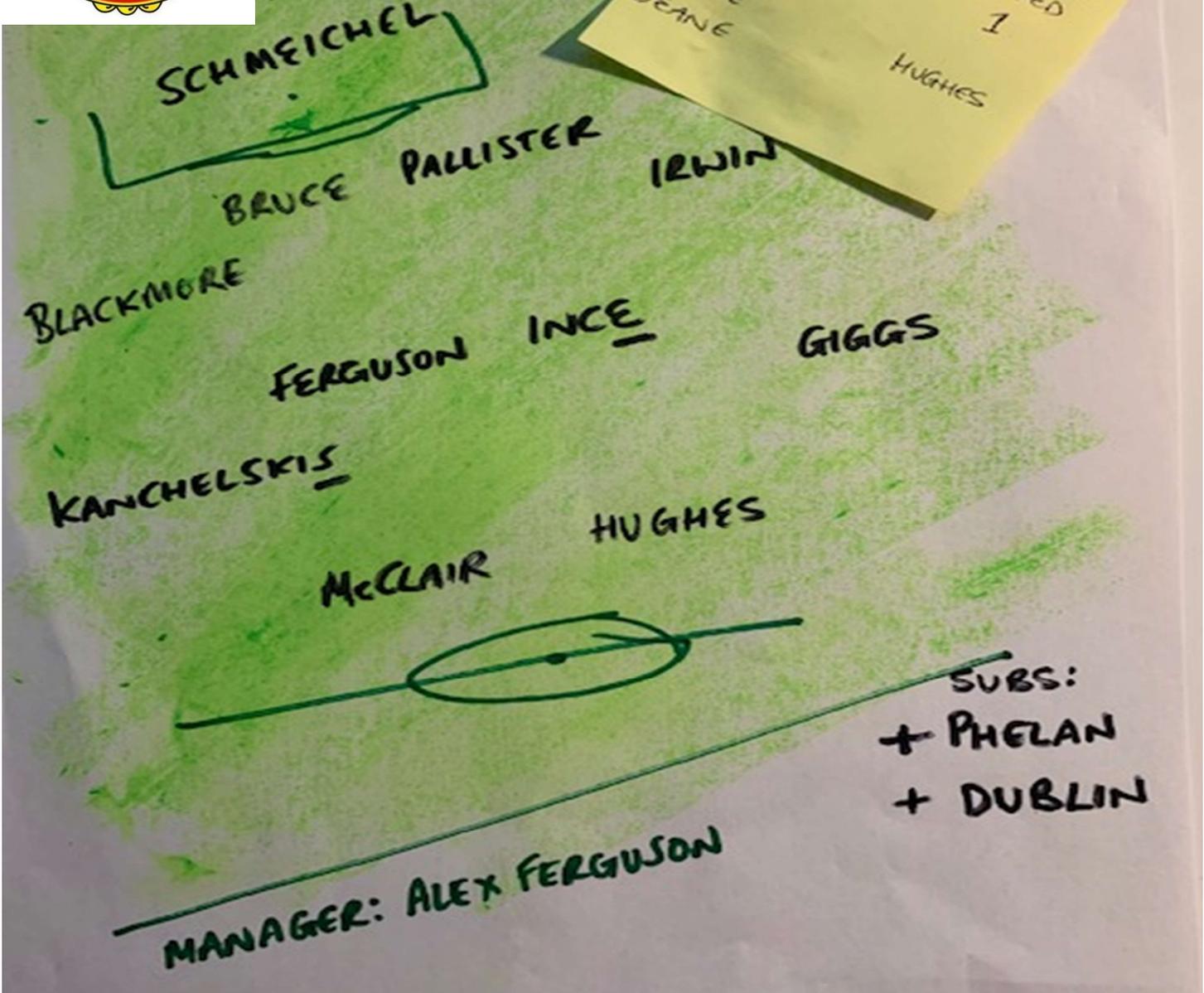
MIMMS
MORAN
MAY
ATKINS
RIPLEY
HENDRY
SHERWOOD
NEWELL
WRIGHT
DOBSON
SHEARER

SUBS:
+ PRICE
MANAGER: KENNY DALGLISH



Gokhan Inler – The first Swiss player to win the Premier League, with Leicester City in 2015/16.





Alexander Hleb – Formerly of Stuttgart, Arsenal and Barcelona and seemingly joined BATE Borisov 5 times throughout his career.





17th AUGUST 1992
MANCHESTER CITY v's Q.P.R
1 - 1
WHITE SINTON



Luca Antonini – Former Italian defender perhaps best known for his 5 seasons at AC Milan.



Cult Heroes

There is no Oxford Dictionary definition of a cult hero. To us, in terms of football, a cult hero is a player that has an affiliation with a club or nation that makes them stand out from the rest. A particular game, or season, or a club changing event that the player was instrumental in means they're forever held in high acclaim.

Sometimes there is even an element of sarcasm associated with tag. It is almost suggesting the player wasn't supposed to be good enough for the team, but hard work and graft meant they made it.

There are of course obvious candidates for cult heroes, for example Eric Cantona at Manchester United. His arrogance and outspoken nature adding to his status. There tends to be an element of controversy that follows some cult heroes, and King Eric was no doubt in that bucket!

Players at Arsenal that have carried the cult hero status, seemingly for stepping up to prove the doubters wrong would include Martin Keown, Perry Groves and Ray Parlour.

There are the players that are held in their fans hearts for games that stick in the mind, or for having the knack of scoring against the local rivals, ala Shaun Goater or Shola Ameobi.

But we are familiar with all the names above. At The Halfway Line we continually want to look outside the box and cast the net out further. So the players included in this article are cult heroes but have no previous with English clubs and we want to give you a flavour of why they carry that cult hero tag.



Ian Poveda-Ocampo – The tremendously named winger spent his youth career at Arsenal, Chelsea and Barcelona. Now with Leeds United having signed from Manchester City.



Cuauhtémoc Blanco

Mention the player Cuauhtémoc Blanco and our immediate two thoughts are;
1, Stocky, and
2, Did the odd skill at the 1998 World Cup called the Blanco Bop*.

Although both pretty accurate, after researching there is a hell of a lot more, especially if you are a Club América of Mexico fan. Blanco joined the club as a youth player in 1989, playing at that level for 4 years before joining the first team in 1992. He made his debut for the club as a 19 year old and the attacker stayed with the club until 2007 when he moved permanently away to the MLS in the USA.

In the 15 years at Club America he played over 330 games and scored 125 goals.

In May 2005, Blanco won his first club championship as a player, leading Club América to its tenth league title, when Club América defeated U.A.G. In the next three consecutive years between 2005 and 2007, he was awarded the MVP.

Post his MLS career, Blanco was some what nomadic in the Mexican league, and he eventually moved into politics. In

February 2016, and a month into his political career, it was announced that Blanco would participate for one last time in an official Liga MX match during the 2016 season for Club América. It would allow him to officially end his career and say goodbye to his adoring fans. On 5 March, Blanco started the match wearing the number 100 jersey for Club America against Morelia.

*The Blanco Bop was actually named the Cuauhtemiña.



Diogo Goncalves – Portuguese winger who made the loan move from Benfica to Nottingham Forest.



Darijo Srna

Think foreign right back signs for club in new country. Establishes himself as club captain and makes a record number of appearances for the club during their most successful period as a club.

You're thinking Javier Zanetti aren't you?

Well, we have a Zanetti Mark#2 in the Croatian Darijo Srna.

Srna signed for Shakhtar Donetsk from Hajduk Split in 2003 and from then to 2018 he appeared for the club 536 times, and captained then to multiple successes.

So much is his cult hero status, he is quite often referred to as the 'Icon of Shakhtar', and during his time at the club he won the following titles:

Ukrainian Premier League (*10), Ukrainian Cup (*7), Ukrainian Super Cup (*8), UEFA Cup (*1)



Quite often cult hero status comes with behaviours away from the football pitch, and Srna ticks this box as well.

While at Shakhtar, Srna frequently bought match tickets for orphans and often financed their travel to the stadium at his own expense. In late 2014, he purchased 20 tonnes of tangerines from farms near Metković and had them donated to over 23,000 primary school children in the Donbass region during the ongoing war there.

Further more in 2009 Srna was awarded the Order of Courage in the Ukraine, recognition for individual courage and heroism while rescuing people or valued materials while endangering own life.



Lassana Diarra – Midfielder used sparingly at Chelsea and Arsenal before more successful moves to Portsmouth and Real Madrid.



Alex

Alexsandro de Souza as per his full name, is not one of the more obvious Brazilians who were successful in Europe that would roll off your tongue if ever quizzed.

After significant success in his homeland with Palmeiras and Cruzeiro, Alex made the move to Turkish giants Fenerbahce in 2004. This was his second venture into Europe after a previous attempt in Italy with Parma. It couldn't have turned out more differently.

With Parma, Alex made more loan moves out of the club than he did first team appearances for them and transferred back to Brazil.

The impression left at Fenerbahce however ensured cult hero status.

He played for the Yellow Canaries for 9 seasons, and even prior to leaving the fans self funded a statue of the player to be erected at a local public park in Istanbul.

His highlights include league titles in 2004/05, 2006/07 and 2010/11. In the latter season at the tender age of 33 years old, not only did he lead the team to league success but he significantly aided the cause by contributing 28 goals and 13 assists in 33 games. This saw the golden boot be awarded to the attacking midfielder as well as the League's Player of the Year award. (his 2nd after 2005).



Alex finished his career with Fenerbahce with remarkable statistics for a traditional number 10 and attacking midfielder, scoring 172 goals and assisting 139 times in 344 games.



Daniel Osvaldo – Slightly controversial striker throughout his career. The former Southampton front man supposedly fired by Boca Juniors after being caught smoking in the teams dressing room.



Keisuke Honda

Some players are held in high regard by their club's fans. Some are admired afar from opposition fans. Some countries however have a player who is seen as a cult hero by the nation as a whole.

Japan have history of cult heroes. One is widely celebrated Kazuyoshi Miura, who incredibly made his footballing debut in 1986 and continues to play first team, professional football today, at the age of 53. Another was Hidetoshi Nakata, who broken the mould in the late 1990's by becoming a successful export out of Japan into Europe.

The Japanese cult hero for this article however is Keisuke Honda.



Honda was an international footballer for Japan, earning 98 caps between 2008 and 2018. He represented his nation at three World Cups (2010, 2014 and 2018) and with his goal in the 2018 World Cup he became the top scoring Asian player in World Cup history and the only player to register a goal and an assist in each of the last three tournaments.

He was also voted most valuable player of the 2011 AFC Asian Cup as Japan lifted a record fourth title.

Though perhaps our favourite fact about Keisuke Honda is that by scoring for club sides Nagoya Grampus (Jap), VVV-Venlo (Hol), CSKA Moscow (Rus), AC Milan (Ita), Pachuca (Mex), Melbourne Victory (Aus) and Botafogo (Bra) he has scored for clubs in **FIVE** different continents!! We can only pray a move to an African club is on the cards prior to retirement.



Bruno Costa – Former Porto youth player only mustering four league appearances before moving on. His namesake Jorge played +250 games and lifted the European Champions League.



Lars Høgh

In this issue we have already discovered Rogerio Ceni has the record of games played for one club. He donned the Sao Paulo jersey for a reported 1198 games. We are all very aware of one club legends, in their own right cult heroes. Paolo Maldini, 25 seasons & 647 league appearances for AC Milan, Francesco Totti, 25 seasons & 619 league appearances for Roma and Ryan Giggs, 24 seasons & 672 appearances for Manchester United,

But what about the unknown? In the modern era, which player has the most number of league appearances for one club, ensuring the cult hero status that we desire is cemented in place?

Introducing the Danish goalkeeper, Lars Høgh, who over 23 league seasons appeared for OB, Odense Boldklub, in the Danish Superliga, a staggering 817 times!



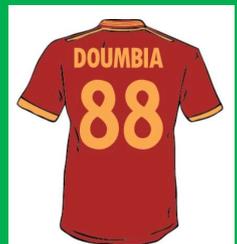
The picture on the left is Lars Høgh at the beginning of a European Cup Winners Cup fixture against Arsenal at Highbury in 1993.

For all his dominance in between the sticks for OB, he, like Ceni & Brazil, was unable to make an imprint on the Danish national team, winning only 8 international caps.

But to represent your club for that period of longevity, you are certainly considered a club cult hero.



Seydou Doumbia – Ivorian journeyman, playing in Italy, Japan, England, Portugal, Russia and Switzerland, most successfully in the latter two.



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. Our feature here 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.

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Football Association or SAFA is the national administrative governing body that controls the sport of football in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and is a member of the Confederation of African Football (CAF).

The South African Premier Division (referred to as the Absa Premiership for sponsorship reasons) is the South African professional football leagues highest division of the South African football league system and was founded in **1996**. The league was founded after an agreement between the National Soccer League (South Africa) and the remnants of the National Professional Soccer League (South Africa)



**SOUTH AFRICAN
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

There are currently 16 teams in the top division. **Kaizer Chiefs, Mamelodi Sundowns, SuperSport United, Orlando Pirates, Maritzburg United, Bidvest Wits, Golden Arrows, Highlands Park, Bloemfontein Celtic, Cape Town City, Stellenbosch, Chippa United, Baroka FC, Polokwane City, AmaZulu FC and Black Leopards**

The most successful team in the history of the league with 9 titles is Mamelodi Sundowns.

The Soweto Derby is a soccer rivalry between Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates in South Africa and is considered one of the most fiercely contested matches in African football.

Based in Soweto, Johannesburg, the rivalry stems from the fact that Kaizer Chiefs was formed by a former Orlando Pirates star Kaizer Motaung.



Odion Ighalo – Surprising Manchester United loan signing in January 2020 becoming the first Nigerian to play for club.



The South African National team is nicknamed Bafana Bafana and they play their home games at the FNB Stadium, in Johannesburg.

The national team's greatest result was winning the Africa Cup of Nations at home in 1996, which remains their sole international competition victory to date.

The Bafana Bafana has made three appearances in World Cup finals, although they have not yet made it past the first round. In 2010 they were the host nation. You may remember the vuvuzela's!



The highest capped South African is Aaron Mokoena with 107 international caps to his name.

Benni McCarthy is the South African national team's all-time top scorer with 31 goals. He is also the only South African to win the UEFA Champions League, doing so with Porto in 2003–04.



There have been 13 South Africans to play in the English Premier League. The first two players to do so travelled together in 1994 to join Leeds United. Phil Masinga joined from the Mamelodi Sundowns and Lucas Radebe from the Kaizer Chiefs.



Radebe can lay claim to being the most successful of imports, playing for Leeds over 250 times, even though at the time of his transfer the rumour was he was only purchased by Leeds to keep Masinga happy!

Fellow import Quinton Fortune, played for Manchester United over the course of 7 seasons. Despite playing in three Premier League winning seasons (1999–2000, 2000–01 and 2002–03), Fortune never played the required 10 games in each season stipulated to earn a winner's medal.



Yann M'Vila – French defensive midfielder promised much at Rennes but failed to live up to the hype and since having turned out at Rubin Kazan, Inter Milan and Sunderland. Now back in Ligue 1.



The Treatment Room

Achilles Heal

Achilles tendon rupture is when the Achilles tendon, at the back of the ankle, breaks. Symptoms include the sudden onset of sharp pain in the heel. A snapping sound may be heard as the tendon breaks and walking becomes difficult.

Rupture typically occurs as a result of a sudden bending up of the foot when the calf muscle is engaged, direct trauma, or long-standing tendonitis.

A classic sign of an Achilles tendon rupture is the feeling of being hit in the calf area. Players often report feeling a "pop". There may be sudden pain in the area, and the player cannot lift up onto his toes while weight bearing. Even walking uphill or upstairs is difficult. Swelling may appear on the back of the leg in the Achilles area.

What is the recovery time for Achilles tendon repair?

At six weeks patients are usually allowed full weightbearing. Physical therapy is started and is aimed at restoring ankle range of motion. Strengthening of the calf muscles and Achilles is gradually allowed as the tendon heals. Patients are usually able to return to full activity by six months.

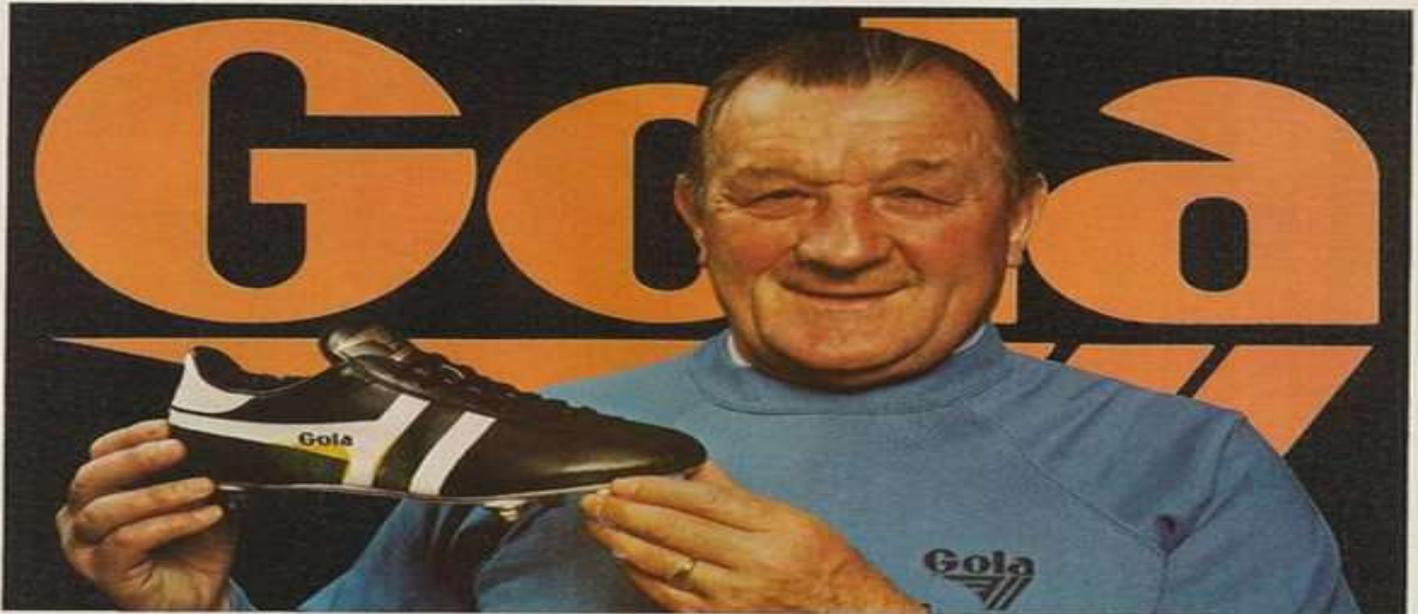
Recovering from an Achilles injury is no walk in the park however. The Achilles is the largest tendon in your body. It helps you walk, run, jump, and move your foot in every direction. So if you injure or tear it, you won't be able to do much of anything for a while.

How long it takes for you to heal will depend on how bad your injury is. Tendinitis involves pain and discomfort but no damage to the tendon, so that might be just a few weeks of rest and ice packs. A complete rupture is a totally different story that could take up to a year to heal.



Simone Zaza – Italian international striker, played in Serie A as well as La Liga and the Premier League. His penalty technique leaves a lot to be desired, especially if you miss!





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Victor Lindelof – Current holder of the Guldbollen (Sweden’s player of the year). Since 1990, only one winner of the award has not played in the English Premier League (Par Zetterberg).



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) Which player is highest in terms of most goals scored in the Premier League, that has done so for scoring for only one club?
- 2) Name the five players to have scored a hat-trick for three different clubs in the Premier League?
- 3) Name 4 players to have played for Chelsea in the PL and to have scored in a World Cup Final and/or a European Championship final?
- 4) Which active Premier League player has scored for 5 PL clubs (PL at the time of scoring)?
- 5) Since 1990, the World Record Transfer Fee has been 'broken' 17 times. Can you name the 6 (out of the 17) that have played for Juventus at some point in their careers?
- 6) Since the year 2000, name the 7 players to wear the number 10 shirt for Real Madrid?

Team mates

- 1) I have been a team mate of Roberto Baggio, Marcel Desailly, Fabio Cannavaro, Alan Stubbs and Des Walker – who am I?
- 2) I have been a team mate of Nick Barmby, Peter Beardsley, Brian Laudrup, Karl-Heinz Riedle and Christian Ziege – who am I?
- 3) I have been a team mate of Juan Sebastian Veron, Robinho, Mark Van Bommel, Heung-Min Son and Isco – who am I?
- 4) I have been a team mate of Rui Costa, David Seaman, Kevin Phillips, Andrei Kanchelskis, Gaizka Mendieta – who am I?
- 5) I have been a team mate of Nwankwo Kanu, Nicolas Anelka, Mikel Arteta, Benik Afobe, Paul Dickov and Sol Campbell, but I have **never** played for Arsenal – who am I?

What club links the following players?

- 1) Karim Benzema, Michael Essien, Mahamadou Diarra and Julien Faubert?
- 2) Phil Babb, Peter Schmeichel, Alan Mahon and Cedric Soares?
- 3) Shkodran Mustafi, Gabriel Paulista, Francis Coquelin and Jeremy Mathieu?
- 4) Paul Ince, Robbie Keane, Ivan Cavaleiro and Joleon Lescott?
- 5) Marc Overmars, Dennis Bergkamp, Wim Jonk and Yaya Sanogo?
- 6) Thibaut Courtois, Kevin De Bruyne, Divock Origi and Christian Benteke?
- 7) Gheorghe Hagi, Arda Turan, Gheorghe Popescu, and Hamit Altintop?
- 8) Javi García, Javier Saviola, Pablo Aimar and Ezequiel Garay?



Diego Laxalt – Uruguayan attacking left back, previously signed for Inter Milan but never played. 4 separate loan spells in Serie A but now playing for AC Milan.



Last Issues Quiz 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? **Hans Segers, Peter Schmeichel, Craig Forrest and Jan Stejskal**
- 2) Only 5 clubs have only ever had one manager in the Premier League – name the club and the manager?
Blackpool & Holloway, Bournemouth & Howe, Barnsley & Wilson, Swindon & Gorman and Oldham & Royle
- 3) Harry Redknapp as managed 5 Premier League clubs. List them in order of games actually managed (highest first)? **West Ham United, Portsmouth, Tottenham Hotspur, Queens Park Rangers and Southampton**
- 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.
Thierry Henry, Eric Cantona, Olivier Giroud, Louis Saha and Nicolas Anelka. The clubs are Blackburn Rovers and Leicester City
- 5) Name a player to have played for all the following: a City, a Hotspur, a Rangers, a Palace, a Villa and a United?
Wayne Routledge
- 6) What is highest fee paid for a domestic transfer, the player, and the two clubs involved? **Kylian Mbappe**

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? **Robbie Keane**
- 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? **Emmanuel Adebayor**
- 3) My team mates include Mario Mandzukic, Granit Xhaka, Nemanja Vidic, Marko Arnautovic, Lukas Podolski and Mohamed Salah. Who am I? **Xherdan Shaqiri**
- 4) My team mates include Ben Tal Haim, Shinji Kagawa, Dimitri Payet, Cesc Fabregas, Gabriel Paulista and Patrick Van Aanholt. Who am I? **Michy Batshuayi**
- 5) My team mates include Luis Figo, Jimmy Floyd-Hasselbaink, Xabi Alonso, Samir Nasri and Jordan Henderson. Who am I? **Boudewijn Zenden**

What club links the following players?

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



William-Fils "Willy" Aubameyang – Brother of Pierre-Emerick and Catilina. All started their careers at AC Milan with only Pierre-Emerick never making a first team appearance.



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 current and former 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.

In this issue we look at clubs from the North East of England that have had a significant presence in the Premier League era: we give you Middlesbrough, Newcastle United and Sunderland's selected 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, but these won't necessarily have been in the Premier League so you'll really have to jog the memory bank.



David Ivan – Slovakian midfielder, played briefly for Sampdoria before moving on to play for Chievo. Not the most famous David to play for Sampdoria, with Platt having done so from 1993-95.



Middlesbrough



Loan Rangers →

Small amount of appearances = 2



Samba! →



9 games

Games = 20
Goals = 0



Brazilian flair = lots
Games = none



Rodriginho – Brazilian playmaker, played and top scored for Corinthians in 2017 with his side winning the Série A and Paulista.



Newcastle United



6 years at the club
0 games

3 games



Loan Ranger



2 games

Games = 11
Goals = 0



1 game

15 games & 5 goals
BUT WHEN?



Layton Stewart – Young Liverpool centre forward hoping to make his mark the way previous home grown talent has in the past, ala Robbie Fowler and Michael Owen.



Sunderland



(again)

Loan Rangers

13 games



Expensive flop



Moyes' mate



Lord!



Hachim Mastour – The youngest ever Moroccan international aged 16 years old and 363 days, who despite all the promise never managed a senior appearance for AC Milan.



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

1	David Seaman	England	1988-2002	51	Christian Eriksen	Ajax	2009-2010
2	Gary Neville	Manchester United	1995-2011	52	Bobby Zamora	Queens Park Rangers	2011-2012
3	Roberto Carlos	Real Madrid	1996-2007	53	Simone Romagnoli	AC Milan	2009-2010
4	Javier Zanetti	Inter Milan	1995-2014	54	Mason Greenwood	Manchester United	2018-2019
5	Sergio Busquets	Barcelona	2014-2020	55	Emile Smith-Rowe	Arsenal	2018-2019
6	Franco Baresi	AC Milan	1979-1997	56	Ryan Smith	Arsenal	2003-2005
7	Son Heung-min	Tottenham Hotspur	2015-2020	57	Marvin Emnes	Swansea City	2013-2014
8	Teddy Sheringham	West Ham United	2004-2007	58	Stefan Handanovic	Udinese	2004-2005
9	Luis Suarez	Barcelona	2014-2020	59	Chris Willock	Arsenal	2015-2016
10	Lothar Matthaus	Bayern Munich	1992-2000	60	John Guidetti	Manchester City	2010-2015
11	Pavel Nedved	Juventus	2001-2009	61	Numan Curuksu	Osmanlispor	2014-2019
12	Bryan Robson	Manchester United	1992-1994	62	Harry Winks	Tottenham Hotspur	2013-2014
13	Thomas Muller	Germany	2009-2020	63	Andreas Weimann	Wolverhampton Wanderers	2016-2017
14	José María Gutiérrez Hernández	Real Madrid	1997-2010	64	Pietro Pelligi	Genoa	2015-2018
15	Gareth Barry	Aston Villa	1999-2002	65	Ben Sheaf	Arsenal	2017-2019
16	Fabian Barthez	France	1994-2006	66	Ruben Dias	Benfica	2015-2018
17	Pedro Rodriguez	Barcelona	2009-2013	67	Helder Costa	Benfica	2013-2014
18	Paul Scholes	Manchester United	1996-2011	68	Andrea Fulignati	Palermo	2014-2017
19	Paul Gascoigne	England	1989-1990	69	Joe Willock	Arsenal	2017-2018
20	Mista	Valencia	2002-2006	70	Massimo Taibi	Torino	2005-2006
21	Philip Lahm	Bayern Munich	2005-2017	71	Grigoris Georgatos	Olympiakos	2003-2004
22	Gael Clichy	Arsenal	2003-2011	72	Josip Ilcic	Atalanta	2017-2020
23	Sol Campbell	Arsenal	2002-2006	73	Salvatore Fresi	Inter Milan	2001-2002
24	Ali Daei	Bayern Munich	1998-1999	74	Julio Cruz	Lazio	2009-2010
25	Peter Crouch	Stoke City	2011-2019	75	Anselmo Robbiati	Fiorentina	2001-2002
26	Riyad Mahrez	Leicester City	2013-2018	76	Kerlon	Inter Milan	2009-2010
27	Fabio Quagliarella	Sampdoria	2015-2020	77	McDonald Mariga	Inter Milan	2013-2014
28	Jesper Blomqvist	Parma	1997-1998	78	Luciano Zauri	Lazio	2011-2013
29	Alvaro Morata	Chelsea	2018-2019	79	Vladimir Weiss	Olympiakos	2013-2014
30	Adrian Mutu	Juventus	2004-2005	80	Gokhan Inler	Besiktas	2016-2017
31	Ederson	Manchester City	2017-2020	81	Alexander Hleb	BATE	2014-2016
32	Christian Vieri	Inter Milan	1999-2005	82	Luca Antonini	Sampdoria	2003-2004
33	Pepe	Porto	2018-2019	83	Ilan Poveda-Ocampo	Manchester City	2018-2020
34	Andy Van Der Meyde	Ajax	1997-1999	84	Diogo Goncalves	Benfica	2017-2018
35	Steven Defour	Porto	2011-2014	85	Lassana Diarra	Anzhi Makhachkala	2012-2014
36	Dean Richards	Tottenham Hotspur	2001-2004	86	Daniel Osvaldo	Atalanta	2005-2006
37	Roberto Pereiya	Watford	2016-2020	87	Bruno Costa	Porto	2017-2018
38	James Milner	Leeds United	2002-2004	88	Seydou Doumbia	Roma	2014-2015
39	DJ Campbell	Blackpool	2010-2011	89	Odion Ighalo	Udinese	2009-2010
40	Hector Bellerin	Arsenal	2012-2014	90	Yann M'Vila	Inter Milan	2014-2015
41	Gerard DeLofeu	Barcelona	2010-2012	91	Simone Zaza	Sampdoria	2010-2011
42	Jason Puncheon	Crystal Palace	2014-2019	92	Victor Lindelof	Benfica	2013-2014
43	Andy Reid	Blackpool	2010-2011	93	Diego Laxalt	AC Milan	2018-2020
44	Nicolas Manolas	Roma	2014-2019	94	Willy Aubameyang	AC Milan	2007-2008
45	Alex Mitrovic	Newcastle United	2015-2018	95	David Ivan	Sampdoria	2014-2017
46	Barry Bannan	Crystal Palace	2013-2014	96	Rodriguinho	Corinthians	2012-2013
47	Ciaran Clark	Aston Villa	2009-2010	97	Layton Stewart	Liverpool	2019-2020
48	Emilio Insua	Liverpool	2006-2008	98	Hachim Mastour	AC Milan	2013-2015
49	Ryan Babel	Ajax	2004-2005	99	Mido	Roma	2004-2005
50	Robert Earnshaw	Blackpool	2013-2014	100	Aaron Mokoena	South Africa	1997-2010



Mido – Nomadic Egyptian striker playing throughout Europe in Belgium, Holland, Spain, France, Italy and England with attitude problems seemingly holding back any great success.



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

- The best number 10's
- The missing men
- Fashion Faux Pas in football
- In your Father's footsteps
- More best foreign XI's in the Premier League
- The Treatment Room
- The greatest XI never to....
- Country focus
- The Boot Room
- More Classic Kits
- More Historical line ups
- And much much more!!



Aaron Mokoena – The youngest player to play for South Africa, going on to win over 100 caps for the Bafana Bafana, wearing the number 100 to commemorate the 100th cap.



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