

MANCHESTER UNITED 2015 TRANSFER, TACTICAL & PERSONNEL REPORT

Written by J A Lombard



MANCHESTER UNITED



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Additional notes

All of the statistics in this paper have been provided by Squawka (<http://www.squawka.com/>) and Who Scored (<http://whoscored.com/>).

I understand the fact that statistics only tell part of the story, however I've done my best to link the statistics to each other to provide a clearer picture, opinions and bias are obviously apparent in parts, however these are the opinions of myself and not always considered the widely accepted opinion.

Please note; Statistical analysis has not been provided through out.

2 INTRODUCTION

The 10 month spell from August 2013 to May 2014 saw the demise of arguably the greatest sports institute on the planet at the hands of the now former Manchester United Manager David Moyes. In a bid for the Glazers, Manchester United's owners, to resuscitate this dying footballing giant it was essential that they find someone with the ability to 'do a Fergie' and unite the red half of Manchester.

The Aim of this report is to discuss Manchester United since the reign of Louis Van Gaal began, looking at tactics, personnel and the immediate future of the club, focusing specifically on playing and coaching staff.



3 SENIOR TEAM – JANUARY 2015

The Manchester United Senior team is one which has faced a lot of criticism and scrutiny over the past 18 months due to its lack of 'star power', form and performance.

Former Holland Manager, Louis Van Gaal has already started to clear out a lot of the 'deadwood' at Manchester United – players such as Tom Cleverley (Aston Villa), Javier Hernandez (Real Madrid) and Luis Nani (Sporting CP) (whom are some of the most inconsistent performers) have left the club on Loan), While others have been moved on to embark on new chapters in their careers; Danny Welbeck (Arsenal) and Patrice Evra (Juventus) are just two examples of permanent transfers out of the club.

3.1 PLAYER SALES

Typically speaking, Manchester United use the January window as an opportunity to sell or loan some of the more youthful playing staff. Expecting players such as Jonny Evans or Antonio Valencia to leave in January would perhaps be a little naïve to say the least.

Anders Lindegaard

Once upon a time Anders was seen as the successor to a retiring Edwin Van Der Sar by some, a player with solid attributes who is a victim of being too good for his current position at the club. Anders is almost certainly never going to claim the jersey of David De Gea so a move to pastures new may be the best option of the Danish shot stopper.

Likely Destination; A top 8 calibre club (Everton, Newcastle, Swansea City) or a lesser European league championship contender (Lyon, PSV, Porto, Besiktas).

Adnan Januzaj

The savior of Manchester United, the new Cristiano Ronaldo, Adnan Januzaj started his Manchester United career with a bang, turning in top class, man of the match performances week in, week out. Adnan was quite possibly the only part of the 13/14 campaign worth remembering and yet all of that seems nothing but a distant memory. In fact Januzaj has failed to perform on every given opportunity under Louis Van Gaal this season and as such found his playing time limited. A likely loan beckons for the young Belgium international, however United fans can be forgiven for comparing him to the last player to arrive with a bang in Manchester, Federico Macheda.

Likely Destination; Europa League contention clubs (Everton, Newcastle), PSG or a possible stint in Holland.

Nick Powell

It was a sunny afternoon, the date being May 27th 2012 and Crewe Alexandra were fighting for a place in League 1 against fellow play off finalists Cheltenham Town. Young Starlett Nick Powell had ran the show all season for Crewe and was set to do it one last time, in a very Henry-Gerrard esque combination Powell flicked the ball into the air and on the half turn volleyed a thunderous rocket into the top corner of the Wembley nets. Crewe were playing football back in League 1.

On July 1st of that very same year Nick Powell's blossoming career grew from strength to strength as he joined the biggest club in world football, fresh of the back of another successful season Manchester United wrapped up the signing of the most promising English player at that time and a 'future England Captain' if the then United Gaffer Sir Alex Ferguson is to be believed.

After a bright start, and a cracker against Wigan Athletic Nick found his minutes limited and as such was sent out on loan, unfortunately that seems to be the story of his career to date. Once likened to a young Frank Lampard, Nick Powell has largely been unsuccessful on every single loan spell he's had, in particular his most recent spell at Leicester City where he not only failed to find the net but he also failed to make any form of an impact and was sent packing back to Manchester after displaying a poor attitude and inability to be coached. It appears as if his most recent antics have earned the young Englishman a one way ticket out of Manchester.

Likely Destination; *Bottom half Premier League clubs; Burnley, West Brom, Hull City. Promotion chasing Championship clubs; Ipswich Town, Bournemouth, Middlesbrough. It is possible that the young attacking midfielder could face attention from one or two top half EPL clubs such as Newcastle United, West Ham or Southampton.*

Anderson

Once described as having the potential to be as good as Wayne Rooney and Ronaldinho, Anderson was destined for great things. The boy from Brazil started well, turning in decent displays in his first season at Manchester United and even further down the line in matches against Arsenal in the classic 8-2 victory and Manchester City in the 3-2 Community Shield victory. Unfortunately for the Brazilian crock persistent injuries and a glamorous lifestyle have ruined is once fruitful career. A man who once could only be stopped by taking away his legs is now being stopped by takeaways. There's no excuse for a professional athlete to be out of shape and overweight but Anderson is and I'm sure Louis Van Gaal has seen enough (quite literally) of the Samba star.

Likely Destination; *Brazil; Gremio, Corinthians, Santos, Flamengo. Argentina; River Plate, Boca Juniors.*

Marnick Vermijl

An up and down Manchester United youth career has seen the starlet divide many Manchester United fans, while some believe he should be given an opportunity in the first team especially considering the defensive crisis at United while others believe he's never shown the potential to be a Manchester United regular and should be shipped off sooner rather than later.

As a Under 23 player his presence has been noted, nominated for the Reserves player of the year in 2013, a mainstay on the team sheet and of course who can forget him leading the charge against Tottenham in the League Final.

Vermijl has outstayed his welcome at Reserve level and needs to make the step up to first team football, is that at Manchester United? I'm not so sure. The baby-faced assassin saw something in the young boy however 3 Manchester United bosses; Sir Alex Ferguson, David Moyes and Louis Van Gaal have decided against giving him opportunities. Thus leading towards a potential transfer in the near future perhaps?

Likely destination; *Championship level and below; Bournemouth, Leeds United, etc.*

3.2 TARGET AREAS

Since the arrival of Louis Van Gaal the club have strengthened significantly and spent over £150 Million in transfer fees to rebuild this fallen club.

However, rebuilding a team in one window is of course unrealistic and purchasing the players you need in January is probably seen as a rare but not impossible situation. Manchester United want to attract superstars and superstars are not willing to move clubs midway through a busy and potentially successful campaign.

Goalkeeper

David De Gea is without a doubt the man between the sticks for Manchester United, but there is an argument surrounding the personnel of the backup goalkeeper. Anders Lindegaard is possibly off, Ben Amos and Sam Johnstone aren't quite at the level required to perform at the highest level if god forbid something happen to big Dave.

A back is needed if Anders is to leave Old Trafford.

Central Defense

With rumors surrounding the uncertain future of Chris Smalling, Jonny Evans and Paddy McNair, Manchester United will need to strengthen in depth and quality in order to build a top quality central defense. – Marcos Rojo, Phil Jones and co aren't likely to bring the Premier League trophy back to Old Trafford without reinforcements.

Right Back

Make no mistake about it, Rafael is a brilliant attacking fullback when he plays...the problem however comes from the fact that he doesn't play that often, constant injuries and the odd rash tackle leading to a red card have seen the Brazilian, who is annoyingly not an international, watching from the stands more often than not.

Rafael is unlikely to be sold, but reinforcements are needed if Van Gaal is serious about returning Manchester United back to their title winning ways.

3.3 REPORTED TARGETS

Every day the press print pointless words in black and white, wasting paper and our time while they spout nonsense about who Manchester United are signing. We all love a gossip down the pub, with who's going where and why but the English Media have been working in overdrive this season. Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale, Cavani, Vidal, Cech and even James Milner are players our friends in the media would have Manchester United fans believe are signing.

Goalkeeper

Victor Valdes – *This one seems plausible, to an extent. Victor isn't in the same league as Dave but he's a good, experienced goalkeeper, however I'm not sure he'll be happy with sitting on the bench and I'm also pretty sure that Manchester United fans won't want to see him on £100,000 weekly wage to sit there.*

Asmir Begovic – *There was a time when Asmir Begovic was in line to replace Van Der Sar if the papers are to be believed and what a replacement he would have been. While the likes of Vorm, Mignolet, Krul and Szczesny have fallen away Begovic's form has remained consistent and to a high level. A top keeper, not a bench warmer.*

Petr Cech – *A lot of respect for the appropriately named Czech, one of the best in Premier League history who must be desperate to leave Chelsea to try and avoid a similar situation to Cudicini at Chelsea once, ironically Cech had arrived (Cudicini was a formidable Goalkeeper worthy of keeping any goal in Europe, however his love for Chelsea and perhaps Money? Meant his career didn't pan out as planned). A quick question though, why would Cech swap the Champions Elect bench for the rainy benches of Manchester?*

Central Defense

Adil Rami – *If Manchester United are to purchase Adil Rami it certainly will not be as a squad player, the talented Frenchman is one of the most under-rated central defenders in Europe. At 29 he's not a long term option but he's certainly a player who will bring calmness, composure and a steady pass completion rate to Manchester United's backline.*

Mats Hummels – *A player I've been against from day one. Mats is a terrific player don't get me wrong, his ability to read the game is second to none but he does have a tendency to handicap his side when he plays. Germany have to play a deep defensive line to make up for his lack of pace which means the midfield and forwards have to press with caution, for Dortmund he's been known to fall asleep during big games (See the Robben goal in the UEFA Champions League Final) and this season he's also been one of if not the worst senior player at the club. If anything I'd much rather have his quicker, more fearless albeit much less technical defensive partner **Subotic**.*

Ron Vlaar – *An unspectacular link to say the least, but somebody who I would who heartedly object too. Ron Vlaar has always been a steady player, no worse than what we currently have in terms of ability but far superior in terms of knowing the Van Gaal system. For anything under £5 Million I would expect Vlaar to be a welcomed and solid addition. Injury concerns are apparent however I see no cause for concern as a sporadic squad player.*

Miranda – I'm not sure why we're being linked with the 30 year old Atletico defender. He's not an awful defender but the hype surrounding him doesn't exist for a reason, he's unlikely to improve our already poor defense and will only lose his pace as he advances into his 30's. As a Van Gaal signing it doesn't make sense.

Ezequiel Garay – Another link I don't fully understand, if Garay was to be a Manchester United player he would have been by now. Prior to his arrival at Real Madrid, United were heavily linked with the Argentine but unfortunately lost out. Then after 1 good season at Benfica, Mr. Moyes decides to cancel the transfer put in place but his predecessor Sir Alex Ferguson, fast forward another 12 months and Garay is still waiting for his United dream move having not been chased by current boss Louis Van Gaal. Instead Ezequiel has taken up the opportunity to play in Russia, yet the links still persist.

As a defender however, he is exactly what we need, intelligent, quick, technical and an ready formed relationship with Marcos Rojo (also, the Argentines have been known to swap between a back 3 and 4 over the past 3 years meaning he'll be well versed in his role at the club).

Fabian Schar – I like Schar, although not as much as some others do. He's a versatile, young Center back who would transform our defense considerably...on paper. On the field he's raw, young and at times very reckless. Manchester United could do with some young blood destined for great things, but currently our main preference should be to sign an experienced leader who knows how to play the Louis Van Gaal way.

Winston Reid – Ironically it's probably the least favorite player that I really want to see at United. He doesn't have the big name of a Hummels or Garay but he's a cracking central defender who I believe would give our defense the edge that it needs providing he can grasp the dreaded 3 man defense.

A young Rio Ferdinand if ever I saw one, in fact, no. He reminds me of a young Vincent Kompany, his pace is impressive, he can pass the ball, isn't afraid of dribbling, cracks skulls with the best of them and isn't afraid to tell his teammates if and when they've screwed up. I'm a huge fan of this lad and if he moves to Manchester United he'll be a huge success. Liverpool, Arsenal and Spurs are all reportedly interested in the Kiwi.

Right Back

Seamus Coleman – Coleman seems like he's purpose built for Manchester United, having played in a 3-5-2 for Everton occasionally he seems like a good option. Quite possibly the best right back in the Premier League last year, with the exception of Zabaleta. His defensive game is far more effective than most will have you believe with the Everton right back winning 71% of his tackles – Rafael on the overhand manages to win 45% of his tackles while German legend and benchmark has a tackle win percentage of 40% and Manchester City defender Pablo Zabaleta also manages 45%. **A price tag of £20M+ may be too much for Manchester United though.**

Juanfran – The Spaniard has seemingly come from nowhere, having endless potential as a youngster he failed to deliver when stepping up to the first team football in Spain. However, over the past few years he's matured and seemingly blossomed into an exciting and solid fullback option. Defensively he's as solid as any modern day fullback (with a tackle percentage bettering Lahm and Zabaleta) while also offering a constant presence going further forward. Built like Antonio Valencia but with a more astute

nose of defensive responsibilities and an incredible eye for a pass, age may not be on his side but he's certainly an option to consider.

Dani Alves – *One of the greatest attacking fullbacks in footballing history. Arguably the man who changed the role of the modern fullback into an effective attacking outlet, Dani Alves was a world class talent. At 31 his age is counting against him, however he's a perfect fit into a fullback system and as Mourinho has proved at Chelsea with Filipe, age hasn't got to be a big factor. He wouldn't be my first choice but to rotate with Antonio Valencia and Rafael he's certainly an option which has to be considered.*

Gregory Van Der Wiel – *Not my first option by a long shot and perhaps an option many would consider inferior and pointless. Last season injuries cut his campaign short and ultimately missed the World Cup as a result. He knows Van Gaal, he understands the philosophy and has been part of a 3 man defensive set up in the past. Certainly a good squad option to say the least. With PSG signing Aurier in the summer Wiel may be available for under £8 Million.*

Lukasz Piszczek - *Playing 22 times and racking up 7 assists for the German disappointments this season, Piszczek is a more than qualified alternative to Rafael. He's direct and always providing an attacking threat however at times his defensive displays do leave a lot to be desired with Bender, Gundogan and Sahin known for doing his dirty work. Not the greatest alternative but certainly a player worth considering especially if Dortmund continue their downward spiral.*

Nathaniel Clyne – *I wasn't sure if I was going to write about Clyne. He's a talented young player, however his 'hype to stardom' has been a little overdone. He's shaky defensively and offensively, offering a poor crossing ratio and constantly caught out of position, would I take him? As a young player to mould, definitely. As a starting option? Not at all. Southampton will most likely ask for sums upwards of £15 Million also.*

3.4 MY SIGNINGS

Goalkeeper

Working on the assumption that Lindegaard is leaving Manchester United in January I would look to secure the services of Victor Valdes on a free agency. His relationship with Van Gaal has pretty much made it a guaranteed signing and perhaps knowing he's a backup option would lead to reduced wage demands (my only concern). Would it also perhaps act as another ploy for De Gea to stay at United? A friend and perhaps icon training with him on a weekly basis?

My option; Victor Valdes.

Central Defender(s)

Central defenders are needed, any blind man and his dog could tell you that. Although United don't have a poor record of conceding goals this season they do have a poor record of making mistakes in the back field, fortunately for United big Dave has been building walls behind him.

Getting major targets in January is unlikely to say the least, but with players departing in the summer (See summer 2015 player sales) a few central defenders will need to be signed both now and in a few months.

Winston Reid is the first central defender I would opt for to join up at Old Trafford, at the very least he's a very good squad player, At the very best he leads the line and proves to be the player I believe he will be. Anything upto £12 Million would be an absolute bargain.

By other option would also be an unlikely target in Ron Vlaar, once again he's in a very similar bracket to Reid without the ability to become a top class defender. He's someone who commands his defenders well and is a leader from the back, along with Reid we could have 2 hard hitting central defenders.

My options; Ron Vlaar & Winston Reid

Right Back

There are certainly some big options for right fullback this January, I'm not overly convinced on the availability of any of them, but out of those we've been linked too, the best option considering price, experience and title winning pedigree would be Juanfran, Dani Alves would be a considerable option however Barcelona, now with their ban maybe inclined to keep hold of the Brazilian until the end of the season.

Juanfran may also not be available for transfer in January, but a sizeable offer will hopefully be enough to convince him and Atletico to part ways with each other in January.

If Seamus Coleman is an available option then he is somebody that needs to be pursued as he's without a doubt the best box to box right back in world football.

My Option; Coleman (followed by Juanfran and/or Dani Alves)

4 SENIOR TEAM – SUMMER 2015

The winter transfer window is where things tend to get interesting, it's also the time when the rumor mill starts up again and the media goes crazy linking us with every players in the world in the hope of getting one or two right and bringing us an exclusive.

It's also the time when our team should begin to take shape as a final product, interesting!

4.1 PLAYER SALES

David De Gea

*This is mainly going off of a worst case scenario, but the threat is very real and there is confirmed interest from Real Madrid – Who **always** get their man. Big Dave may be about to leave our shores to return home to sunny Spain and sign with Real Madrid. He is a boyhood Atletico fan but if it's an opportunity to advance his career and return closer to his family then I believe it's an option he would find hard to turn down. **Is he off?** I'm not sure. But this story certainly has legs.*

Likely destination; Real Madrid.

Central Defense:

*I'm expecting a lot of movement in central defense this coming summer, quite frankly the players we have either aren't good enough or are constantly out injured (which isn't any good either). **Jonny Evans** should be entering the twilight of his career and unfortunately hasn't come to grips with responsibilities in a 3 man defense, very similar to my criticism of **Smalling** (The only reason I believe **Jones** will stay is because of his immense potential, pace and ability to bring the ball out from defense), I also believe to be leaving Manchester United this coming summer. Thorpe and Keane are two players who I think quite simply aren't good enough for Manchester United at a time where we need excellence not potential excellence.*

Likely Destinations;

Jonny Evans

Chris Smalling

Tom Thorpe

Michael Keane `

Newcastle United (Mid table Premier League clubs).

Arsenal, Spurs, Everton, etc. (top 6 Premier League clubs)

Mid to low Championship Clubs (e.g. Leeds United)

Burnley, Leicester, West Brom (Bottom half Premier League Clubs)

Darren Fletcher

I like Darren Fletcher, a lot. For me He's a club great bordering on Club legend. If it wasn't for him I don't believe he would have had the success we have had. A number of performances spring to mind e.g. the 1-0 vs Chelsea in 2005. He shows everything this club is about, twice he's risen from the ashes of obscurity to play a role for Manchester United (the first being when he was written off by the fans in his early Manchester United career).

As high as my opinions are of Fletcher, it's time to realize that his time with the club is up unfortunately and he needs to move on to a club where his on field contributions are not only going to be more appreciated but also more needed.

Likely destination; Hull City (Mid Table EPL clubs) or Celtic.

Wilfred Zaha

I didn't see it, David Moyes didn't see it and now Louis Van Gaal can't see it either. Don't get me wrong, Zaha has the potential to be a very good player, but in no way, shape or form was he ready for Manchester United. Next season he'll be 22, an age where maturity will begin to show through, unfortunately all I can see is a player with that raw potential I saw at Crystal Palace, not a world beater by any stretch of the imagination but a good player nonetheless.

Pace, Power trickery and no end product. A line I'll be using on the next player I'll be writing about (no prizes for guessing who).

Likely Destination; Crystal Palace (Top 10 Premier League team)

Luis Nani

When Cristiano Ronaldo packed up his bags and headed to Madrid many saw it as the time for Nani to become his own player get out of Cristiano's shadow. Credit to Luis Nani he did step up to the plate at first, scoring goals and assisting a goal almost every game. However, the more he played, as each season passed he became more and more inconsistent, the magic moments were less frequent and eventually we were left with a shell of a player who had potential to go as far as Angel Di Maria has.

I think it's time for Nani to move now though, his form back in Portugal is testament to his need for a change of scenery rather than a change in fortunes. Unlike most I don't hold anything against Nani, in fact I'm thankful for what he did prior to 2011.

Likely Destination; Portugese Premier Division (Benfica, Porto, Sporting CP), Serie A (Juventus, Milan, Roma).

Angelo Henriquez

I'd never really seen much of Henriquez, in the games he did play he didn't look impressive and in general never bought into much of the hype.

So far he's failed to look like a United player but seeing as he didn't really cost much and is still only a kid you can't write him off as a United player just yet. However, with Wilson growing into his role at United, Falcao potentially staying, Rooney and RVP it's hard to see exactly where he fits in and for that reason I can see him leaving the club in the summer either on loan or Permanently.

Likely destination; Stoke City, Getafe, Levante, Real Zaragoza, (Mid table clubs in Italy, England and Spain).

Will Keane

I am so gutted about Will Keane. Before his major injury playing for England a couple of years ago he was tipped for massive things, he single handedly destroyed the U23's league and according to Sir Alex was going to major part in the following campaign following his injury.

Unfortunately he just hasn't recovered in the way we'd hoped, and unfortunately Wilson has skipped ahead of him in the pecking order and competition will prove to be too much for the young Englishman.

Likely Destination; Mid – Low Premier League Clubs (perhaps QPR).

Javier Hernandez

I'm a huge fan of Javier Hernandez, however he needs to be the main man at whichever club he's at, unfortunately now more than ever he'll never lead the line at Manchester United and at 27 he needs to think about himself and move on. Real Madrid aren't going to be his final destination either by the looks of it.

A great goal scorer, a poor football player.

Likely Destination; Top 6 Premier League Clubs (Arsenal, Tottenham, Southampton), Italian Clubs (Juventus, AS Roma, Milan) or Spain (Athletico Madrid).

4.2 TARGET AREAS

Assuming the above outgoings happen and that Manchester United sign two Central defenders, a Goalkeeper and a Right fullback in the January transfer window then I believe the squad will need to sign players in the following positions.

Goalkeeper

With David De Gea potentially off and the signing of a backup Goalkeeper in January, the best possible option would be to recruit a first choice goalkeeper in the summer window. Many targets are potentially available who would be able to keep the sheets clean at Old Trafford.

Central Defense

Manchester United need to strengthen heavily with first choice central defenders in order to challenge for the Premier League title. Although United possess adequate squad players they do not possess the type of defender who is capable of stopping world class forwards.

Central Midfield

The problem area of the past few years is on its way to being fixed, Herrera and Blind were signed in summer 2014, Carrick has returned from injury in great form and Fellaini as found himself to be a key player at old Trafford. However, all that side United still need a defensive presence to rotate with Fellaini and a mobile box to box midfielder (a role currently being played by Wayne Rooney).

Right Winger

Antonio Valencia is a very good squad player, Adnan Januzaj is a number 10 who can operate out wide, but what United need is a player who can operate as a wide man and come inside if need be, Angel Di Maria is a terrific winger, but United will need threats down both sides if they're to compete.

Left Winger

Ashley Young has been in great form of late, but he, like Antonio Valencia is a squad player and not a first team regular. He's proven to be useful player this season but nearing the twilight of his career and ultimately will start to lose pace of the next few years. Di Maria is a brilliant player also, however he may be more useful playing in the middle of a 3 man midfield (as he did for Real Madrid), a left winger is needed for Manchester United next season.

4.3 REPORTED TARGETS

Goalkeeper

Petr Cech – I wrote about Cech earlier, and although I said he wouldn't want the move, there is a big difference between a backup keeper and a number goal keeper at a huge club. Of course he isn't a player I would expect at Old Trafford however he would have to be considered if we were to lose big Dave.

Iker Casillas – Real Madrid would be replacing the Spanish legend with De Gea and we could possibly do the complete opposite. I'm not sure how much Casillas has left to offer at the top but perhaps a change in direction is exactly what he needs. Comparing him to Reina while at Liverpool, who did have many incredible games and won points on his own for Liverpool (yes, he did have poor games, but overall I thought he was a decent keeper), lets remember that Casillas is a better goalkeeper than Reina anyway, so although he may have issues with coming for corners and dealing with high balls, he's still a terrific goalkeeper.

Asmir Begovic – Brilliant Goalkeeper, in fact I would say he's one of the most consistent goalkeepers I've ever seen. He'll be available relatively cheaply at around £15 Million and is still young enough to be a 10 year goalkeeper. I'd be happy with Asmir.

Hugo Lloris – Very similar to Neuer in my opinion, incredibly fast off his line and possesses great attributes which make him a very effective sweeper keeper. I would love to have Lloris at United if De Gea were to leave – in fact he'd probably be one of the first options. However, this is Spurs and this is Levy. It'll be a heavy transfer fee to sign the French international.

Adrian – I'm sure many of you will be surprised to see Adrian on this list. Well, I've watched a lot of West Ham this season (I'm a really big fan of big Sam) and Adrian has been just incredible. When I first decided to write about Adrian I done a bit of digging to see how well he's done and he's been better than David De Gea statistically. He's faced more shots and conceded less goals than De Gea, has a higher save rate and has been quite possibly the most valuable player this side of the Premier League season.

Okay, so he's not a big name and a lot of people will tell me we shouldn't be linked with an average Goalkeeper, but I've genuinely been blown away by his performances this year. Before anybody slates Adrian's inclusion, watch him, watch a West Ham game this week and see if you're impressed, I know I certainly was.

Adrian's stats according to Squaka are below;

Performance Score	Total Appearances	Total Clean Sheets
158	19	4
Avg. Goals Conceded	Squawka Awards	Avg. Saves Per Game
1.21	8/11	2.68
Avg. Saves Per Goal	Avg. Claim Success	Avg. Punches
2.22	96%	26%
Dist. Success	Dist. Length	Total Yellow/Red
56%	47m	2/0

Central Defense

Diego Godin – I do like Godin, I'm just not 100% sure why he would leave the club he loves, he's loves Atletico, the fans love him and he's their captain. For me, it just doesn't make much sense. His age is also something which I think counts against him to a degree, he's a fantastic defender though and would certainly improve our backline 10 fold. He's quick, strong as an ox and possesses great technical ability, an all-round solid defender.

Gerard Pique – According to the papers Gerard is returning to Manchester, I'm in two minds about how I feel about this lad in general, he's a good defender but I'm not sure that he's what we need. He's very similar to Hummels in that he's unable to really play a high line or against pacey forwards. A good player but for what we're trying to build I'm not sure he's the right option.

Jan Vertonghen – Jan Vertonghen is a brilliant central defender, of course he has rough edges and his concentration lacks that needed of a truly world class player but he does do a job on a regular basis for Tottenham. However, this is Spurs and aside from the cost we have to be realistic about a possible transfer. Firstly much like Godin he's their captain, and part of a side that's going to grow into a champions League club at some stage.

Andrea Barzagli – One of few players I would happily take at Manchester United. Many would have only seen his poor displays in the World Cup, which admittedly were poor but he's been a constant at Juventus and has shown brilliant form over the past few years. Very good player, quick, agile and can play as either a modern ball playing central defender or an old fashion kick 'em style defender.



Central Midfield

Kevin Strootman – Who doesn't like a bit of Kevin Strootman? By some he's considered over-rated, by others extremely under-rated, If anything it'll appear that he's a perfect replacement for Michael Carrick if we're simply discussing reputation. Surprisingly, Strootman is a lot more mobile than most will have you believe (it's key to remember that mobility is not pace) and his ability to move up and down the field springs from his former positions: Once an attacking midfielder Strootman knows exactly how to move forward, find spaces and score goals. The defensive aspect of his game is also something that has vastly improved, especially since his move to AS Roma. The one thing Strootman lacks is pace, however in a midfield with Herrera and possible Di Maria, while also playing in a team built on possession and not counter attacks there is no reason why Strootman would be an exciting fit for Manchester United.

That said, according to Squaka in his 2 games since returning his contribution hasn't been at all bad in Serie A. However, from watching his last outing against Sassuolo his defensive display was poor, failing to make a single tackle, interception or clearance in just under an hour of football. Moving further forward he was slightly better with a 74% pass accuracy (0% key passes completed) and 3 scoring opportunities created.

Before his injury I would have snapped your hand off for Strootman, now I believe he's a player we must look at with extreme caution over the next few months.

Arturo Vidal – If you're playing the latest FIFA game or Football Manager Game then I'm sure that Arturo Vidal is just an unstoppable monster, however, that isn't the case in the real world.

I've watched very little of him this season, a few games here and there but not an awful lot. Vidal as a player I like, his work rate and box to box abilities did at one stage make him the best central midfielder player on the planet.

Yet, much like Strootman it appears as if Vidal has been knocked by his big knee injury last season and unfortunately it's played a big part on his performances this season. His energy levels are there as they've always been but his specific attributes have taken a big dip.

Defensively speaking Vidal has lost out in tackles 61% of the time, only completed 3 successful dribbles in 14 games and given away more fouls through challenges than not (59%).

Offensively, he's doing okay, scoring 6 goals and making 488 successful passes in the 14 games he's played in with more than half of those being forward passes.

Personally, the jury is still on Vidal for me, a terrific player on his day however the question has to be asked; **has he peaked?**

Morgan schneiderlin – Morgan has had a pretty impressive rise to fame at Southampton. Not much of a fuss would have been made about the young man before the beginning of last season. Since his arrival on the big stage he's supposedly won a lot of plaudits for his ability on the field with recent media links to Liverpool, Arsenal, PSG and Tottenham.

He's 100% a true leader on the field and you'll be hard pressed to find a player with the creative and defensive abilities of the young Frenchman. But, as always the media hype surrounding the Southampton player will have you thinking he's better than he actually is.

In his 15 games for Southampton this year he's managed to get himself sent off once and yellow carded on a further 5 occasions, which isn't helped by his poor tackling stats where he's only been successful 41 times out of 102. In complete contrast he has managed to bring the ball out of defense well enough over the course of the season with only 1 failed dribbling attempt all year (admittedly he's only attempted 5).

Averaging 4 defensive actions a game, with half of those being interceptions and the other half tending to be clearances – his reactions are certainly up to speed.

His passing is what I've found to be really interesting, perhaps Koeman is a more attacking and direct manager to Van Gaal, and it is simply the instruction of Koeman that is giving Schneiderlin his impressive passing statistics; 89% pass completion of which 67% were forward thinking passes. Not bad for a defensive minded midfielder.

It appears as if Morgan is a good player, a very good player in fact, however I would call his discipline and defensive record into question, his tackling needs improving if he's to make strides up to bigger clubs in his career.

He's certainly somebody I would pay close attention too however.

Victor Wanyama – How many of us were screaming for Sir Alex Ferguson to sign the 23 year old a couple of years ago?

Well, maybe I'm here to tell you that you're all wrong and he is in fact an average player, we'll see.

Seeing as Wanyama is a defensive midfielder let's start on the defensive side of the game. Over the course of the season thus far, having played 17 games Wanyama has managed to make just over half of his attempted tackles (51%), complete 100% of his dribbling take ons (16/16) and get booked only 3 times. The most impressive defensive statistics of our midfield targets mentioned here.

Going forward, Wanyama has stuck the ball away 3 times all of which have been with his right foot and create 8 chances in total (1 assist, 7 key passes). His passing accuracy is also very impressive with an 86% pass completion rate and 56% of those passes have forward thinking. His shooting is hugely sporadic with a very hit and miss target ratio with around 8 of his missed shots (50%) finding their way close to the corner flag than the goal posts.

Losing out on Paul Pogba was a bitter blow, but Victor Wanyama could just be the next best thing, at only 23 I think the young lad has an incredible future ahead of him.

Wingers

I was going to split this up into left and right but I've decided to do them together simply because the ability to interchange is a big attribute for wingers in the modern game.

Arjen Robben (Right) – *The player I think Van Gaal would want at Manchester United more than any other, the tricky winger, although in the latter years of his career is certainly a player that makes headlines for all the right reasons.*

Just to give a quick insight into the form of Robben this year here are some of his statistics; 13 appearances, 10 goals, 35 key passes, 3 assists, 26 shots, 83% pass accuracy (366 successful forward passes) and an average of 1 interception per game.

I'm not sure if Robben would want to leave the Allianz while Bayern are in the form of their life, however it is certainly a player Manchester United must enquire about going into the 2015/16 season.

Arda Turan (Left) – *He's not quick, he's not full of step overs but one think that Arda Turan guarantees you is end product.*

I thought that at 27 years old and with the signing of Griezmann that his days would be numbered in the capital, but it appears as if I've been proven wrong for this year at least. The Turkish maestro has been a key part of Atletico's team this year turning in quality performance after quality performance.

Having made 14 appearances and scoring on 3 of those this season, assisting a further 3 and providing another 17 key passes Arda has certainly been keeping himself busy in the final third of the pitch.

Although that's where we see an end to the impressive part of Turan's season, seeing a heavy number of backwards passes for the winger and a lack of productivity in the defensive part of the field may indicate that he's not exactly what Van Gaal will be looking for moving forward.

An effective and interesting alternative at what would be a reasonable fee, however he may have already peaked and found a level which suits him.

A useful squad player perhaps? Or do Manchester United possess plenty?

Juan Cuadrado (Right) – *Fresh of the back of a terrific World Cup where his name became one of the most talked about in world football could Cuadrado be heading to the Premier League and Manchester United?*

The talented Colombian who would occupy a deeper wing back role in if he were to move to Manchester United as well as the forward role he plays in Fiorentina has had something of a remarkable 2014 and he seems destined to carry that form into 2015.

In a more advanced winger role, Cuadrado has scored 3 goals (2 right, 1 left) in 13 appearances this season contributing a further 3 assists and unlocking defenses with key passes on 23 other occasions. A pass completion rate of 85% has seen him play more backwards (52.5%) passes than forward which could be seen as one of few negatives for the 26 year old.

In a deeper wing back role for Columbia, Cuadrado has been equally as impressive, netting once in the past 5 games and creating 8 more chances (4 assists), his passing success drops to 84% keeping a similar statistic of backwards passes.

Cuadrado would surely be a great success in the Premier League, a well-built frame along with an eye for key passes and a terrific use of both feet would be an improvement on the current options at Manchester United.

He's certainly an upgrade on Antonio Valencia.

Marco Reus (Left) – *Many would consider Marco Reus the hottest property outside of Spain and the most likely player to end up at Real Madrid sooner rather than later, the German is yet to show signs of slowing down and has contributed well for Dortmund in the midst of a dreadful season for the club and an injury hit season for the player.*

Marco hardly needs an introduction and would single handedly transform Manchester United's attack from one of the best in the Premier League to one of the best in Europe, the pacey German has managed to add goals to his game over the past 2 years and his brilliance is not reflected in Dortmund's current league position.

In his 7 game this season Reus has been involved in 5 goals, scoring 3 of them and providing a further 18 key passes. Perhaps most surprising is that in the small amount of games played Reus has managed to make an astonishing 10 tackles (which for an advanced forward is impressive).

Whether Reus fancies swapping Germany for England remains to be seen, although he's certainly an exciting player for fans to keep an eye on.



4.4 MY SIGNINGS

Central Defense

Earlier I made the point that Manchester United need an experienced leader at the back to command the defense, and I stand by that statement. However, much like Van Gaal I believe that an experienced leader doesn't have to reflect that experience in games played or age.

*3 of the 4 central defenders play a very similar style of football, **Inigo Martinez** is a player who needs to move on to a bigger club to complete his transformation into what I believe would be the best central defender to come out of Spain since the emergence of a young Puyol. Make no mistake that he's still a young lad learning his trade but the ability this lad possesses is already making him a stand out candidate, this season alone Inigo Martinez has completed 453 forward passes as opposed to 120 backwards passes and played 3 key passes for Sociedad.*

The other central defender that I believe needs to be signed is Italian legend Giorgio Chiellini, a player who has always committed his career to Juventus and given his all every time he steps out onto the football field. Giorgio is everything that Van Gaal looks for in a defender; Tough, Versatile, Quick and technical – the perfect all-rounder. The 30 year old is yet to make an attacking contribution having failed to register a single shot on target, but he has contributed in other ways, playing 8 key passes, winning 25 headers and 20 tackles in 13 games for Juventus this term. A pass accuracy of 88% is also very impressive with the average pass covering nearly 20 meters. – not to mention his heavy involvement in both a 3 and 4 man defense over the years making his versatility a big advantage in the Italians favor.

The remaining 2 options, who would suffice as back up targets are Marc Bartra of Barcelona and Laporte of Bilbao – both central defenders have big futures ahead of them in very different ways. Bartra first has only featured 5 times for Barcelona this term, making 171 forward passes in doing so and being fouled 3 times (not committing a single foul himself), his heading statistics are also incredibly successful – winning 15 of 20 headers so far this season. The young defender is perhaps too young to walk into the Manchester United first team, however he's certainly a player who could grow into the role next to a cultured and experienced partner.

Up next, is Laporte, a player who I believe is going to be a superb player in the future, perhaps a better fit for Manchester United than Bartra. The 20 year old has been an ever present figure for the Basque club this season racking up 14 appearances and being substituted 0 times in the process.

His slight frame is something that would need changing if he were to move to the Premier League, standing at just 6'2 and weighing a little over 88KG Laporte would find it difficult against the Benteke's and Bony's of this world. The Frenchman has played a total of 559 forward passes average a total distance of 24 meters (some distance!). His technical ability outweighs his lack of build, quick, effective and a very good read of the game does make Laporte an attractive alternative to Inigo Martinez or Marc Bartra.

Central Midfield

Victor Wanyama has surely got to me the midfield man to come into Manchester United in the summer of 2015. This season especially the young saints midfielder is showing promise further forward and living up to the billing he was giving while plying his trade in Scotland. A sure thing that would do more than give the Manchester United midfield power and direction.

Failing the addition of Wanyama, the pursuit of Dutch midfielder and former Manchester City midfield general **Nigel De Jong** has to be a considered option. Arguably Milan's best player so far in the current campaign the tough tackling midfielder has many advantages that Van Gaal may find too hard to turn down.

De Jong has previously worked under Van Gaal with the Dutch national team and understands not only the system but the demand of the new Manchester United gaffer, his knowledge of the Premier League is also something which would make him a prime candidate for United this summer.

Playing 550 forward passes (and only 208 backwards passes) De Jong always looks for the forwards option, his tough tackling name still exists having been booked in over half of Milan's games this season.

He's also contributed with 4 key passes and 2 goals in 13 games.

Gundogan is the second midfielder that Manchester United could possibly target in the Summer 2015 window. Ilkay has started to do what Strootman and Vidal have failed to do with both his performances and statistical review and that's prove his fitness after a long injury lay off.

Admittedly, there's a long way to go before Gundogan can be considered back to his best, but we have a long way left of the season and with Real Madrid, Bayern and Chelsea stocked in midfield, Barcelona unable to sign players and PSG being effected by the FFP rules, Manchester United remain one of the only clubs in Europe capable of signing the midfielder realistically.

On his way back this season Gundogan has played in 8 games, Scoring once, assisting once and playing 8 key passes. An 88% pass accuracy shows the German still has an eye for a ball while his take on statistics make for impressive reading (12/16) and 27 attempted tackles show his energy levels and ability to move around the field are still in full flow despite his injury.

Unfortunately, an issue surrounding Gundogan is the condition of his back, and is supposedly the factor behind Real Madrid pulling out of a deal for the 24 year in 2012. **It's something Manchester United would need to monitor closely if they were to sign the midfielder.**

Wingers

Seeing consistency from a winger is become rarer and rarer as the years go on, hitting a target with a cross and beating a man are both things which can't be done with 100% completion, plus the ever evolving role of the winger requiring them to cut inside, shoot with both feet, swap flanks and offer a defensive presence is making the role much, much more difficult to play.

*The winger I believe that Manchester United should be aiming at 100% is **Marco Reus**, it's hardly a surprise given what a talented winger the young German is, on par with the likes of Angel Di Maria, Alexis Sanchez and Gareth Bale, Reus really is one of a kind.*

A forward 3 of; Di Maria, Falcao and Marco Reus would surely give the United fans plenty to shout and sing about in 2015.

Alternatively, a 'savvy' purchase may be that of under-rated Belgium winger Kevin Mirallas, having scored 5 goals in 13 appearances this term and created a further 12 scoring opportunities the Belgium is someone the club should keep an eye on moving forward. As the season has gone on Kevin has improved drastically and according to Squakwa the 27 year old has been their 3rd best player.

He's not Marco Reus but he's certainly a credible alternative.

*Moving onto the right hand side the undisputed choice of winger has to be Juan Cuadrado, the analysis above explains why the young Colombian should be considered a primary target for Manchester United, his ability is only complimented further by his flexibility to play across a number of positions and maintain a high level of performance **(Right Back, Right Wing Back, Right Midfield, Right Wing, Left Midfield, Left Wing, Central Attack Midfield and Striker)***

5 LOAN PLAYER ANALYSIS

5.1 ON LOAN

Radamel Falcao

It may be too soon to really judge the contribution of the Colombian, especially as 2014 would probably be considered to be the worst in the prolific striker's career. Unfortunately due to the severity of his injury we can't look back through 2014 and find some interesting stats pre-injury.

Therefore I'm going to try and honestly assess the Colombian's contribution for Manchester United since his arrival.

Match fitness is a problem for Falcao, having only started 7 games this term, of which 2 were finished he appears to be struggling a little with the pace of the Premier League, which is perfectly acceptable considering his injury lay off. However, the fact is we're 4 months into his recovery and his ability to finish 90 minutes is still in question and that's a problem.

Putting the ball in the goal is probably the Colombian's biggest threat and his goal return would have you believe that perhaps he's not cut out for the Premier League, and in some aspects people may be right. But if we simply look at his shooting statistics over the course of the season it makes for impressive reading having had 11 shots on target in his 12 games with only 4 shots off target (excluding blocked shots).

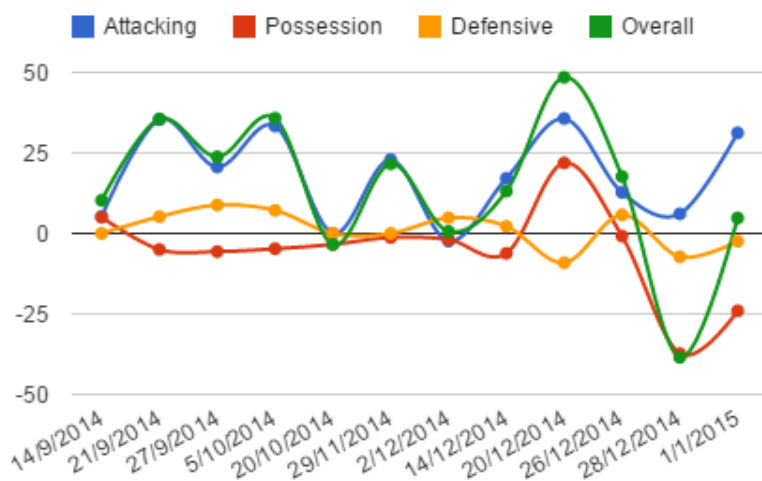
In comparison with the other top marksman in world football, Falcao rocks up with comparable statistics;

Player	On target percentage
Radamel Falcao	65%
Cristiano Ronaldo	75%
Lionel Messi	65%
Sergio Aguero	61%
Diego Costa	68%

Away from the goal tally and shooting statistics Falcao has looked impressive in other areas of his game for Manchester United this season, especially with his all-around play. Considering he's only played 90 minutes on two occasions his assist rate and key pass rate are impressive with 3 assists and 7 key passes and an averaging 86% pass accuracy (12 apps). In comparison to his premier league rivals Falcao does fail to flatter, with Diego Costa creating 29 (16 apps) opportunities and Sergio Aguero creating a further 15 (15 apps). Compared to his European counterparts the gulf once again increases; Messi has created 42 chances in 16 games while Cristiano Ronaldo offers 38 chances in 14 appearances.

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To say that Falcao has improved since day 1 would also be a deceiving, according to Squawka his performances have been hit and miss during all of his appearances (the fact he's only played 2 minute minutes have to be accounted for in this assessment).



90 minute performances against Aston Villa on December 20th indicate one of his more impressive games however against Tottenham on 28th December indicates his worst performance for Manchester United.

Ultimately, it would be idiotic to consider Falcao a poor signing or that his contribution hasn't been impactful during certain times of the season, however he hasn't lived up to the billing that Manchester United fans were expected as of yet, it remains to be seen whether he can up his performances and contribution in order to stay at Manchester United next season.

5.2 AWAY ON LOAN

This section is going to be a fair amount shorter than most of the others, mainly because I've seen very little of our Loanees with the exception of Zaha, Cleverley, bits of Hernandez and Nani. If I'm able too I'll discuss what I've seen and give my own view on that, however I will be relying on statistical data to look at our players performances.

Goalkeepers:

Unfortunately I haven't found time to watch either of our young Goalkeepers this season, even though I've been desperate to watch Milinkovic, so I'll be using Squawka and a few other sources such as match reports to base this analysis.

*Starting with **Vanja Milinkovic**, there isn't an awful lot of data surrounding the young Serbian, however he has managed to keep 7 clean sheets in the 17 appearances he's made this season, conceding a total of 18 goals in the process and oddly enough picking up 3 yellow cards.*

Ultimately not an awful lot is known about him and his performances this season, it looks as if he's got some way to go before, as you'd expect, he's seen in the senior team.

***Sam Johnstone**, was very impressive away on loan at Doncaster last season and has since started to boost his chances of possible first team football in the future.*

He hasn't enjoyed the same success this time around and unfortunately it appears as if he may struggle to take a first team squad position from either David De Gea, Anders Lindegaard or Ben Amos in the near future. Since rejoining rovers on loan he's featured in 12 games, keeping 4 clean sheets and conceding a total of 9 goals. – It's not bad going, but this is the standard of League 1 and unfortunately he's not managing to make him stand out at a lower league level therefore his chances to impress for the Manchester United first team are probably few and far between.

He does have age on his side, however I feel as if he'll benefit from a few more loan spells and then ultimately move on to a championship side in the future.

Defenders:

Ask any Burnley fan and they'll tell you Michael Keane has done very well on loan that turf moor this season. Playing a total of 10 games and even grabbing himself an assist.

From what I've seen he seems like the same player we saw at Manchester United, needs to bulk up slightly but his overall game is great for such a young player, unfortunately McNair and Blackett may have taken his chance as a squad player for United but he's not going down without a fight!

Defensively speaking Keane has won 78% of his headers (43/55) and committed only 4 fouls, unfortunately his tackling rate is a little under 50% which will need to improve if he's to remain at Manchester United in the foreseeable future.

Overall it would appear as if Keane is enjoying a successful loan spell away from Old Trafford, doing his reputation and experience no harm in the process! It's good to see a United youngster doing well in the Premier League.

***Reece James** has been a constant since joining Rotherham at the end of November playing every minute of their last 6 games, managing to do as Reece does, he's been up and down the field making challenges all game long every game, unfortunately defensively does leave a little to be desired and although he's winning over 50% of his tackles (12/21) he's failed to take on any player and won only 2 headers.*

For a defender he also appears to be passing the ball sideways and backwards a lot, now considering he's playing as a left back for Rotherham it does ask the question of why isn't he taking players on? – is it a managerial instruction or is he simply too scared to lose the ball? Over a 3rd of his passes have gone either backwards or sideways (87) while 64% have gone forward (158).

I'm not sure where things currently stand with James but he's not a player I would expect to see starting for Manchester United anytime soon or at all.

Midfielders:

***Tom, Tom, Tom... Cleverley** has failed to impress at all since joining Villa on loan, don't get me wrong he hasn't done anything wrong so to speak but he's been very much the same player he was at Manchester United. Many Villa fans will tell you, and in fact some have told me that they're pleased with the Englishman's contribution this season, and I understand that I really do. However they know a different Tom Cleverley to those of Manchester United, to us Cleverley was a young player capable of replacing Paul Scholes, great passing, ability to score goals and above all take players on – after his injury against Bolton he returned a different, more submissive player and to an extent it hurts the United fans, or at least did.*

Since joining Villa Cleverley has failed to register a single goal or assist in 16 games, but in a team where your job is to keep possession and let the likes of Westwood and Delph create chances his return and performances haven't been bad.

Strictly speaking he's been one of Villa's most consistent players, his passing is as you'd expect with nearly half of his passes going backwards (44.1% - 332 passes) however he has played 420 forward passes, which is nice to see.

Overall, Cleverley has failed to improve on his performances from last season, however the step down in expectations has given him breathing space and a place for his mediocre United performances to transform into decent Villa performances without actually having to change his game. Yes, he could be doing more for Villa, far more. But overall they remain satisfied and his time at Manchester United is up.

Earlier in the report I wrote about the almost certain departure of Nick Powell, many will argue that he's not about to leave but his attitude has been poor and to an extent so have his performances. Many will argue it's down to the management styles of Nigel Pearson and that may well be true, but on the field his performances have been disappointing. Going back to Manchester United on the back of a poor loan spell and a bad report from Pearson isn't going to please Van Gaal, a man who prides himself on discipline.

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I feel as if it's a bit unfair to discuss Powell's performances simply because he's not really featured for Leicester, so I'm not going to discuss his performances, instead I'm going to paste a performance break down below.

Performance Score	Total Appearances	Total Goals Scored
-15	3	0
Shot Accuracy	Squawka Awards	Total Chances Created
0%	0/0	0
Avg. Pass Accuracy	Avg. Pass Length	Avg. Duels Won
81%	15m	40%
Avg. Defensive Actions	Total Defensive Errors	Total Yellow/Red
0	0	0/0

Forwards:

18 months ago **Wilfred Zaha** was being paraded as the second coming of Cristiano Ronaldo, now? He's struggling to perform for Crystal Palace back on loan.

Starting with my own personal opinion on the performances I've seen thus far. It appears as if Zaha still lacks end product, decision making and intelligence on the field, its great having pace and the odd blistering shot but unfortunately that isn't going to transform him into a good let alone great player.

He's not a player I've been impressed with before he joined United and he's still not a player I've been impressed with.

My opinion is that he lacks talent just as much as intelligence, unlike players like Nani who are world beaters on their day just lack the intelligence to keep a consistent level of performance.

During his 13 games (2 full games) Zaha has found the back of the net once and contributed with 1 assist and 5 key passes. Which isn't a bad contribution, however he is playing as a winger and therefore key passes include any form of accurate cross or acute through ball.

His shot accuracy has been horrifically poor registering 45% while his passing accuracy is also just as dismal for a player you would consider a possible first team player at Manchester United (76%). Interestingly he's committed more fouls than he's suffered (23 committed, 13 suffered) and only completed 36% of his take ons (25/59).

Statistically and through what I've seen, I fail to see the hype surrounding Zaha and full expect him to be leaving Manchester United over the next 12 months.

Angelo Henriquez Is another Manchester United player that I've never really seen the potential in, admittedly I've seen very little of him but in general I'm left a little underwhelmed when I do see the Chilean perform.

Simply put, I don't think he's got a future at Manchester United (his hints at joining Zagreb permanently perhaps confirm that), statistically this season for Zagreb he's been a bit hit and miss scoring 9 goals in 18 games.

Unfortunately I haven't seen him play since being on loan, or managed to find any other forms of statistical analysis, therefore I can't give an opinion of his loan spell based on statistics, only my existing opinion of him not being good enough.

Javier Hernandez is failing to get a look in at Real Madrid and you've got to feel for the little pea, leaving to sign for Real Madrid is a huge honor, and even competing with the likes of Ronaldo, Benzema and Bale for a starting berth you would have assumed Hernandez would have got more starts and minutes than he has.

So far this season Hernandez has made 7 apps, starting only 1 of those games. He has managed to score 3 goals and grab himself an assist. Funnily enough he's only 5 goals from being the clubs 2nd highest goal scorer as Ronaldo continues to take the world by storm.

Overall, my opinion of watching Hernandez at Madrid has shown me that he's the same player he was at United, nothing has changed and it's a shame, the lad still has a big future ahead of him and will likely move on to become a top player at a smaller club, it's unlikely that we'll see him playing for United again, which is a sad thing to say but unfortunately it seems as if Chicharito is off to pastures new.

