

Impact on Performance of Forwards when moving to a new English Premier League Team

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Abstract: English Premier League, often called the Premier League or abbreviated as EPL is the biggest Association Football league in the world in terms of total revenue generated on the whole as well as revenue generated per participating team.

The Premier League was established in 1992 and the 1992-93 season was the first season under the Premier League banner after the former First Division known as the Football League First Division was re-branded to what we now know as the English Premier League.

It sits at the top of the English Football Pyramid with the top four teams get a place in the UEFA Champions League. Since the TV Sponsorship Money is equally distributed among all 20 teams competing in the season, the Premier League offers a relative fairground to all the teams as compared to other leagues across Europe, and hence, is seen as the most competitive football league on the planet.

Keywords – Football, Soccer, Premier League, Strikers, Forwards, Goals, Performance, Sports

I. INTRODUCTION

The English Premier League, re-branded from the Football League First Division is arguably the most widely followed football league on the planet, drawing the highest TV viewership than any other football league in the world.

Every year, 20 teams play a round-robin of home and away games, with each team playing 38 games, 19 at home and 19 away, in a bid to become the Champions of England. However, there is much more to aim for than coming first in the league.

Top Four teams at the end of the season reserve a group stage berth in the UEFA Champions League, Europe's premier club competition whereas teams ranked fifth and sixth, and sometimes seventh (depending on cup results) get a place in the UEFA Europa League, the second biggest club competition in Europe.

The bottom three teams are relegated to the second division, the EFL Championship, which is a very small league in contrast of the Premier League, and small clubs fight for their survival so as to not get relegated.

Premier League and its predecessor, the Football League First Division have provided the most unique winners of the Champions League (previously known as the European Cup) with five different winners, namely Liverpool (6 titles), Manchester United (3 titles), Nottingham Forest (2 titles), Chelsea and Aston Villa (1 title each), racking up 13 titles in total.

Manchester United, is by far, the most successful club in the English Premier League, with 13 titles to its name, half of the 26 seasons to date. Chelsea have claimed the title 5 times, with Manchester United's city rivals, Manchester City stacking up the top prize 4 times. Arsenal have won the league 3 times and in 2003-04 became the only club to date to win the Premier League without losing a game, fittingly becoming The Invincibles.

Blackburn Rovers won the 1994-95 title and Leicester City shocked the world with their 2015-16 triumph.

Every season, the Transfer Window opens up, once in the summer (between the seasons, from 1st July to 1st September, now the closing date has been revised to 8th August for incoming transfers), and in the winter (the month of January).

Clubs which traditionally fight for their survival from relegation find it hard to hold on to good players, who are lured away by big clubs, usually from the Top 6 (namely Manchester United, Liverpool FC, Manchester City, Arsenal, Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur), who pay a huge amount of money to the parent clubs as transfer fees in order to get the rights of the player to play for them.

Every year, a host of players move from one club to another in the Premier League, and an even bigger group of players move from different leagues across the world in order to prove their mettle in the biggest football league in the world.

Premier League clubs, having vast riches due to lucrative TV deals and sponsorships on the virtue of being household names across the world, spend a lot of money in bringing top talent into the league from across the world. Although players from every position, be it a goalkeeper, a defender, a midfielder are bought into the teams, the biggest emphasis is given to Forwards, players who play as Strikers, Center Forwards, Attacking Number 10's and Wingers, because these players score most of the goals for the team. Historically, Football on the whole, has been dominated by performances of the forwards, with players like Pele, Diego Maradona, Cristiano Ronaldo, Marco Van Basten, Lionel Messi and Ronaldo Nazario, often touted as the greatest in the game, have been forwards all their careers. This research paper aims to study the impact on the performance of a forward, in terms of goals scored, when he moves to a new English Premier league team.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a lot of Literature published and available readily on the internet about the Premier League, its impact on sport and there are many articles and papers that gauge the performance factor within the league, highlighting different factors which make the Premier League what it is and what it's not. This section highlights a few papers which resonate with the common topic for this particular research paper. Oberstone (2009) builds up a vigorous, measurably noteworthy, six autonomous variable different relapse model that represents the general accomplishment of English Premier League football club's dependent on a variety of twenty-four pitch activities gathered during the 2007-2008 season. Furthermore, single direction ANOVA is utilized to recognize those particular pitch activities that measurably isolated the main 4 clubs from (1) the dozen clubs shaping the centre of the pack and, (2) by a more noteworthy differentiation, the last 4 clubs. Thirteen pitch activities yield measurably critical contrasts among these three levels of clubs utilizing this second technique for examination. Unlike professional American sports, football in England—as well as in many leagues in Europe and South America—has grave outcomes for poorly performing clubs. At the end of each English Premier League (EPL) 38-game season, the top football clubs get rich, while the bottom three are relegated—unceremoniously booted out of the league: demoted to a lower division euphemistically called the Championship. In addition to being downgraded to a lower league status, a relegated EPL club will experience an accompanying dramatic decline in income resulting from the loss of league television revenue sharing, a drop in club merchandise sales, and dramatically lower attendance. Further, there will be accompanying losses of star personnel—players whose salaries the club could no longer support. According to Marek - Vávra (2017), home team advantage as a self-standing phenomenon was deeply studied by Pollard & Pollard (2005). Their paper offers nice summary of previous research on this phenomenon and analysis of more than 400,000 matches in many sports played between years 1876 and 2003. They quantified home team advantage in association football as the number of points obtained by the home team expressed as a percentage of all points obtained in all games played. The same definition of home team advantage was used by Allen & Jones (2014) in analysis of the English Premier League in the seasons 1992/1993–2011/2012. Their results showed that 60.77% (± 8.30) of total points was won in home games. Zuber (2008) considers the game-related execution of the traded on an open market groups in the English Premier League. It is discovered that the value conduct of the traded on an open market soccer group market to be extremely unfeeling toward game results as far as the two returns and exchanging volume. It is accepted that the outcomes point to another kind of financial specialist in pro athletics – these speculator fans don't exchange on data that may influence incomes at the same time, rather, seem to get an incentive from negligible proprietorship. Additionally, Barnes, Archer, Hogg, Bush, Bradley. (2014) inspected the advancement of physical and specialized soccer execution over a 7-season period in the English Premier League. Match execution perceptions ($n=14\ 700$) were investigated for rising patterns. Absolute separation secured during a match was $\sim 2\%$ lower in 2006–07 contrasted with 2012–13. Across 7 seasons, high-force running separation and activities expanded by $\sim 30\%$ and $\sim 50\%$ individually. Dash separation and number of runs expanded by $\sim 35\%$ and $\sim 85\%$, separately. Mean dash separation was shorter in 2012–13 contrasted with 2006–07 with the extent of dangerous runs expanding. Players performed more passes and effective goes in 2012–13 contrasted with 2006–07. Though the quantity of short and medium takes a break, the quantity of long passes differed little. This information shows development of physical and specialized parameters in the English Premier League, and could be utilized to help ability ID, preparing and moulding arrangement. This study is an ode to the improvement of technical ability of individual players as the game itself evolves over the years. Krzysztof Durlík, Pawel Bieniek (2014) uncovered that the most

goals were scored from close to separations to focus (over half) while 53% of all crossed objective line lower than goalkeeper's hips. Moreover, second 50% of a match brings more goals (57.5) as players become unfocused in view of depletion. Training staffs need to have players arranged genuinely to keep up an hour and a half liberated from half time. Also, Athalie Redwood-Brown (2008) focused on the 5 minutes leading up a goal being scored and the 5 minutes that followed the goal. The frequency of passing and the percentage of successful passes were compared between these periods and the average for 5 minutes within the half of the match in which the goal was scored. There were 285 goals from 120 English FA Premier League matches that were analysed. In the 5 minutes that preceded a goal, the scoring team played a significantly greater percentage passes accurately than the average for the half, while the conceding team played significantly fewer passes. After the goal was scored, the scoring team played significantly fewer passes and a lower percentage of passes were played accurately than the average for the half of the match where the goal was scored. Accurate passing not only retains possession but may also lead to scoring opportunities while also restricting opposition possessions and scoring opportunities.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This Report focuses on research methodology that was used in the study. It provides a detailed description of the research approach in this study. Research design, instruments, data collection and analysis methods used were presented in the report.

3.2 Research Design

This study used as descriptive research. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and describes the data collection. It also uses graphs and charts to the reader in understanding the data distribution easily.

3.3 Period of Study

The study deals with forwards, their games played and goals scored in the English Premier League, also called the "Premier League" from the 2013-14 to 2018-19 season.

3.4 Sample Design

The study includes all the forwards; hence it is fair to state it is a selective sample.

3.5 Data Collection

Data was collected from the Premier League's Online Database for the subsequent seasons. For players moving into the Premier League from clubs outside of it (including newly promoted teams), the data was collected from the respective online sources of the corresponding football leagues.

3.5 Validity and Reliability Content validity (also known as logical validity) refers to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given construct. To achieve content validity the most recent data was used, and performances of small sample size (less than 15 games) were omitted.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Average Games Played, Average Goals Scored and Average Goals per Game for 2013-14 English Premier League Season

2013-14	
Average Games	28.9375
Average Goals	9.604166667
Average Goals/Game	0.331893449

This table tells that the average games played by a forward out of a possible 38 league fixtures in the 2013-14 English Premier League season was 28.93 and they scored 9.60 goals throughout the season with an average goals per game ratio of 0.33 goals per game.

Table 2: Comparison of newly moved forwards in the 2014-15 season with all the strikers of 2013-14 season.

2014-15		2013-14	
Average Games	24.44827586	Average Games	26.48275862
Average Goals	5.862068966	Average Goals	10.20689655
Average Goals/Game	0.23977433	Average Goals/Game	0.385416667

With this data we can see players who moved to a new team in 2014-15 played less games and scored significantly less goals (about 0.15 goals less per game) than the last season

Table 3: Comparison of newly moved forwards in the 2015-16 season with the newly moved forwards of 2014-15 season

2015-16		2014-15	
Average Games	31.26315789	Average Games	30
Average Goals	7.421052632	Average Goals	10.42105263
Average Goals/Game	0.237373737	Average Goals/Game	0.347368421

With this data, we can see that players got more games while moving to a new team (which is one of the objectives of a player) but performance-wise their goals were reduced by more than 25%.

Table 4: Comparison of newly moved forwards in the 2016-17 season with the newly moved forwards of 2015-16 season

2016-17		2015-16	
Average Games	29	Average Games	31.27272727
Average Goals	9.454545455	Average Goals	11.72727273
Average Goals/Game	0.326018809	Average Goals/Game	0.375

With this data we see that players got almost similar playtime but their performance in terms of goals reduced.

Table 5: Comparison of newly moved forwards in the 2017-18 season with the newly moved forwards of 2016-17 season

2017-18		2016-17	
Average Games	29.2	Average Games	27.26666667
Average Goals	10.26666667	Average Goals	13.53333333
Average Goals/Game	0.351598174	Average Goals/Game	0.496332518

Going with the trend, the players got a similar amount of games, albeit a bit more, however, their productivity in terms of goals reduced.

Table 6: Comparison of newly moved forwards in the 2018-19 season with the newly moved forwards of 2017-18 season

2018-19		2017-18	
Average Games	28.5	Average Games	28
Average Goals	7.285714286	Average Goals	6.857142857
Average Goals/Game	0.255639098	Average Goals/Game	0.244897959

In 2018-19, the number of games and average goals per game were almost similar.

Table 7: Regression Statistics

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.929323722
R Square	0.863642581
Adjusted R Square	0.858940601
Standard Error	0.05698348
Coefficients	
Intercept	0.005751544
Previous Year	1.313673755

Equation: *Expected Goals per Game in New Season with New Team = 1.313673755 * (Goals per Game in Last Full Season) + 0.00575144*

V. FINDINGS

1. Players at the onset of their careers move to newly promoted clubs and clubs at the bottom half of the league to get more game time to develop their overall game.
2. Players at the peak of their careers change teams to get more lucrative salaries and/or having a change to play in a bigger market (like London or Manchester) and compete for trophies.
3. When a player moves to a new team, the performance generally falls below the standards of the previous year, among other factors, this could be attributed to the change in system and the synchronization of a player into a new institution. This could be further complicated by a new coach taking charge in the middle of the season or injury to the player or another key player in the team.
4. Despite many players move for getting more games in the new team, the overall shift in games played turned out to be negative. This also, can be attributed to the reasons mentioned in the point above.
5. Although teams spend top dollar to recruit the best talent which is cautiously scouted, the final call, according to this research is that players do not have an immediate impact. To study overall impact, one has to study the second, third and the following seasons and the performances, which are beyond the scope of this paper.

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