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The Review: GW 20 - A thread

Hi everyone, welcome to the latest edition of “The Review” where I look at the GW gone by and Kane replacements with an eye on the upcoming GW21:

#FPL #FPLCommunity @OfficialFPL

(Data taken from @FFScout and @FFH_HQ with consent)

Before I start, I'd like to introduce to you this game Fantasy5
that I play each GW. It's free to enter and all you have to do is pick 5 players to beat their Fantasy points target. It's very exciting and you have a chance to win £10k! Link below:

https://t.co/61OCw4bHZQ

#ad

At this point, I’d also like to mention that I post about FPL on my Instagram too, so if you have an Instagram account, follow up here!

https://t.co/1tZ92vBXIT

Q: In this section, I talk about Manchester City.

I first run a comparison between Man City’s midfielders from GW 13-20:

(read below)

Gündo■an V Foden v Bernardo v Sterling

Mins per chance created: 46 v 26 v 57 v 51
Mins per shots in the box: 38 v 32 v 81 v 41

Mins per big chance: 92 v 208 v 285 v 124
Mins per expected involvement: 149 v 179 v 278 v 122

Gündo■an seems to be matching Sterling stats-wise more or less over recent times which is incredible given that he's half the price. Both seem to have the edge over Foden and Bernardo in terms of underlying numbers, particularly for goal threat. What favours Gündo■an is that...

... he takes penalties in the absence of both KdB and Aguero. His historical numbers are more or less irrelevant as he seems to be playing a completely different role over recent times. In isolation, I think Sterling is the best option in terms of sheer explosiveness because...

... he still carries the greatest goal threat of all Man City players, as can be seen from the numbers from the West Brom game where he accumulated the highest number of shots inside the box. In terms of captaincy, Man City are bookies favorites to score 2.5+ goals this week...

... despite the fact that Sheffield United have improved recently and are in the top five for xGc over the past six games. Man City's attacking numbers are on a different stratosphere these days – Sterling is the standout pick for captaincy given his expected involvement...

... in my opinion, but I wouldn't be surprised if Gündo■an matched him. Man City's defence meanwhile is the gift which keeps on giving. They have now conceded just once in the past 12 games that Dias and Stones have started together, having...

... an expected goals conceded (xGc) of ~0.45 per game in the process. Cancelo finally delivered as per his expected numbers and there's every chance that he's only just started.

Q: How does Son seem to do historically without Kane? Is he a risky captaincy shout this week now that Kane is out?

Credit to my friend @yonkersfpl for some of the stats I'm about to post. Looking at a larger sample size from 2017-2020:

(read below)

Son without Kane v Son with Kane (2017-20):

Expected involvement per 90: 0.51 v 0.57
xG per 90: 0.4 v 0.35
xA per 90: 0.11 v 0.22

When I take historical numbers into account, it tells me that there isn't a huge difference in Son's numbers with and without Kane – as the decrease in expected assists without Kane is offset by the increase in xG, due to the impact of penalties. There have been six sustained...

... periods when Son has played without Kane between 2017-20. Only once has his performance been better without Kane than with him in the side – but tellingly that happened in the latter half of last season where Son seemed to perform twice as

better in games without Kane than...

... he did with him in the side and you can argue Son has grown into a far better player since 2017 so recent numbers might be more relevant. This can be shown in last season's underlying numbers where Son almost doubled his goal threat without Kane, even though it did result...

... in a drop in his creativity:

Son without Kane v Son with Kane (2019-20):

Mins per shot inside the box: 25 v 50.88
Mins per big chance: 75 v 226
Mins per chance created: 90 v 58.14

I didn't think this would have been an easy game for Spurs even if Harry Kane was fit. I have even more doubts now, given his injury and how toothless Spurs looked once he came off at half time v Liverpool. That and my analysis on the Brighton defence makes me doubt Son for...

... captaincy this week. Brighton at home have been posting stellar defensive numbers all season. However, their expected tally of goals conceded at home of 8.9 is some way off their actual tally of goals conceded which is 15. This variance between expected and actual output...

... of 6.1 is among the second worst for underperformance at home in the league. A large part of this can be attributed to Mat Ryan, who has a variance of -4 between expected and actual goals conceded at home which is one of the worst for keepers in the league. However, with...

... Sanchez now in goal Brighton are looking more assured at the back which will make it tough for Spurs in my opinion. Spurs are not even in the top ten for xG away from home and they will have a tough time coming up against a Brighton side who are second only to Man City for...

...xG conceded, xG non penalty conceded and big chances conceded at home (and 12th away from home for xG conceded in the league). Son could very well notch here, but I wouldn't recommend him for captaincy as their ceiling looks limited.

Q: In this section, I analyze Liverpool in detail.

Liverpool GW 10-20 Home v Liverpool GW 10-20 Away

Mins per shots in the box: 8.18 v 10.8
Mins per big chance: 75 v 32

What I read from this is that of late, Liverpool are more suited to playing on the counter away from home rather than against deep blocks at home where they still tend to create a decent amount of chances but are struggling for form due to lack of quality chance creation...

... Even despite their recent struggles, Liverpool are ranked in the top three for big chances and xG per game in away matches from GW 10-20 so their underlying numbers away from home are perfectly fine. They finally broke their drought against Spurs where they registered...

... four big chances so I don't think chance creation v West Ham will be a worry for them despite the fact that West Ham have conceded the fewest number of shots in the box in the past four matches. Worryingly for Salah owners, Mane has more than twice the numbers of shots...

... in the box and four times as many big chances as Salah over the past four GWs. He seems to me a more reliable captaincy option given his recent numbers and his numbers in away games over the season:

(read below)

Salah v Mane (away games 20/21):

Mins per shot inside the box: 45 vs 34
Mins per big chance: 102 vs 71

Trent has improved on his underlying numbers in recent weeks as well, which is worth keeping an eye on:

(read below)

Trent (last 4 games) v Trent (20/21 averages):

Mins per shot inside the box: 70 vs 1142
Mins per big chance: 347 vs 1142
Mins per chance created: 57 vs 50
Mins per touch in the final third: 2.33 vs 2.55
Mins per penalty area touch: 16 vs 54

Q: In the next three sections, I talk about different Harry Kane replacements. My first pick would be Dominic Calvert Lewin.

Based on a pure hunch, Everton in my opinion are an explosion waiting to happen. Nothing from the recent Everton numbers seem to suggest this is the...

... case, as they are bottom for xG over the past four matches but now with Digne, Richarlison, James and Calvert Lewin all fit and available, I expect them to go on a run – particularly when I see that they face two obliging defences coming up (NEW, lee)...

... My friend @FPLCruyff74 wrote that in games where all four have started, Everton have scored at an average of 2.8 goals per game scoring 17 times in six games. I wouldn't read too much into their blank against Leicester as they have been in solid defensive form of late...

...Newcastle are second worst for xG conceded in away matches over the season and have been on an abysmal run of form – being in the bottom three teams for highest xG conceded over the past four games which is why I expect Everton's

attackers to have a lot of fun...

... Calvert Lewin has a great record against them too, having scored four times against them in his previous three appearances so there's every chance he continues on that run. He's a decent differential for those managers eyeing up a captaincy punt this week, I think he has...

... the upside. He seems like the ideal player to punt on for those managers who have a wildcard available too – given their short-term fixtures. Another point worth noting for FPL managers is that Digne played on the left wing against Leicester so it will be interesting to...

... see if he keeps being played out of position. James Rodriguez seems to be back at his best too, having scored in the GW and previously recording eight chances created in the cup game (including two big chances created and assists). When he's on form, it only means that...

... Calvert Lewin will be fed with high quality chances which bodes well for his prospects.

Q: Now, I look at how Antonio and how he could be another alternative for Kane if you don't already own him.

With the exception of Man City, no team has a better average xG per game than West Ham over the past three matches. The impact of Antonio as expected has been...

... significant, with the West Ham forward top in the league for shots in the box, big chances and non-penalty xG over this spell. Granted the past three games have been easy on paper (BUR WBA cpl), but numbers such are eight shots inside the box, four big chances, two...

... big chances created are nothing new to FPL managers who have witnessed prime Antonio – he has always been a stats monster when on form. He'll now be up against a Liverpool defence who concede on average 2.1 big chances per game away from home so he can continue to deliver.

Q: In this section, I discuss Aston Villa.

This seems like a weekly copy-paste into my articles every week but I can't stress on the incredible value that Villa assets are offering this season – particularly their defence, Jack Grealish and Ollie Watkins. This week...

... Villa registered five big chances against Burnley at Turf Moor which is a fine achievement in itself given how rigid Burnley can be to break down at home. Grealish and Watkins were unlucky not to score bigger, while Villa conceded thrice despite Burnley having a...

... xG of just ~0.5. This season Villa are in the top three for xG and in the top five for xG conceded which just highlights how far they have come. I highlight their gargantuan improvement this season by comparing them to their numbers last season:

Aston Villa 20/21 v Aston Villa 19/20

Shots inside the box per game: 10.8 v 7.5
Big chances per game: 2.9 v 1.6
Average xG per game: 1.8 v 1.1

(read below)

Aston Villa 20/21 v Aston Villa 19/20

Shots conceded in the box per game: 8 v 10.5
Big chances conceded per game: 1.3 v 2.6
Average xG conceded per game: 1.2 v 1.8

Q: In this section, I analyze how Leeds' attacking numbers have dropped off and how this has affected Patrick Bamford.

It is interesting to note the drastic drop in Leeds' recent attacking numbers:

(read below)

Leeds GW 1-15 v GW 16-20 (with league ranks in brackets)

Shots in the box per game: 10.7 (1st) v 7.5 (11th)
Big chances per game: 2.3 (7th) v 0.75 (18th)
Average xG per game: 1.7 (2nd) v 0.8 (15th)

Bamford GW 1-15 v GW 16-20 (with league ranks for forwards in brackets)

Shots in the box per game: 3.27 (1st) v 2.25 (5th)
Big chances per game: 1.1 (3rd) v 0.5 (8th)
Average xG per game: 0.7 (2nd) v 0.2 (13th)

As you can see, similar trends are being followed in both the comparisons I make. Both Leeds and Bamford are on the decline, which could be as a result of exhaustion or because of teams adapting to their playstyle. Bamford got taken off despite Leeds needing a goal with...

... the game being tied at 1-1 which caught me by surprise. Raphinha despite having two goal involvements against Newcastle had an expected goal involvement (xGi) of just 0.5 (0.3 xA with 0.2 xG) which shows that he overperformed this week. The slump in Leeds' numbers is made...

... particularly concerning for Bamford and Raphinha owners given the fact that their stats have declined despite having a good run of fixtures (wba tot BHA new). They now face a Leicester side who are in the top four for expected goals conceded (xGc) in the past six games...

... which indicates that Bamford and Raphinha could be struggling for points this week.

Q: In this section, I share my thoughts on Tuchel-ball and what I made of Chelsea's game vs Wolves.

Having managed Dortmund and PSG, Tuchel has now been tasked with the job of getting a struggling Chelsea side back on track. Being the thirteenth different manager since...

... Abramovich took over, time will tell if he's taken the lucky or unlucky number. Tuchel is a passionate manager who likes to play aggressive yet smart football. He has numerous trophies to his name and he went as far as the Champions League final with PSG but fell short...

... of the goal because of a stubborn Bayern team. He is often compared to Klopp as they both have a similar aggressive football philosophy. Man marking and the use of wing backs to attack through the flanks are two major elements of Tuchel's football. Now I will move on to...

... discuss the first Chelsea game that Tuchel managed. Chelsea faced a Wolves side but we got to see a side of Chelsea that we have not seen in a while. It was a real dominant performance by the Blues as they held 78.8 percent possession of the ball. This was the highest...

... possession by any team in this GW. The blues stringed together a total of 898 passes (highest number of passes made by any team this GW) and were really swift with their movement. Another stat that really caught my eye was that Chelsea conceded just one shot in the box...

...(which was the fewest in the GW) which might lead us to think that defensive assets of Chelsea might be worth keeping an eye on. Rudiger being 4.5 is an asset to be considered. Ben Chilwell was really attacking and recorded 38 touches in the final third. He was in...

... charge of the entire left flank, playing as a left wing back. Kai Havertz and Ziyech recorded some good numbers in the game too. The Moroccan winger played a slightly central role instead of playing wide as he did under Frank Lampard. Ziyech had the highest number...

.. of chances created and Kai Havertz had the highest amount of penalty area touches and shots inside the box of all players in the Chelsea-Wolves match this GW. Chelsea face BUR, tot, shu and Newcastle in the next four GWs and considering this good run of fixtures, Chelsea...

...assets seem attractive but this might be a risky move for now considering Tuchel's history to chop and change. I wouldn't read too much into one game because the sample size is limited and it is premature to deduce conclusions, but I'll...

... be keeping an eye on Chelsea's assets with a lot of interest heading into the coming GW.

Q: In this section, I discuss how I expect Leicester's assets to fare in the upcoming fixtures.

There's a lot of interest in Leicester's assets this week which is understandable given that they are coming up against a Leeds defence who have the worst xG conceded in away...

... matches this season. I wrote last week as to how Leicester's average xG without Vardy dropped to ~1.13 per game as compared to ~1.52 with him in the side last season – that trend seemed to worryingly continue in the Everton game where Leicester posted an xG...

... of 1.1 despite having an xG of 1.7 away from home this season. I do think that despite the fact that their numbers will drop without Vardy, Leicester should be good enough to put a couple past Leeds here. Without the obvious lack of a talisman, it's hard to decide...

... which one of Barnes and Maddison to pick. I did a comparison last week and Barnes came up trumps – he would still be my pick as he's more direct and has more avenues to points. Even in the Everton game, he had the highest number of chances created and penalty area touches...

... of all Leicester players. Barnes scored against Leeds in the reverse fixture and will fancy his chances again – even Newcastle managed 22 shots against Leeds and had twice as much as Leeds' xG this GW!

Q: In this section, I write about the drop in Southampton's numbers.

Southampton GW 1-13 vs GW 14-20

Shots inside the box per game: 7.08 (12th) vs 4.33 (18th)
Big Chances per game: 1.54 (11th) vs 1 (16th)
Average xG per game: 1.14 (13th) vs 0.55 (19th)

Southampton GW 1-13 vs GW 14-20

Shots in the box conceded per game: 7.30 (12th) vs 8.33 (12th)
Big chances conceded per game: 1.92 (7th) vs 2 (9th)
Average xG conceded per game: 1.13 (16th) vs 1.44 (12th)

Southampton's attacking numbers have dropped noticeably. They kicked off the season really well with Danny Ings being their key man but now over the past six matches, they are bottom for xG and xG non penalty which is something you wouldn't associate with a team like...

... Southampton. So, I'd advice if you have Ings or Che Adams, it might be the right time to sell them given their lack of form. Southampton's tough run of fixtures is not going to help Ings or Che Adams either. (AVL mun new WOL CHE) Southampton's attacking struggles has...

... added pressure to their defence concurrently as well, which can be seen in how their xG conceded per game has increased from 1.13 to 1.44 of late and thus they have been more prone to more opposition attacks.

Here is my Fantasy5 team for the week! No team has conceded fewer big chances away than Spurs so Lloris has a good chance of beating his predicted score of 6.5. No keeper has accumulated more FPL points this season than Pope so he is a decent shout to outscore 2.5 points too.

This brings me to the end of the article. I would like to thank @urboihamza whose contribution has been immense helping me to release this on time. I would appreciate if you could offer him some encouragement too (follows/feedback appreciated!).

If you are looking to follow my work, follow me at:

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I await your feedback with anticipation!