

## Twitter Thread by [Maram](#)



**Maram**

[@utdmaram](#)



**Analyzing Manchester United's stalemate draw over Liverpool in the Premier League through data and tactical analysis: a thread.**



MUFC's plan was to bypass Liverpool's high press through vertical \*quick\* passes and long balls to exploit their lack of senior CB's but — execution was lacking.

An improvement in presence came from progressing the ball wide but the final ball was still poor.

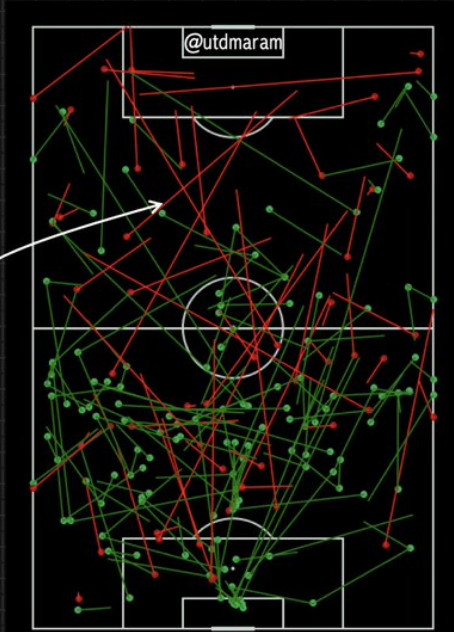
# LIVERPOOL 0 – 0 MANCHESTER UNITED

Pass Map | Every Successful and Unsuccessful Pass Attempted

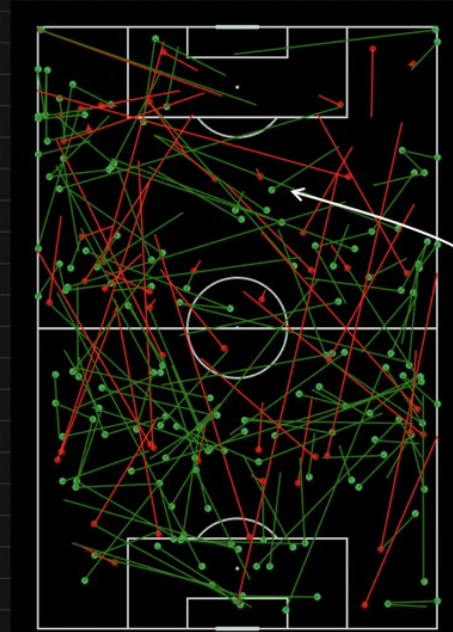
—● Unsuccessful  
—● Successful

FIRST HALF

SECOND HALF



Manchester United struggled in terms of execution of passes in the opposition half



Manchester United improved penetration in the second half but still struggled in terms of verticality.

Taking a look at the flow of passes:

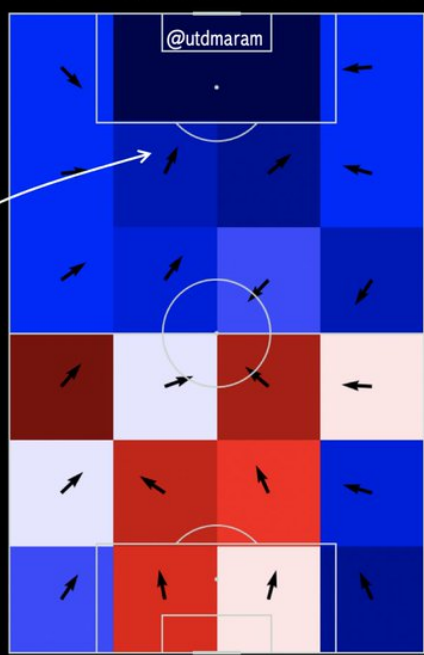
- Manchester United had a higher concentration of passes in their own half and posed little to no threat — but built out the back well under pressure.
- Improvement: they were able to exploit Liverpool wide through overlaps and cutbacks.

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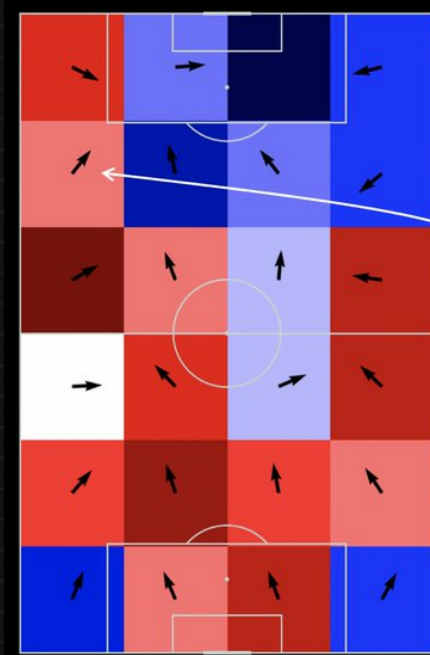
Pass Flow Plot

FIRST HALF

SECOND HALF



Manchester United were very passive in the opposition half. Many attempts were to find runners in behind in transition but execution was poor.



Manchester United were able to pose threat and in the opposition half through the left flank.

EXAMPLE: #MUFC build out the back in a series of quick forward passes.

This came from Martial dropping deep to carry — essential. Bruno's trademark backwards flick that takes Fabinho out of the backline and Rashford's blindside run here was excellent.

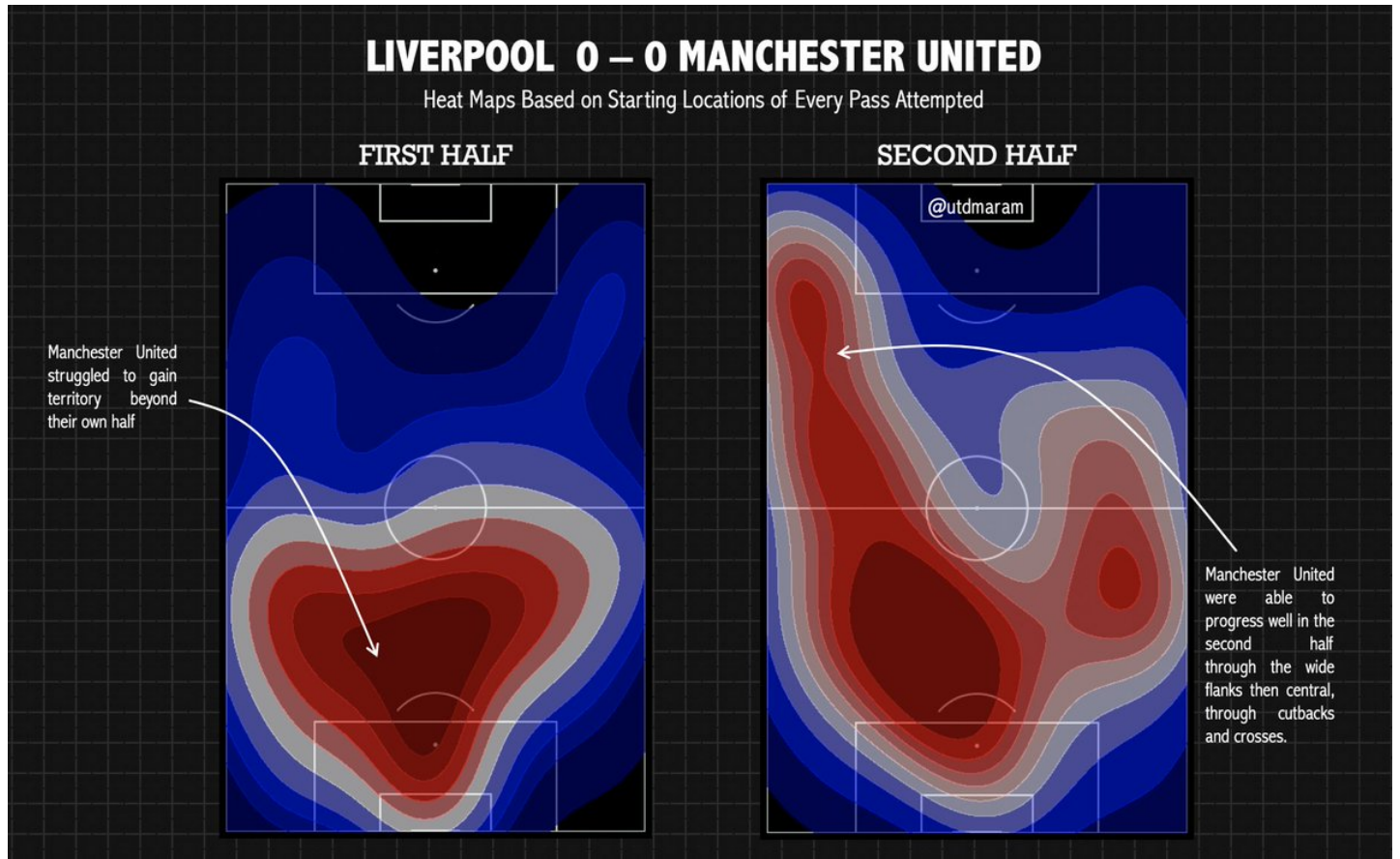
Poor final ball.



Let's take a closer look at the lack of territorial dominance — issues:

(A) While #MUFC were able to improve their suppression — the right flank was very poor with Pogba tucking into the half-spaces.

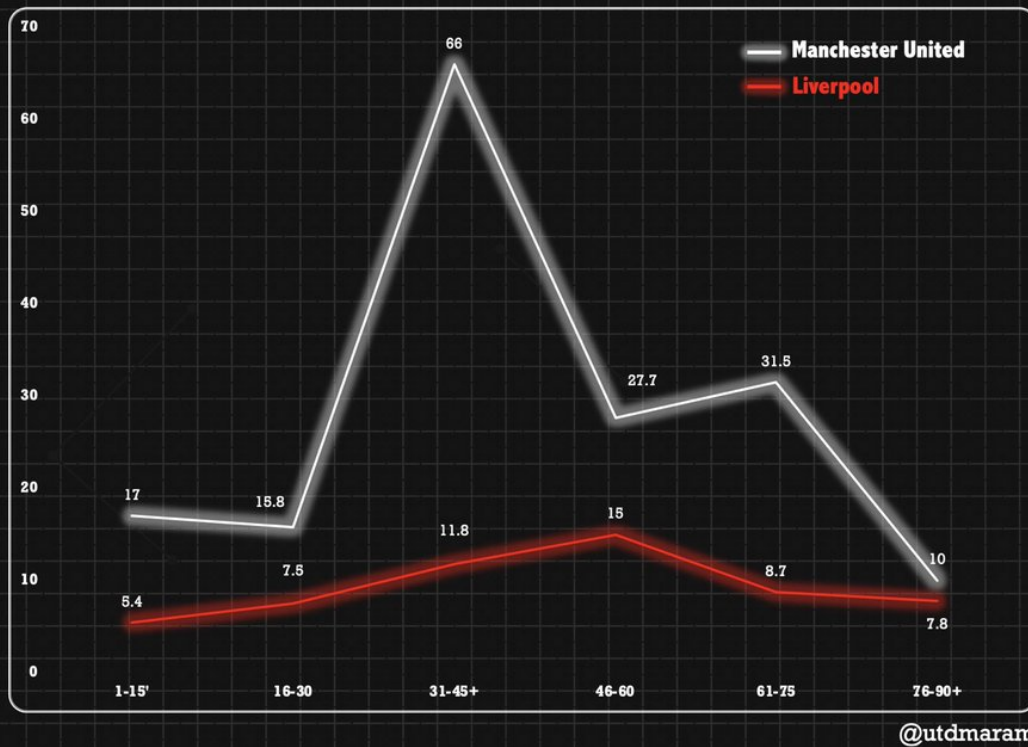
(B) #MUFC had poor central penetration — more difficult to score.



Manchester United's numbers in terms of pressure intensity is low — but that is not bad — instead #MUFC set up in a 4-4-2 mid-block and looked to force Liverpool wide where they would then close them down and regain possession.

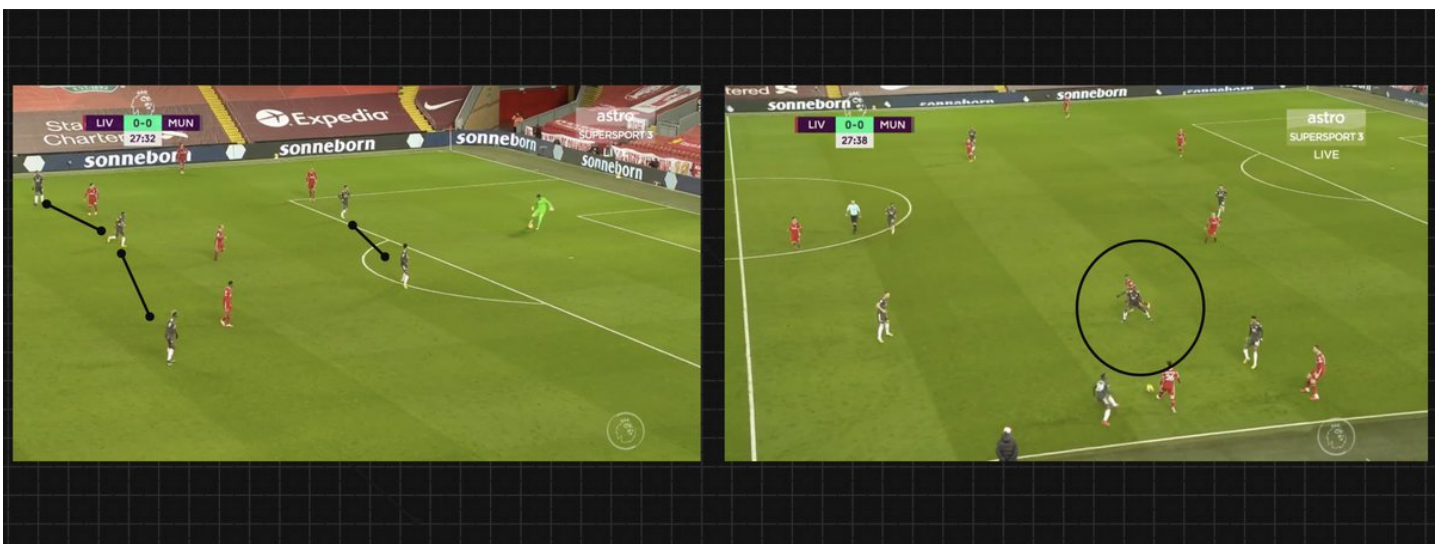
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Passes Allowed Per Defensive Action | Pressure Intensity | The Lower the Better



EXAMPLE: #MUFC do not heavy pressurize Liverpool and instead give them time and space on the ball when central — forcing them wide.

Then, they close them down and clog the passing lanes, winning back possession. Pogba here was able to intercept, but quickly fouled.

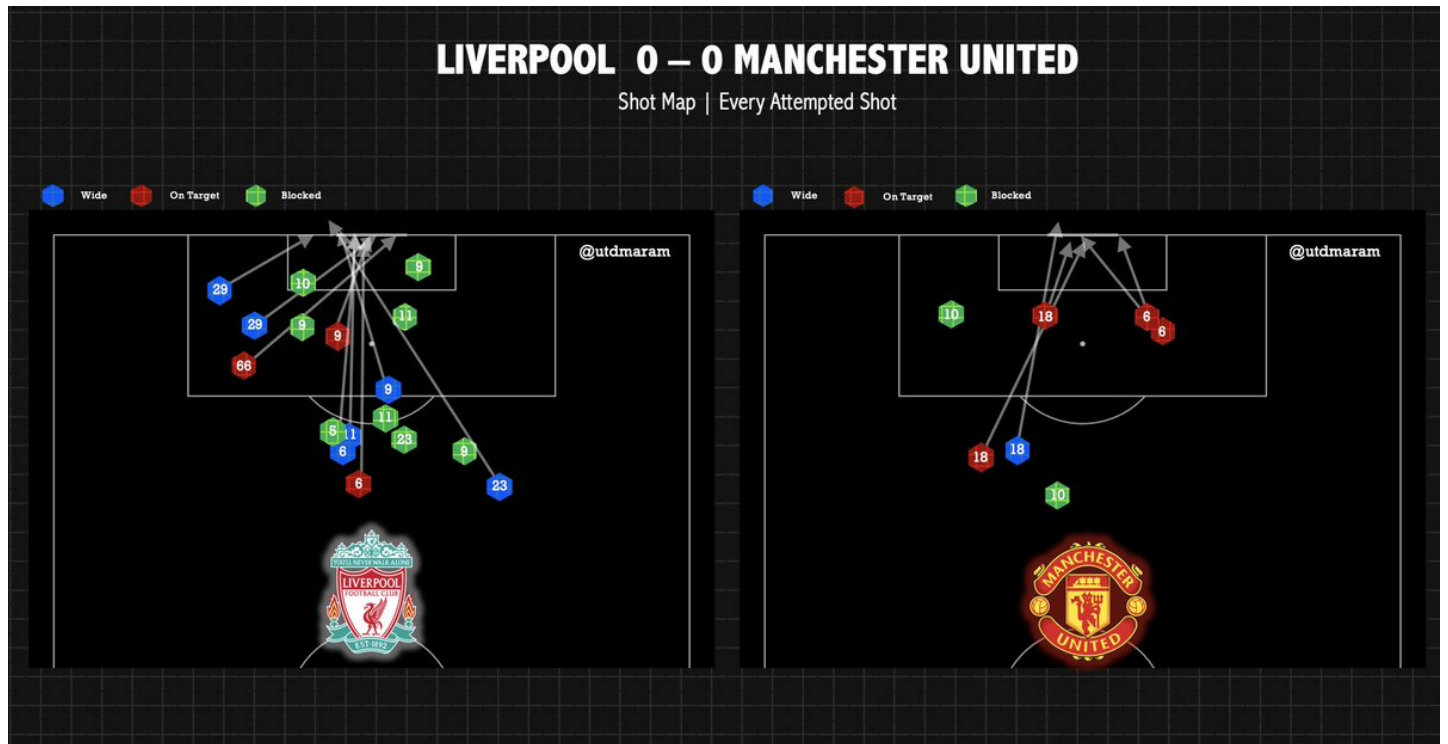


#MUFC did well creating a hindrance, allowing #LIV only 3 shots on target.

This came from an excellent positional sense & anticipation of danger.

MUFC however had low attempted shots because many opportunities were not capitalized/continued well i.e poor

decisions/final ball.

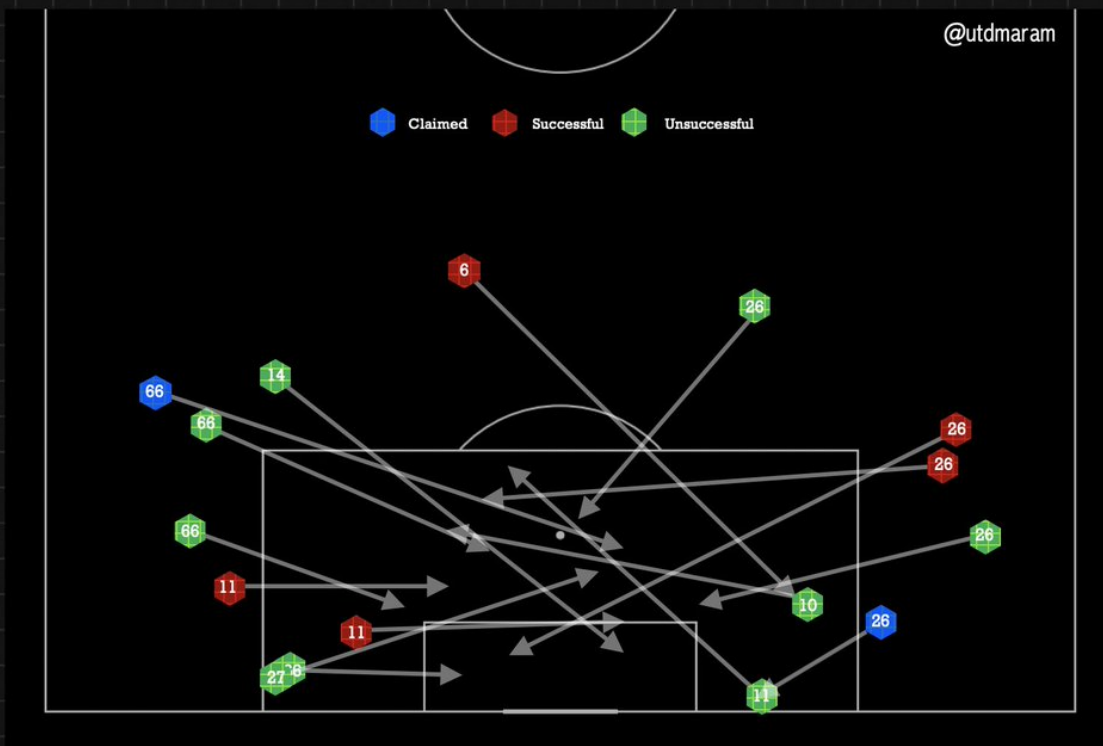


Speaking of the backline, Manchester United struggle defending crosses — but not against Liverpool.

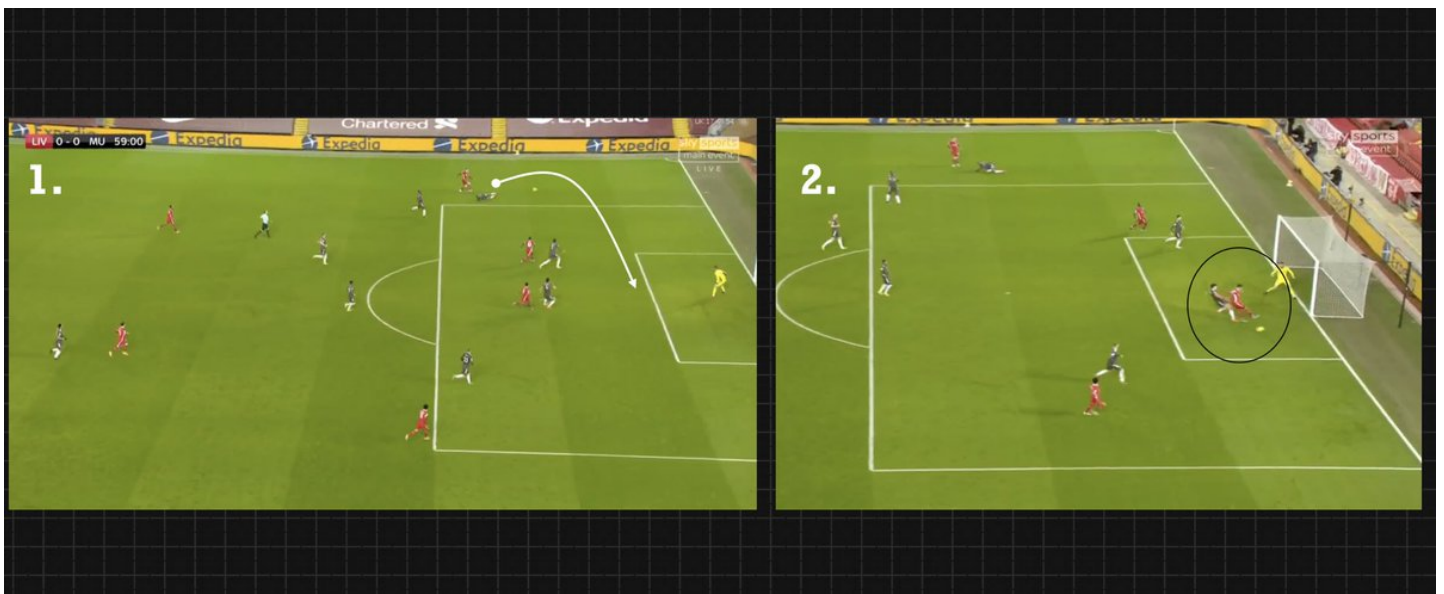
Out of 16 crosses, only 5 were successful. A compact block forced Liverpool to rush to go long at times. MUFC's tracked their runners and defended space very very well.

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Crosses Against



EXAMPLE: This was a vital block from Maguire that came from anticipating the cross and tracking Firmino's run — preventing even a shot on target.



(A) Manchester United had a poor presence in the midfield i.e drawn to individual duels and failing to win.

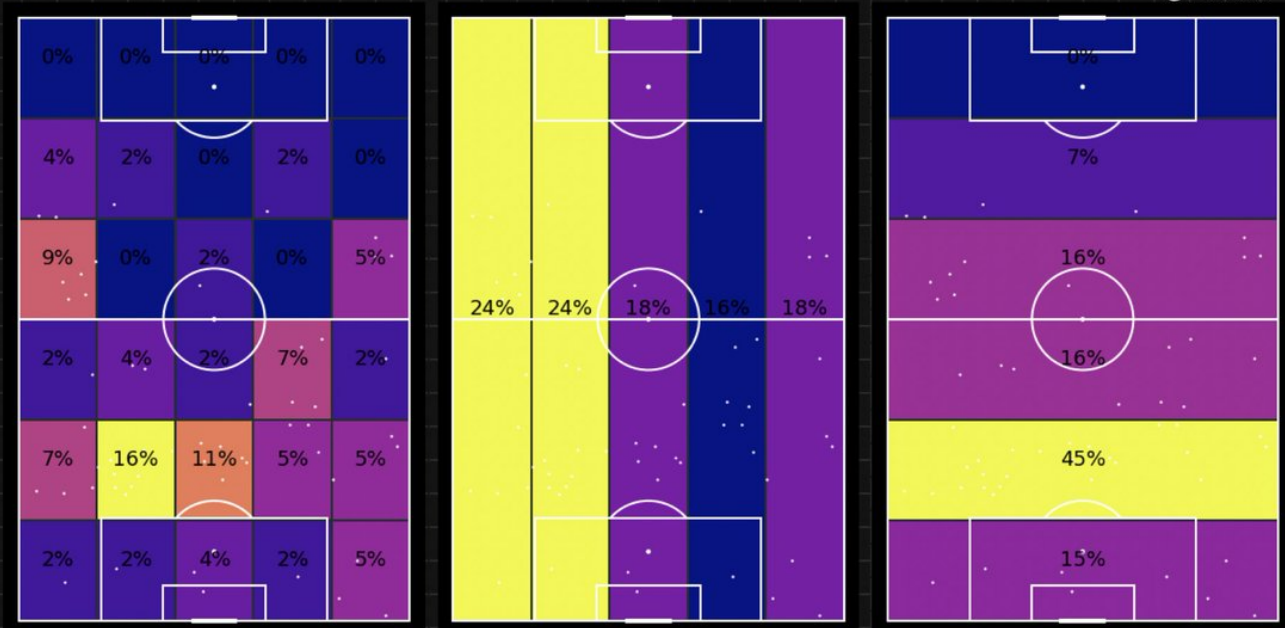
(B) MUFC could not sustain the pressure of their attacks.

(C) Pushing Pogba/AWB forward allowed #LIV to penetrate through the right flank unchallenged at times.

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Location of Defensive Actions

@utdmaram



EXAMPLE: In #MUFC's attempt in closing down LIV by pushing AWB/Pogba forwards — they were bypassed and allowed Salah acres of space to run into \*unchallenged\*

This led to a shot on target by Firmino.



Let's take a look at Manchester United's best performer both offensively and defensively — Luke Shaw not only occupied the left flank well but his carries/dribbles inwards, overlaps and crosses allowed MUFC to transition well.



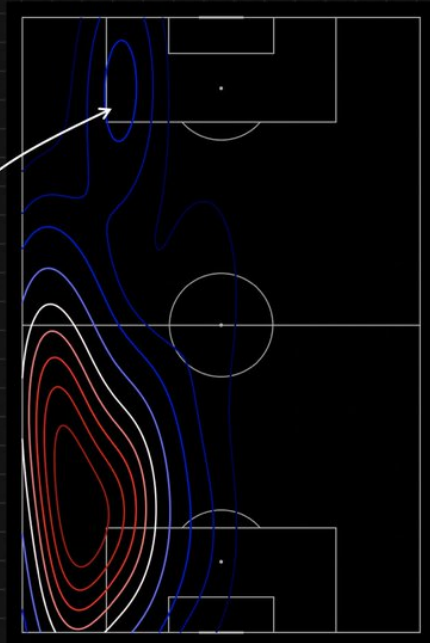
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Pass Flow Plot

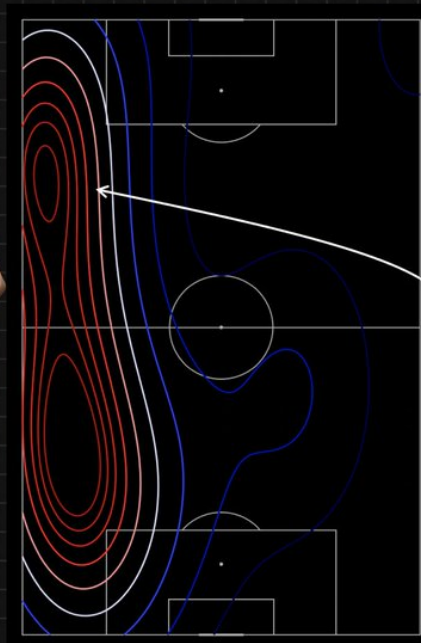
FIRST HALF

SECOND HALF

Despite Manchester United's struggle Luke Shaw was able to penetrate the opposition box very well.



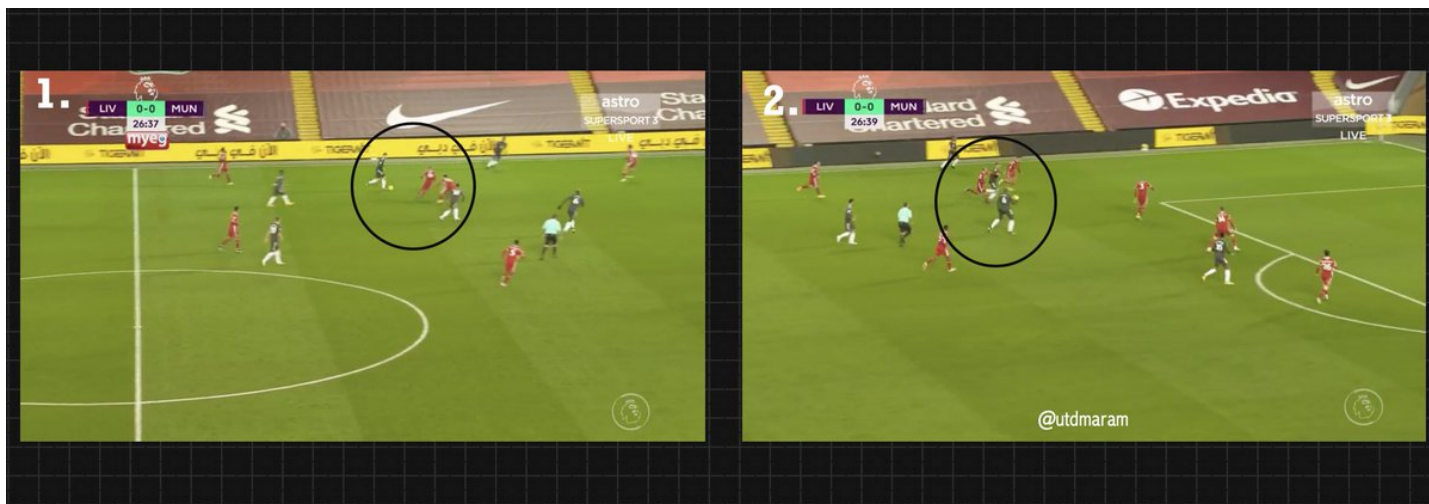
Luke Shaw's proactivity was essential to Manchester United in the second half.



EXAMPLE:

Luke Shaw carries the ball here — attracting two #LIV players and bypassing them.

This disrupted Liverpool's organization and allowed #MUFC to penetrate the opposition box.



This was an excellent defensive performance from #MUFC — \*but\* a very poor offensive one in many aspects i.e runs and decision making.

While many would be disappointed with just a draw, this is huge progress to where MUFC were exactly a year ago at Anfield.

END.

