



TECHNICAL REPORT

2022/23





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ROLL OF HONOUR

Cover image: Wolfsburg's Lena Oberdorf tracks Barcelona midfielder Aitana Bonmatí during the final

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Barcelona celebrate their final triumph

The new-look competition continued to deliver on and off the pitch, with high drama, thrilling contests and a huge increase in attendances

The second season in the enhanced format involved 71 clubs from 49 national associations, with 58 of them on the starting grid when Round 1 kicked off in August 2022 in the shape of 15 mini-tournaments contested by three or, mostly, four teams. Round 2, played as home-and-away ties, then decided the 12 contestants to join four automatic qualifiers in the 16-team group stage.

Vllaznia became the first Albanian club to reach this phase. Roma, having won the Italian title for the first time, were fellow debutants and ultimately progressed as far as the quarter-finals. When the group stage started in October, Lyon opened their title defence with a 5-1 home defeat by Arsenal, an eyebrow-raising scoreline which endorsed the feeling that competitive levels are rising.

This was reinforced when four of the six two-legged knockout ties were decided by single-goal margins and the defending champions were eliminated by Chelsea in a penalty shoot-out; with Paris Saint-Germain also bowing out, the semi-finals were bereft of French teams for the

first time in a decade. The final between Barcelona and Wolfsburg in Eindhoven was also a single-goal victory which ended with the Catalan club lifting the trophy for the second time. It also allowed Barcelona to climb to the top of the club rankings which Lyon had dominated since the 2018/19 season.

Once again, Barcelona attracted huge crowds to matches at the Camp Nou, with 72,262 watching the second leg of the semi-final against Chelsea. The competition's pulling power was further illustrated by an overall attendance figure of 726,206, a massive 24% increase on the figure from the previous season.

The UEFA Technical Report aims to transmit information and analysis from Europe's premier women's club competition to all the other levels of women's football. The report is based on observations by top-level club and national team coaches Britta Carlson, Gemma Grainger, Jayne Ludlow, Joe Montemurro, Martin Sjögren and Jorge Vilda.

GROUP A



Chelsea FC
(CHE)



Paris Saint-Germain
(PAR)



Real Madrid CF
(RMA)



K.F.F. Vllaznia
(VLA)

GROUP B



VfL Wolfsburg
(WOL)



AS Roma
(ROM)



SKN St. Pölten
(STP)



SK Slavia Praha
(SLA)

GROUP C



Arsenal WFC
(ARS)



Olympique Lyonnais
(LYO)



Juventus
(JUV)



FC Zürich
(ZUR)

GROUP D



FC Barcelona
(FCB)



FC Bayern München
(BAY)



SL Benfica
(BEN)



FC Rosengård
(ROS)

BARÇA TURN THE TIDE

A pre-match tactical switch from Wolfsburg gave them the early advantage, but Barcelona adjusted their approach at half-time to devastating effect

Tactical awareness, physical endurance and mental resilience were tested to the limit when Barcelona and Wolfsburg faced up on a sunny afternoon in Eindhoven. Both coaches had full squads to choose from and, whereas Jonatan Giráldez was loyal to Barcelona's habitual 1-4-3-3, Tommy Stroot raised eyebrows by moving striker Ewa Pajor to the left of his attack, looking to exploit spaces behind Barça right-back Lucy Bronze, leaving Alex Popp to manoeuvre in a more advanced central role.

The tactical ploy yielded almost immediate dividends. In the third minute, Pajor dispossessed Bronze and struck a right-footed drive that Sandra Paños could do no more than palm into the top corner of her net. A 1-0 deficit would not normally be dramatic. But, for the Barcelona players, it called up psychological phantoms – memories of the previous season's final when they had conceded two goals against

Lyon in 23 minutes and four goals in under half an hour of the 2019 final against the same opponents. "We made a mistake and conceded right at the start," Giráldez commented afterwards. "The important thing is how you react. We did that well – but then conceded again."

The second psychological blow arrived eight minutes prior to the interval, just when Giráldez's players had settled into their game and created two excellent chances – one of them a back-post header from a corner. But on one of the few occasions when Wolfsburg were able to break clear of Barça's high press and build through the thirds, Felicitas Rauch fed a pass to Pajor whose inswinging right-footed cross from the left allowed Popp to head in from close range. "It was practically Wolfsburg's only attack with control during the first half," Martin Sjögren remarked. "They'd had very little ball in middle-to-front areas,

hadn't been able to play out through the centre and had had little success when the goalkeeper played long."

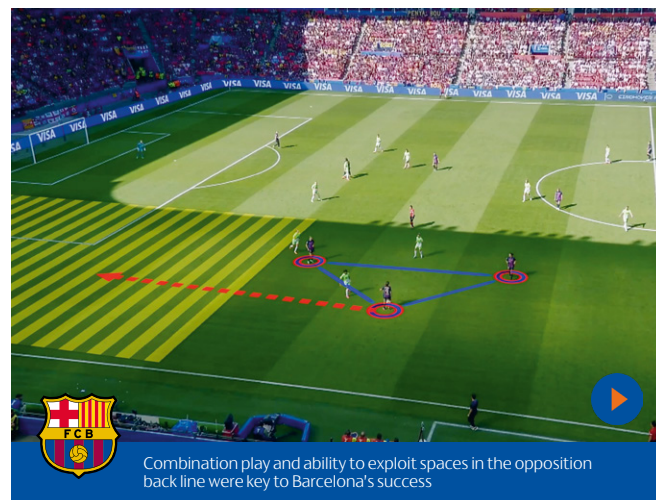
But two goals from three attempts meant the talk at half-time was about Wolfsburg's efficiency in attack and, above all, their well-designed and well-implemented defensive strategy. When Barça were building from the back, Wolfsburg pushed five players forward to press, with one cutting off a passing route to midfield and, at some distance, a back line of four with left-back Rauch staying wide to hamper access to Barça's main 1v1 threat, Caroline Graham Hansen. Centre-back Dominique Janssen was ready to spring out to follow No9 Mariona Caldentey and, when Rauch moved out of her zone to police Graham Hansen, holding midfielder Lena Oberdorf was quick to fill the gap. Oberdorf and Svenja Huth engaged in tight marking in front of the back line while winger Sveindís Jónsdóttir dropped

"THE TALK AT HALF-TIME WAS ABOUT WOLFSBURG'S EFFICIENCY IN ATTACK AND THEIR WELL-DESIGNED AND WELL-IMPLEMENTED DEFENSIVE STRATEGY"





Half-time pressing adjustments from Barcelona



Combination play and ability to exploit spaces in the opposition back line were key to Barcelona's success



Left-back Fridolina Rolfö smashes in Barcelona's winning goal

back to pre-empt a switch of play to Barça left-back Fridolina Rolfö, thus completing a defensive line of five.

Barça's technique often allowed them to retain possession under Wolfsburg's tight marking, the psychological blows translated into unforced errors and more long passing than usual. But a tactical adjustment at half-time was signalled by the technical observers as the turning of a tide. Up to the interval their high press was led by a front line of three. "The change," Jorge Vilda observed, "was to press with Salma Paralluelo and, usually, Aitana Bonmatí as the top two, challenging the Wolfsburg centre-backs, with the false striker Mariona Caldentey dropping into a second line of four or five. They were more willing to take risks and, if necessary, defend 3v3." The risk-taking also pushed Barça's full-backs, subdued during the first half, further upfield for proactive contributions to attacks through the wide areas.

The defensive order that had been Wolfsburg's strength immediately started to gravitate towards disorder. Within three minutes, Bonmatí's ball-winning set up Bronze to find holding midfielder Patri Guijarro, whose pass allowed Graham Hansen to deliver a low cross from the right for the on-running Guijarro to side-foot in at the near post. Two minutes later, Bonmatí lofted another cross from the right for Guijarro, making an untracked run from deep, to equalise with a combination of head and shoulder.

Now it was Wolfsburg's turn to recover from psychological damage, but Barcelona's relentless possession play left them relying on sporadic counterattacks which posed genuine threats to their opponents' more expansive approach. With Caldentey and Bonmatí as free spirits and the full-backs in attacking mode, Barça created overloads in the wide areas, notably on the left where Rolfö was ready to make runs as far as the by-line. With Wolfsburg's defence pulled out of shape, it was Barça's ability to create chaos which set up the telling blow. A low cross from the right was cleared by Lynn Wilms straight at Kathrin Hendrich. Caldentey latched on to the rebound which was eventually poked out to Rolfö, who shot high into the net. Wolfsburg fought to the last. But Barcelona's technical qualities, their trademark triangular passing movements, their positional rotations and their use of the wide areas won them their second title in three seasons.



BARCELONA 3-2 WOLFSBURG

SATURDAY 3 JUNE 2023
PSV Stadion, Eindhoven

GOALS

0-1 Pajor (3), 0-2 Popp (37), 1-2 Guijarro (48),
2-2 Guijarro (50), 3-2 Rolfö (70)

YELLOW CARDS

BARCELONA Bonmatí 33, Paredes 90+4
WOLFSBURG Hendrich 21, Jónsdóttir 77, Popp 90+4

REFEREE

Cheryl Foster (WAL)

BARCELONA

- 1 Paños
- 2 Paredes
- 4 León
- 9 Caldentey
- 6 Pina 79
- 10 Graham Hansen
- 7 Crnogorčević 79
- 12 Guijarro
- 14 Bonmatí
- 11 Putellas 90
- 15 Bronze
- 16 Rolfö
- 17 Paralluelo
- 18 Geyse 70
- 21 Walsh
- 23 Syrstad Engen 89

Coach Jonatan Giráldez

WOLFSBURG

- 1 Frohms
- Wilms
- 31 Hegering 84
- 4 Hendrich
- 5 Oberdorf
- 6 Janssen
- Pajor
- 7 Bremer 84
- 10 Huth
- 11 Popp
- 13 Rauch
- Roord
- 8 Lattwein 71
- 29 Jónsdóttir

Coach Tommy Stroot

MATCH STATISTICS

BARCELONA		WOLFSBURG
61	POSSESSION %	39
26	TOTAL ATTEMPTS	8
39	ATTACKS	15
5	CORNERS TAKEN	1
84	PASSING ACCURACY %	73
599	PASSES ATTEMPTED	317
53	BALLS RECOVERED	42
4	SAVES	4
112.1	DISTANCE COVERED KM	114.8
2	YELLOW CARDS	3
0	RED CARDS	0



'EVERYONE HAD TO BELIEVE'

Barcelona coach Jonatan Giráldez reflects on a season of triumph and the half-time team talk that helped turn the final against Wolfsburg on its head

Whereas his predecessor as European champion – the 2022 Champions League winner Sonia Bompastor – entered coaching on the back of a distinguished playing career, Jonatan Giráldez arrived in the Barcelona technical area via studies and work experience in physical education and sports science. A member of the coaching staff when the Catalan club first donned the European crown in 2021, he stepped up to the leading role when Lluís Cortés departed immediately afterwards. And, after losing the 2022 final to Bompastor's Lyon, he went one better by lifting the trophy in Eindhoven.

Two finals. What did you learn from the first one? What did you think you had to do to reach the top rung?

From a footballing perspective, we didn't play our best game in the final that we lost to Olympique Lyonnais, and there were some aspects of our play that we perhaps had to review. But above all, for me, the most important thing was to grow from a mental perspective in situations of play when things aren't going your way. I stress that point a lot because, in every game, there are moments where you will struggle. And the experience of previous seasons, and especially this one, when there have been rough patches to get through, we have grown significantly. We have spent time discussing things, in terms of dialogue and training, where we have had to think about how to act in those situations in important games, independently of what the dynamic of the game is. For me, the improvement we have made in terms of managing games on an emotional level has been magnificent and one example is this year's final. I think that in any other team – being 2-0 down at half-time – heads could start to drop, and you could end up trying to force things. What we did was the exact opposite: we turned that energy around, refocused, and redirected it to be able to turn the game around – and that's what we did.



A final is something special. From one year to the next, did you change anything in your preparation?

When I prepare matches, I always organise the week the same way: one part is devoted to analysing the opposition, another part is devoted to sharing with the players the points I think are more important and we work with the staff to organise the training sessions during the week along with logistics, treatments, and so on. What I don't like to change is routines that help us win matches. I don't like doing exceptional things, as special as the game might be. There's one thing I especially like, which I think is key as a manager: acting as a thermometer to maintain emotional balance. At a time like a final, where you're competing for something important and emotions run high, you have to know how to reduce tension and refocus on the game plan. I think that's key.

And, above all, you have to get rid of negative thoughts. When you're playing a final and are still hung up on last season's final,

what do you have to think about during the week, and during the game, to execute your game plan? You have to put yourself at the service of the team so that we can win the game. From then onwards, everything you can give, you have to put it on the table so that the team can benefit from it. In that sense, I haven't made any changes at all.

In Eindhoven, were you surprised to see Ewa Pajor playing on the left?

Yes, we were particularly surprised by their tactical formation, with [Sveindís] Jónsdóttir and Pajor on the wings and Alexandra Popp playing as a No9, because we thought Wolfsburg were one of the best teams in the world in transitions. But I think they prioritised defending over attacking, because the roles of Pajor and Jónsdóttir were based on defending against our full-backs – Lucy Bronze and Fridolina Rolfö – joining in when we attacked. That probably allowed them greater scope to defend in their half, close to their goal, but maybe at the expense of removing their

chances to transition because Popp has a different skill set; she's an excellent player, but she performs better in other scenarios. And yes I was surprised, because from my point of view, one of the best players in terms of winning back possession, Ewa Pajor, in that scenario with our full-backs, found herself out of those areas where she could really hurt us. However, results generally determine feedback and I guess that being 2-0 up [at half-time], the conclusions they had were quite good. We were able to adapt and attack even better to avoid them getting in behind us, and I think we did it brilliantly.

In the first half, Wolfsburg's one-on-one marking was quite efficient and made it hard to break through...

Yes, in the first half, they defended individually through the middle of the pitch. We had to add an extra player to try to get a numerical advantage in the middle. We tried to get our full-backs really wide to force their wingers further back and keep them away when we

won back possession. We had to make better decisions on when to play a pass inside, because their centre-backs were very active, right on top of our central midfielders when they received the ball with space. So we had some issues to sharpen. Despite this, we had 15 shots on goal, compared to the three shots that they had in the first half. We generated enough chances to be in front. But that's why football is so complicated, tough and beautiful at the same time, because you are two goals down in a game that you've dominated. You have to go in at half-time and turn things around, and that's what we did.

What were your priorities during the half-time team talk?

In my opinion, half-time team talks have two aspects: a tactical aspect, and an emotional one. The tactical aspect focused on what we did well in the first half, and small things we had to improve during the second half like the positioning of Mariona Caldentey and Salma Paralluelo.

I felt that we had lost possession because our centre-backs and central midfielders were too far from each other. I prefer our passing corridors to be a bit closer, especially when the opposition mark us so closely. So, by switching Mariona's position, I felt that we could improve her ball reception, controlling with her right foot and keeping it away from the full-back who we thought would mark her in the second half. Salma was ready to get to the byline, getting in behind the full-back, as well as the centre-back who aimed to prevent our players getting into the box. We also wanted to be a bit more aggressive in defence, releasing Salma and Aitana Bonmatí to press from the front, with Patri Guijarro staying close to her marker to make sure that when we got the ball back, we would have more players close by to hurt them – which we did through Patri with the two goals she scored.

The second aspect is the emotional side. Above all, it was about mentioning all the difficult moments we had been through during the season. We had to look each other in the eyes, see positivism and good energy, see an opportunity to start a comeback. And thinking that comeback victories are a lot sweeter than matches you win from the start. Everyone had to believe and to bang on the table to show that we were the best team in Europe.



Jonatan Giráldez issues instructions to Aitana Bonmatí

Is it difficult to reconcile domestic games and Champions League? Is there a difference in level?

The demands have to be there every day, during training. That's key for me. You play to win your domestic games at the weekend, or during the week, but actually, the place where you have to convey that motivation, that intensity, those battles, your improvement, and especially your development is during training every day. That's a routine and if you improve your day-to-day routine, you are in a better position to be up to speed with the level required on matchday. So, in those Champions League matches, regardless of the level of demand, which is obviously higher than in the league, the onus is exclusively on the coach and the staff to motivate the players in the right way, which is based on continuous improvement.

Are you a perfectionist? With your CV in physical aspects, sports science, analysis...

Yes, I usually say that you have two ways of developing yourself: one is the professional side, given to you by your experience in high performance; and there is also an educational aspect, where through it, you try to be as competent as possible in all the areas that involve football. Throughout my life I've tried to continue doing this. I've tried to train

“WE HAD TO LOOK EACH OTHER IN THE EYES AND SEE POSITIVISM, GOOD ENERGY AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO START A COMEBACK. EVERYONE HAD TO BANG ON THE TABLE TO SHOW THAT WE WERE THE BEST TEAM IN EUROPE”



Patri Guijarro (centre) is congratulated after scoring early in the second half of the final

‘HUGE STRIDES FOR THE FUTURE’

Jonatan Giráldez is impressed by the quality of the Champions League

This was the second season involving a group stage, and for Jonatan Giráldez its impact and importance is clear.

“Yes, no doubt about it,” he said. “You only have to look at the results in the quarter-finals, the semi-finals, in the final – so many were decided by one goal. Chelsea won on penalties in the quarter-finals. Wolfsburg beat Arsenal in the 119th minute.

“Fans need equality and competitive games and I think we saw an amazing Champions League in terms of having dynamic matches, at a high level and an overall show. I am very happy with this group stage, as it allows smaller teams to show what level they have and take huge strides for their future. Despite being delighted with the format, as I always say, the best team has to win, and I think we were the best team this season.”

Giráldez is thrown aloft by his jubilant players



myself in as many things as possible, to have the most competences as an analyst, as a fitness coach, as a coach, as a teacher. There is another factor which I believe has also been important in all the other jobs I've had. Whether they are in the football world or not, you have to try and grab the best things of every job and then try to apply them in your day-to-day life as a professional. I like to be at the forefront in terms of tools, methodology, listening to people talking football - and I also watch a lot of matches. I consider myself as someone who tries to do anything that is in my reach to become the best professional I can be.

Did you learn anything in particular during this Champions League campaign?

Yes, no doubt about it! In my opinion, you learn when you analyse things at the end of the season. I think that this year, in terms of handling our emotions during the knockout stages - and I'm not talking about me as an individual, but the team as a whole - we did extremely well. We have to be aware that the most important thing is achieving our goals. Many times, during matches, there will be moments when you suffer more, moments when one of your players gets sent off, moments when an opponent dominates you because they need to go after the game, moments when you are not precise with the ball, or moments when you miss the goal. And in my opinion, the emotional management of all these moments was an important learning experience.

In the case of Roma, in our 1-0 victory there, we were under a lot of pressure in the closing minutes. The team stood strong and managed to win the return game. Against Chelsea, we were able to win at Stamford Bridge, an incredibly tough venue, and we were also able to overcome the toughest moments at the Camp Nou and deserved to go through. And in the final - obviously, to turn around a 2-0 deficit in the second half, and the manner in which we did so, I think that strengthens the mental fortitude we've had to bolster over the course of the year. It's also important to reflect on the low points, too. In the group stage, we lost a game that was difficult to manage, against Bayern and that could have meant we didn't finish top of the group. But it taught us a lot. When you're going through a rough patch I always say, "It doesn't matter what happens; what's important is how you react." And the reaction we had in terms of performance,

"THAT IS OUR OBLIGATION: NOT TO BE SATISFIED WITH WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED, BUT TO KEEP GROWING. WE CAN'T ASSUME THAT WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED WILL HELP US DO THE SAME IN THE YEARS TO COME"

training, mental level - that made us able to win the Champions League.

Will it be tougher next season now that so many people are analysing what Barça do?

It's hard enough to win one, let alone two! Well, it's a challenge. When you win, you are the team to beat. We have been the team to beat in the Spanish league for a number of years now, and in next season's Champions League, teams will, where possible, analyse us more to try and get the better of us. But I see it as a challenge and an opportunity to motivate the players and the team to better ourselves on an individual and collective basis. That is our obligation: not to be satisfied with what we've achieved up to now, but to keep growing. We can't assume that what we have achieved will help us do the same in the years to come. We have to grow in a tactical sense, offer a greater threat in midfield and attack, improve on an individual level, adapt to different roles and be a team that is harder to suss out.

There's also the added element that European budgets are going up and up. There are teams spending millions on transfers. There are increasing opportunities in foreign markets, which are strengthening by bringing in elite players. The staff are ever more professional; players are more experienced and have better training conditions. And that all means that everything is much more competitive. It means that everything is much tougher. And we, as Barça, need to continue down that path of investing in women's football and continuing

to improve on an individual basis and as a team. Trying to keep ahead of teams that are seeking to catch up with us. That will be the key to us continuing to fulfil our goals.

If you were to go and work in another country, would your philosophy remain the same?

I think my philosophy in terms of work, training, and demands has always been the same in whichever role I have taken on. I have always aimed to give the very best of myself. Now, if you're asking me in a footballing sense, what I always try to do is analyse from a personal perspective: what resources do the players have, and how can we make best use of those resources and work on them so that we can win matches? Let's not forget that football is about the players. As such, the players' characteristics come before philosophy, and what you have to do as a coach is bolster those resources. I love analysis and seeing what every player can do in any given situation, conjuring up scenarios in training, thinking up scenarios in competitions, putting them into practice - seeing them, sharing them, and working on them to keep on improving. So, in another country, in different surroundings, in a different team... For me, what is sacred is having a strong understanding of the players' characteristics, valuing them, trying to make the most of them in training so that they can perform at their best and ultimately win, because I think that's the goal for every team, every coach, and every player.

Barcelona's Fridolina Rolfö (left) battles with Emilie Haavi of Roma in the quarter-final second leg



TACTICAL ANALYSIS

Throughout the season, UEFA's technical observers picked out moments that were representative of wider themes at play in the competition. Here, from the group stage onwards, they analyse some of the key tactical talking points of the campaign



GROUP STAGE

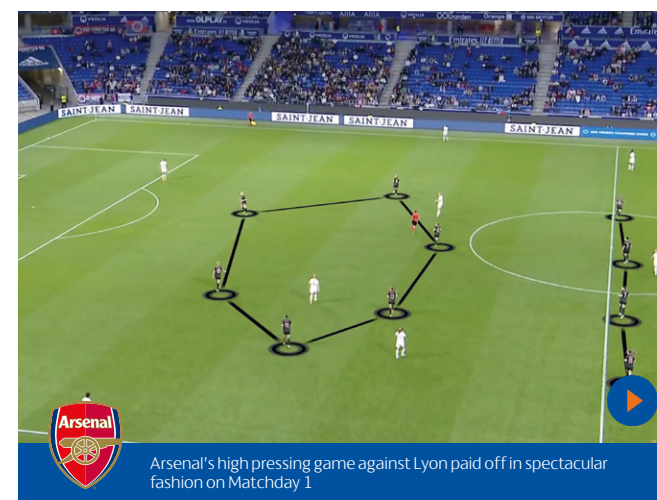
Seeking common denominators among the 48 matches in the group stage, technical observers felt that teams were, in general, tactically astute, game plans were competently implemented, defences were well-structured and 1v1 skills continued to show steady improvement. This was true not only among regular starters but also bench players who, exploiting the five-substitute rule, are increasingly expected to make an impact.

HIGH PRESSING v LOW BLOCKS

"Defending in the opposition half with high collective pressing made a clear impact," the technical observers commented, "with many teams more courageous in holding high lines than in the previous season." During the group stage, 23% of the 130 open-play goals resulted from moves of five passes or less, with multiple examples of regains near the opponents' penalty area followed by one or two passes prior to the finishing touch.

Arsenal, cited as a "high-level counter-pressing team", scored three times after collective work had secured regains – two in the mid-third, one in the final third – during the 5-1 victory over the defending champions in Lyon, a result which sent shockwaves across the continent. "Lyon trusted their 1v1 abilities to the extent that they left spaces," the technical observers remarked. After one point from two games, Sonia Bompastor rectified this facet, allowing her team to qualify via four successive clean sheets.

High scores punctuated a group stage that yielded 177 goals, emphasising that teams, maybe dominant in their domestic leagues, require well-structured defensive strategies when they take on Europe's elite. Top teams often struggled to pierce well-organised mid-to-low defensive blocks. Bayern München's 2-1 home win against Rosengård was mentioned by technical observers as a case in point. Renée Slegers' 1-4-5-1 set-up allowed the midfield to obstruct passing lines to the front and restricted Bayern's opportunities to play between the lines. Although the hosts had 69% of possession and overall control, Slegers commented, "Our organisation in defence was very good. We closed down the spaces they wanted to get into and we didn't over-commit." Even though 39% of open-play goals were scored against structured low or mid blocks, the Swedish team highlighted the value of collective discipline and hard work when implementing defence in a compact low block.



TRANSITIONS TO ATTACK

Being careful about over-committing when pushing forward emerged as a factor when lower-ranked teams took on elite opponents. The combination of high pressing and low defensive blocks sometimes left the attacking team short of space for penetration after high regains. During the group stage only 11% of open-play goals could be clearly attributed to classic counterattacks. Debutants Roma illustrated the point during the 3-0 win over Slavia Praha that clinched their place in the knockout rounds. Despite a 61% share of the ball, Alessandro Spugna's side failed to make a breakthrough until they delivered a successful counterattack following a regain when defending their own penalty box – a facet of the game they would later try to exploit in the quarter-final against Barcelona. In some games, the observers remarked, it was evident that the stronger teams were intentionally beckoning their opponents forward to secure space for a fast counter.

THE BATTLE OF THE GOAL KICK

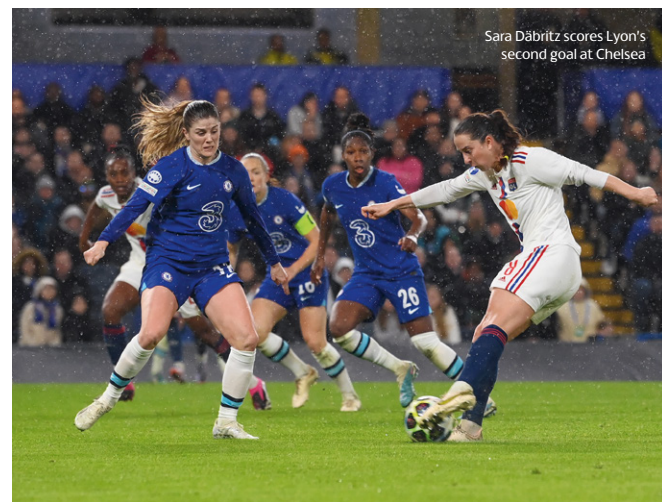
The desire to play out from the back was almost universal during a group stage when the goal kick evolved into a tactical issue. "It's now a natural part of the analysis of opponents," technical observer Martin Sjögren commented, "and you look for offensive and defensive opportunities. It's mainly a risk v reward issue." Defending champions Lyon provided a case study, initially setting themselves up in 1-4-1-4-1 formation at an Arsenal goal kick – which allowed the visitors to play out and win a free-kick in midfield. Next time round, the French team switched to a more aggressive 1-4-1-3-2 structure, looking to disrupt distribution by the centre-backs. The Arsenal goalkeeper opted to play long, with Lyon winning the aerial duel and picking up the second ball. The visitors then dropped Lia Wälti into an area alongside the centre-backs to create a 3v2 scenario with, later in the game, the full-backs dropping deeper to receive or to open a direct pathway to the wingers. As a result, Arsenal found solutions to break the home team's high press on the goal kick.

THE DEAD BALL

During the group stage, 21% of goals stemmed from dead-ball situations – a low figure compared with other competitions. Success rates from set plays are the cue for perennial debate about training-ground time spent on this feature of the game. But the numerical significance was arguably less than the importance of set-play goals that broke a deadlock or struck a psychological blow. Roma, for example, controlled their crucial game against Slavia but needed two set plays (right-footed deliveries of a corner and a free-kick from the right) and a counterattack to secure a win. The first set-play goal came from an outswinging corner by Manuela Giugliano which found Beata Kollmats, who adjusted her posture perfectly to head into the bottom corner. Crucially, Elisa Bartoli dragged her marker away from the area where the ball was delivered. The final goal came when scorer Elena Linari positioned herself as if her role was to protect the edge of the box at a free-kick. She spotted a gap in the opponents' set-up and moved to place Giugliano's precise delivery into the bottom corner. Of equal significance in Lyon, the low, right-footed direct free-kick by Beth Mead on the stroke of half-time meant that the home team headed for the dressing-room with a 1-3 deficit rather than 1-2.

QUARTER-FINALS

The salient features of the quarter-finals were the eliminations, by slim margins, of Paris Saint-Germain and defending champions Lyon, leaving the competition without a French semi-finalist for only the second time in 15 years. Both showed enormous attacking potential, scoring 12 goals in their eight group stage and quarter-final fixtures. Lyon, with seven of 33 goal attempts on target, were within seconds of winning their tie against Chelsea while 25% of Paris's finishing was accurate during a tie when Gérard Prêcheur's side pushed Wolfsburg to the limit despite playing the final third of the first leg with ten players. Arsenal's mid-to-high pressing restricted Bayern to a single on-target attempt during the second leg in London, while Roma creditably remained loyal to their playing philosophy against Barcelona's panoply of attacking options.



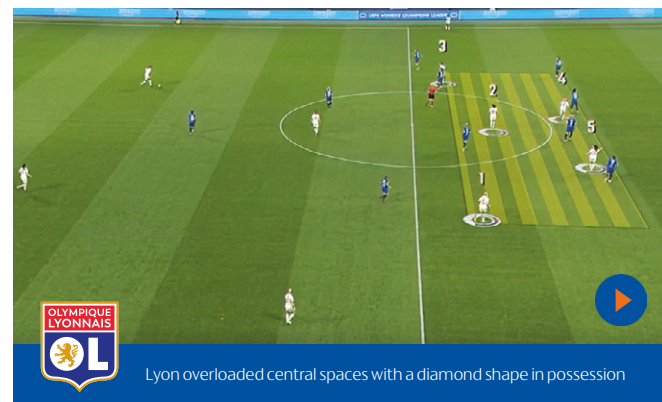
Sara Däbritz scores Lyon's second goal at Chelsea

"Chelsea, with well-positioned centre-backs, were strong in dealing with Lyon's crosses and defended central areas very well. The two holding midfielders prioritised closure of the space in front of the back line."

MARTIN SJÖGREN | UEFA TECHNICAL OBSERVER



Lyon pressed Chelsea high up the field and with a midfield diamond behind to overload central areas



Lyon overloaded central spaces with a diamond shape in possession



DIAMONDS AND CUTTING EDGES

"Lyon prioritised high pressing throughout," technical observer Martin Sjögren reported, "with a diamond shape in midfield when defending in high, mid or low block." During their 1-0 victory in France, Chelsea responded with a long-passing strategy that accounted for 26% of their total and, in the return match in London, as Jayne Ludlow commented, "played a very direct game looking for quick forward supply to Sam Kerr in transitions to attack looking to expose space behind the back line and utilising long kicks by the goalkeeper". Lyon, as a result, "found it hard to gain spaces for counterattacks because Chelsea didn't have time to move the team forward", Sjögren added.

Lyon's midfield diamond had the effect of overloading central areas and leaving the wide areas for the full-backs Ellie Carpenter and Perle Morroni or Selma Bacha to exploit with, as Ludlow mentioned "a preference for far-post deliveries". Lyon delivered 40 crosses (14 at home and 26 in London). "Chelsea, with well-positioned centre-backs, were strong in dealing with them," Sjögren commented, "and defended central areas very well, with the two holding midfielders, Melanie Leupolz and Sophie Ingle, prioritising closure of the space in front of the back line. Their defensive balance was very important throughout."

26% Chelsea's long passes in the first leg at Lyon

40

Lyon crosses in their quarter-final (14 at home, 26 away)

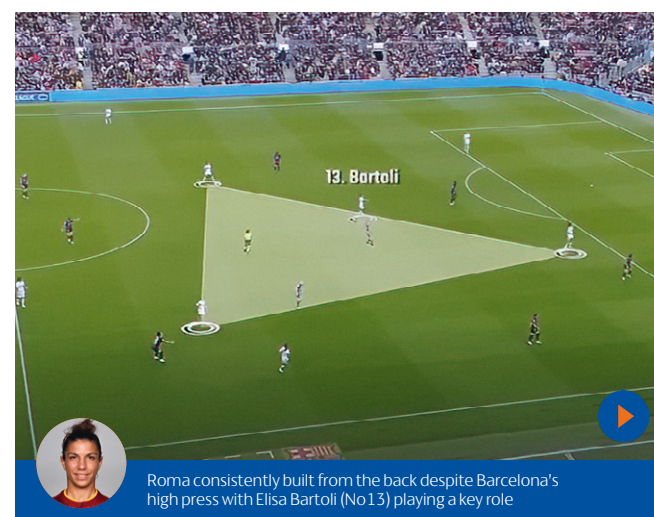
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Lyon's total number of shots across the quarter-final – ten more than opponents Chelsea



ROMA BUILT ON TWO DAYS

As technical observer Joe Montemurro remarked, "it was positive to see Roma continuing to build from the back even when it was difficult against Barcelona's high pressing. Once they were able to get the ball into midfield they became more proactive and confident." On the other hand, he added, Roma were obliged to resist "an onslaught of attacks and possession" as Jonatan Giráldez's team unfurled their attacking riches. This forced Roma's initial 1-4-4-2 structure to metamorphose into a 1-5-4-1 low defensive block with midfielder Annamaria Serturini dropping deep to assist Elisa Bartoli in controlling upfield incursions by Barça's left-back Fridolina Rolfö while, on the other flank, Andressa Alves would track back into more central positions to cover underlapping runs by right-back Lucy Bronze. "At times," Montemurro said, "Roma's build-up play allowed them to retain more possession centrally and to exploit wide areas higher up the pitch." One such move produced Serturini's consolation goal at the Camp Nou when, after winning the ball in their own half, Roma's three-pass counterattack featuring effective crossover runs by Serturini and Valentina Giacinti, the former's finish was well placed into the corner of the Barcelona net.



Roma consistently built from the back despite Barcelona's high press with Elisa Bartoli (No 13) playing a key role



A WELL-STOCKED ARSENAL

"In terms of courage, aggressiveness, security on the ball and the pace of their play, Arsenal deservedly won." That was the verdict by technical observer Britta Carlson after the 2-0 victory in London that gave Jonas Eidevall's team a 2-1 aggregate win against Bayern. During the first leg, Georgia Stanway had played a crucial role for the home team in Munich, dropping into the defensive line to offer passing options to her goalkeeper and centre-backs as they built from the back or, when on the ball herself, beating the Arsenal press with cute forward passes and switches of play, making more touches (86) than any other player on the field and helping to set up Lea Schüller's goal that decided the game.



Bayern's Georgia Stanway played a pivotal role in the first leg in Munich – before Arsenal closed down the central pathways

Arsenal, however, had done their homework. In London, their aggressive 1-4-4-2 pressing with Stina Blackstenius and Frida Maanum rapidly closing central pathways, "forced long balls or hurried inaccurate passes", as Carlson put it. Bayern's difficulties in finding routes to the Arsenal goal prompted Alexander Straus to switch to a 1-3-5-2 structure just after the hour, sending on the dynamic Jovana Damnjanović as second striker and pushing Maximiliane Rall up into midfield. Although the visitors gained in impetus, they were unable to penetrate Arsenal's solid defence, ending the game with that solitary on-target goal attempt.



PARIS'S RELENTLESS PRESSING

"With both teams matching up in formations," Gemma Grainger commented, "the first leg was a very tactical, evenly-balanced contest with neither goalkeeper required to make big saves." She also noted that, even when a player short during the last half-hour, "Paris maintained their aggressive pressing in 1-4-2-3 formation". Right-back Ashley Lawrence and Sakina Karchaoui on the left helped create overloads on the flanks, offering the central players room for fluid attacking movements – notably Ramona Bachmann who, as Grainger mentioned, "had a fluid role, dropping deep to create overloads, deliver line-breaking passes from positions where she could face the goal and engage with Wolfsburg's holding midfielder Lena Oberdorf in a battle between two players who excel in 1v1 duels."

In the return leg, Jorge Vilda saw Paris play "a combination game with numerical superiority in midfield, as Lieke Martens started wide but moved inside to create 4v3 situations while Sandy Baltimore, with more of a winger profile, stayed wide to look for 1v1 situations." Throughout the game – from goal kicks and open play – Paris set out to apply high pressure with striker Kadidiatou Diani pressing the centre-back with the ball with the winger on the opposite flank closing down the other central defender. "Both wingers took up intermediate positions between centre-back and full-back, ready to spring forward," Vilda explained, "while mixed markings kept tight control on key midfielder Jill Roord and middle-to-front linking player Alex Popp. They put Wolfsburg in serious trouble but seemed to suffer an emotional blow when the home side managed to score."

SEMI-FINALS

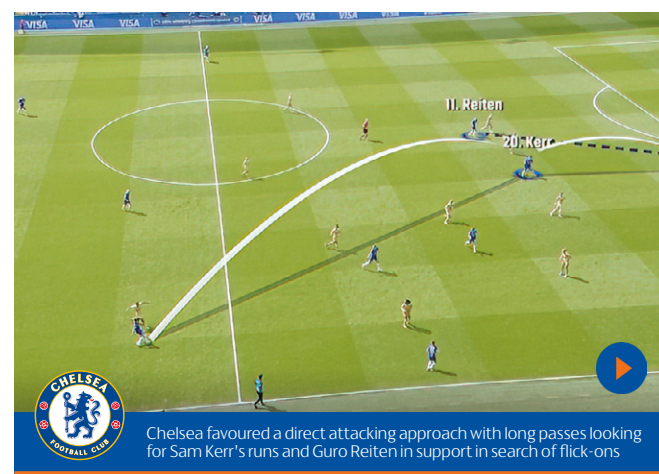
In the semi-finals, huge crowds pushed home teams forward – but, with Wolfsburg and Barcelona booking their trips to Eindhoven by winning in London, there were no victories for hosts.

Once again, slender margins emphasised the intensification of competitiveness among the top teams. Both semi-finals were decided by one-goal margins, with Wolfsburg securing their 5-4 aggregate win against injury-hit Arsenal in the final minute of extra-time. Chelsea's Emma Hayes successfully designed game plans with her avowed intention of staying in the tie with Barcelona for as long as possible and Jonatan Giráldez's team prevailed 2-1 thanks to a goal in each leg by right-winger Caroline Graham Hansen, a decisive element who, as Joe Montemurro remarked, "with Chelsea looking to apply high pressure with wing-backs up, positioned herself outside Chelsea's back line and frequently pulled Magdalena Eriksson out of her centre-back position, creating 1v1 situations or opening spaces for the central attacker to exploit".



FAST FORWARD

Chelsea, accepting that Barcelona would dominate possession, opted for direct attacking with, as Gemma Grainger commented, "Sam Kerr the main threat, making run after run and working relentlessly to convert long balls into successful passes. She operated on the shoulder of Barcelona's high back line, stretching play and offering her team its main outlet when in possession." Kerr preferred to drift to the left between centre-back and right-back, looking to exploit her aerial power and acceleration, supported by Guro Reiten's runs in search of a flick-on. It was this combination which eventually produced Chelsea's equaliser in Barcelona. At home,

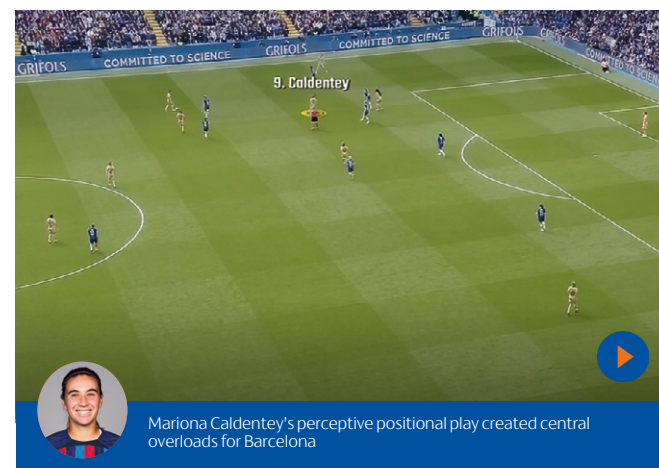


26% of Chelsea's passes were long, as were 18% at the Camp Nou with goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger and midfielders Melanie Leupolz and Erin Cuthbert the main suppliers to the front two.

Barcelona's response was a masterclass in defending that restricted Chelsea to six goal attempts at Stamford Bridge and five in the return leg, with Irene Paredes competing aerially with Kerr while team-mates were alert to second-ball dangers, backtracking at speed and skilfully intercepting through passes. "They also displayed awareness and experience," Grainger added, "in their decision-making between the right time to attack and when it was better to keep possession and dictate the tempo of the game".

SMALL CHANGE, BIG IMPACT

"In Barcelona, a clever and small tactical adjustment in the second half made a big difference," Montemurro reported. Emma Hayes pushed midfielder Jessie Fleming forward to support Chelsea's front two, while Cuthbert dropped into a holding midfielder position alongside Melanie Leupolz. "It allowed her to become more influential," Montemurro explained. "She lifted the team higher and her positioning either side of Keira Walsh drew the Barcelona midfielder away from the centre, allowing the team to find better construction options and create opportunities." During the second half, Chelsea matched the home team 50-50 in ball possession after Barça had enjoyed 58% up to the break. "The adjustment forced Walsh to stay low," Montemurro added, "and, with build-up through the centre more difficult, forced Barça to play on the outside."



Clever positional play also allowed Mariona Caldentey to make an impact, returning from injury as sub in London and then starting the return leg. The Barcelona No9 "made some excellent interchanging with Aitana Bonmati", said Grainger, "then played almost as a false 9 to create central overloads and moved left towards the end. She was a key element in spells of possession." "Creating overloads and assisting the forward line centrally," Montemurro agreed, "she was difficult to deal with and a constant headache for the opposition."

"Barcelona displayed awareness and experience in their decision-making between the right time to attack and when it was better to keep possession and dictate the tempo of the game."

GEMMA GRAINGER | UEFA TECHNICAL OBSERVER

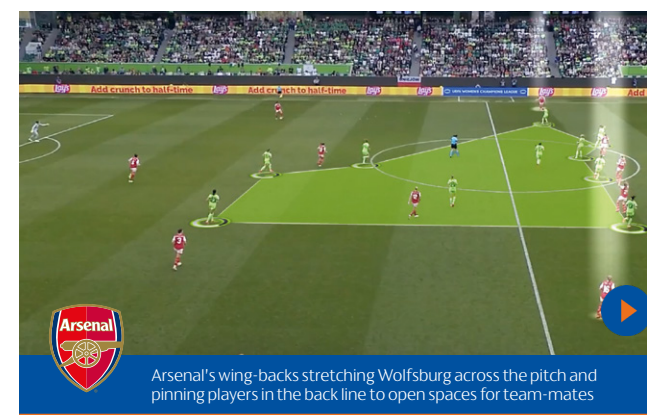


Arsenal's Laura Wienroither battles for possession with Sveindís Jónsdóttir



WING-BACKS FLY HIGH

"Arsenal's attacking set-up was 1-3-4-3 formation with transitions to 1-5-2-3 when they defended in a middle block and, when they defended deep, 1-5-4-1," Jorge Vilda noted. "When you play that system, the wing-back positions are key. And the two Arsenal players did a great job, understanding the correct height of their positioning in all phases of the game." Steph Catley and Noëlle Maritz worked unflinchingly in possession play by stretching Wolfsburg across the pitch, providing defensive balance and create central spaces for team-mates, notably Katie McCabe, a positional free spirit in attack, or Frida Maanum whose work between lines dragged opponents



with her, opening passing lanes to the wing-backs. Arsenal worked on attracting Wolfsburg to one side and then using the wide centre-backs and the goalkeeper to execute a rapid switch of play.

Arsenal's wing-backs posed questions that Wolfsburg worked hard to answer – as illustrated by wide attacker Svenja Huth, described by Vilda as "a long-distance player with an important role in Wolfsburg's response to the Arsenal set-up". She was required to track back to control Catley's upfield work, as Wolfsburg's right-back Lynn Wilms marked McCabe individually. Arsenal looked to capitalise on this by dragging her out of position and exploiting the spaces she vacated. Huth worked hard to plug the gaps and, in the return leg, as Jayne Ludlow noted, "Wolfsburg's transitions were, during most of the game, to a back line of six with both wingers tracking the Arsenal wing-backs."

TRANSITIONAL PHASES

"The second leg was mostly a transitional contest," Ludlow remarked. "And Arsenal's defence-to-attack transitions were especially threatening. Their high or mid pressing restricted Wolfsburg in terms of building through midfield and regains in that area often triggered immediate counters with Stina Blackstenius making runs between the centre-backs while team-mates flooded forward to support the through pass." A three-pass counter allowed Blackstenius to open the scoring in London. Yet open-play successes were rare in a tie where four of the nine goals stemmed from set plays and two from clear defensive errors.



TEAM OF THE SEASON

Not surprisingly, champions Barcelona are well represented in the technical observers' all-star XI with six selections

The technical observers' selection was dominated by the champions, with Barcelona providing three of the back four, two of the midfield trio along with right-winger Caroline Graham Hansen, who accompanied the Wolfsburg duo of Alex Popp and Ewa Pajor in the front line of three. Completing the defence was Katie McCabe who had impressed as left-back – or wing-back when Arsenal switched to a three-centre-back formation during the team's run to the semi-finals.

Alexandra Popp holds off Mapi León in the final

	EWA PAJOR FOR WOLFSBURG		ALEX POPP FOR WOLFSBURG		CAROLINE GRAHAM HANSEN FOR BARCELONA		
	PATRI GUIJARRO MID BARCELONA		LENA OBERDORF MID WOLFSBURG		AITANA BONMATÍ MID BARCELONA		
	KATIE MCCABE DEF ARSENAL		MAPI LEÓN DEF BARCELONA		IRENE PAREDES DEF BARCELONA		LUCY BRONZE DEF BARCELONA
	MERLE FROHMS GK WOLFSBURG						

AWARD WINNERS



Barcelona's Aitana Bonmatí was the technical observers' choice for the 2022/23 player of the season, while Wolfsburg midfielder Lena Oberdorf took the young player prize

Player of the Season Aitana Bonmatí (left) gets away from Lena Oberdorf, winner of the young player award, in the final

8 appearances
678 minutes played
1 assist
62 balls recovered and 20 tackles
49.24 kilometres covered during the season (tenth highest)

YOUNG PLAYER OF THE SEASON

Lena Oberdorf

Pressing, tackling and ball-winning are major elements in the repertoire of the Wolfsburg midfielder whose tireless work in the screening role helped to propel her team into the final. Grainger commented: "She protected the back line and consistently broke up the opponents' play. She was relentlessly competitive in 1v1 duels, utilising her strength and ability to read the game to control or prevent dangerous moments."



11 appearances
927 minutes played
53.15 kilometres covered during the season (third highest)
5 goals, joint second; only Ewa Pajor on nine had more
8 assists, the most in 2022/23

PLAYER OF THE SEASON

Aitana Bonmatí

The Barcelona midfielder's five goals and eight assists added up to a goal-contribution greater than any other player in the competition. But there was more to Aitana Bonmatí than that. UEFA technical observer Gemma Grainger, watching her in action in the semi-final first leg against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge, saw her "dictating the tempo, demanding the ball to ensure Barcelona dominated possession and, with a strong interchanging understanding between the two players, linking very well with Mariona Caldentey".

Joe Montemurro, technical observer at the return match at the Camp Nou, added: "She worked selflessly to regain the ball and make things happen proactively. Her influence when Barcelona are in possession and her positioning off the ball were a delight to watch."

It is no coincidence that Player of the Season Aitana Bonmatí also picked up the most Player of the Match awards, winning it in nearly half of Barcelona's 11 games.



PLAYER OF THE MATCH

A Player of the Match was named after every game to recognise the key performers in Europe's top female club competition

GROUP A

Vllaznia 0-2 Real Madrid	Esther González
Paris 0-1 Chelsea	Millie Bright
Real Madrid 0-0 Paris	Caroline Weir
Chelsea 8-0 Vllaznia	Sam Kerr
Paris 5-0 Vllaznia	Ramona Bachmann
Chelsea 2-0 Real Madrid	Erin Cuthbert
Vllaznia 0-4 Paris	Kadidiatou Diani
Real Madrid 1-1 Chelsea	Olga Carmona
Vllaznia 0-4 Chelsea	Guro Reiten
Paris 2-1 Real Madrid	Kadidiatou Diani
Real Madrid 5-1 Vllaznia	Teresa Abelleira
Chelsea 3-0 Paris	Fran Kirby

GROUP B

Wolfsburg 4-0 St. Pölten	Ewa Pajor
Roma 1-0 Slavia Praha	Emilie Haavi
St. Pölten 3-4 Roma	Manuela Giugliano
Slavia Praha 0-2 Wolfsburg	Ewa Pajor
Slavia Praha 0-1 St. Pölten	Mária Mikoļajová
Roma 1-1 Wolfsburg	Ewa Pajor
Wolfsburg 4-2 Roma	Sveindís Jónsdóttir
St. Pölten 1-1 Slavia Praha	Olivia Lukášová
Roma 5-0 St. Pölten	Manuela Giugliano
Wolfsburg 0-0 Slavia Praha	Olivia Lukášová
St. Pölten 2-8 Wolfsburg	Marina Hegering
Slavia Praha 0-3 Roma	Valentina Giacinti

GROUP C

Zürich 0-2 Juventus	Valentina Cernoia
Lyon 1-5 Arsenal	Beth Mead
Juventus 1-1 Lyon	Barbara Bonansea
Arsenal 3-1 Zürich	Jordan Nobbs
Zürich 0-3 Lyon	Melvine Malard
Juventus 1-1 Arsenal	Lineth Beerenstey
Lyon 4-0 Zürich	Melvine Malard
Arsenal 1-0 Juventus	Steph Catley
Juventus 5-0 Zürich	Cristiana Girelli
Arsenal 0-1 Lyon	Damaris Egurrola
Zürich 1-9 Arsenal	Frida Maanum
Lyon 0-0 Juventus	Pauline Peyraud-Magnin

GROUP D

Bayern 2-1 Rosengård	Julia Grosso
Barcelona 9-0 Benfica	Asisat Oshoala
Rosengård 1-4 Barcelona	Aitana Bonmatí
Benfica 2-3 Bayern	Georgia Stanway
Barcelona 3-0 Bayern	Aitana Bonmatí
Benfica 1-0 Rosengård	Cloé Lacasse
Rosengård 1-3 Benfica	Cloé Lacasse
Bayern 3-1 Barcelona	Lina Magull
Rosengård 0-4 Bayern	Georgia Stanway
Benfica 2-6 Barcelona	Aitana Bonmatí
Barcelona 6-0 Rosengård	Aitana Bonmatí
Bayern 2-0 Benfica	Klara Bühl

QUARTER-FINALS

Lyon 0-1 Chelsea	Guro Reiten
Chelsea 1-2 Lyon	Ann-Katrin Berger Aet; Chelsea won 4-3 on pens
Paris 0-1 Wolfsburg	Dominique Janssen
Wolfsburg 1-1 Paris	Alex Popp Wolfsburg won 2-1 on aggregate
Bayern 1-0 Arsenal	Lea Schüller
Arsenal 2-0 Bayern	Frida Maanum Arsenal won 2-1 on aggregate
Roma 0-1 Barcelona	Salma Paralluelo
Barcelona 5-1 Roma	Fridolina Rolfö Barcelona won 6-1 on aggregate

SEMI-FINALS

Chelsea 0-1 Barcelona	Caroline Graham Hansen
Barcelona 1-1 Chelsea	Aitana Bonmatí Barcelona won 2-1 on aggregate
Wolfsburg 2-2 Arsenal	Jen Beattie
Arsenal 2-3 Wolfsburg	Jill Roord Aet; Wolfsburg won 5-4 on aggregate

FINAL

Barcelona 3-2 Wolfsburg	Patri Gujjarro
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Frida Maanum lets rip against Bayern

GOALS OF THE SEASON

Frida Maanum's long-range strike for Arsenal at home to Bayern was the technical observers' pick for goal of the season

Barcelona supplied half of the season's top ten goals and four of the best five, with Mariona Caldentey's outrageous lob from the centre-circle against Rosengård in Sweden earning third place, one behind the fierce strike from the right by team-mate Caroline Graham Hansen that gave the champions their victory over Chelsea in the away leg of the semi-final. Pride of place, however, went to Arsenal's Frida Maanum, whose right-footed shot from distance sailed into the top far corner of the net to culminate the slick combination move that opened the scoring in the 2-0 home win against Bayern München which sealed a semi-final place.

TOP 10 GOALS

- 1** **FRIDA MAANUM**
ARSENAL 2-0 BAYERN
Quarter-final second leg, 29 March 2023
- 2** **CAROLINE GRAHAM HANSEN**
CHELSEA 0-1 BARCELONA
Semi-final first leg, 22 April 2023
- 3** **MARIONA CALDENTEY**
ROSENGÅRD 1-4 BARCELONA
Group stage Matchday 2, 27 October 2022

- 4** **CLÀUDIA PINA**
BARCELONA 3-0 BAYERN
Group stage Matchday 3, 24 November 2022
- 5** **MAPI LEÓN**
BARCELONA 5-1 ROMA
Quarter-final second leg, 29 March 2023
- 6** **SAM KERR**
CHELSEA 3-0 PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN
Group stage Matchday 6, 22 December 2022
- 7** **ALEX POPP**
WOLFSBURG 1-1 PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN
Quarter-final second leg, 30 March 2023
- 8** **ASISAT OSHOALA**
BARCELONA 9-0 BENFICA
Group stage Matchday 1, 19 October 2022
- 9** **RAMONA BACHMANN**
VLLAZNIA 0-4 PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN
Group stage Matchday 4, 8 December 2022
- 10** **JORDAN NOBBS**
ARSENAL 3-1 ZÜRICH
Group stage Matchday 2, 27 October 2022



Caroline Graham Hansen is congratulated for her goal at Chelsea



PAJOR HITS THE TARGET

Ewa Pajor celebrates a group stage goal at home to Roma

With nine goals, Wolfsburg's Polish forward Ewa Pajor left everyone in her wake as the competition's top scorer

TOP SCORERS

	Ewa Pajor	Wolfsburg	9
	Aitana Bonmatí	Barcelona	5
	Stina Blackstenius	Arsenal	5
	Asiat Oshoala	Barcelona	5
	Frida Maanum	Arsenal	5
	Cloé Lacasse	Benfica	5
	Sam Kerr	Chelsea	5

Wolfsburg forward Ewa Pajor finished as the 2022/23 Women's Champions League top scorer with nine goals, capping her haul with the opener in her team's 3-2 final loss to Barcelona.

Pajor finished four clear of her closest rivals: Barça duo Asiat Oshoala and Aitana Bonmatí, Arsenal pair Stina Blackstenius and Frida Maanum, Cloé Lacasse of Benfica and Chelsea's Sam Kerr. Of that group, Blackstenius, Maanum, Lacasse and Kerr were not involved in the final.

Bonmatí reached eight assists when she set up Patri Guijarro for Barcelona's equaliser in the showpiece, putting her three ahead of team-mates Geyse and Mariona Caldentey, plus Chelsea's Guro Reiten. Bonmatí's total of 13 goal contributions (goals and assists combined) was also the competition's leading tally.

MOST GOALS AND ASSISTS

	Aitana Bonmatí	Barcelona	13
	Ewa Pajor	Wolfsburg	12
	Stina Blackstenius	Arsenal	9

EWAPAJOR'S SHOT MAP*



EWAPAJOR
 TOTAL GOALS **9**
 GAMES PLAYED **11**

*Circles are scaled by the expected goal (xG) value of the shot – the larger the circle, the higher the xG

Stina Blackstenius fires in a shot for Arsenal at home to Juventus



GOALSCORING

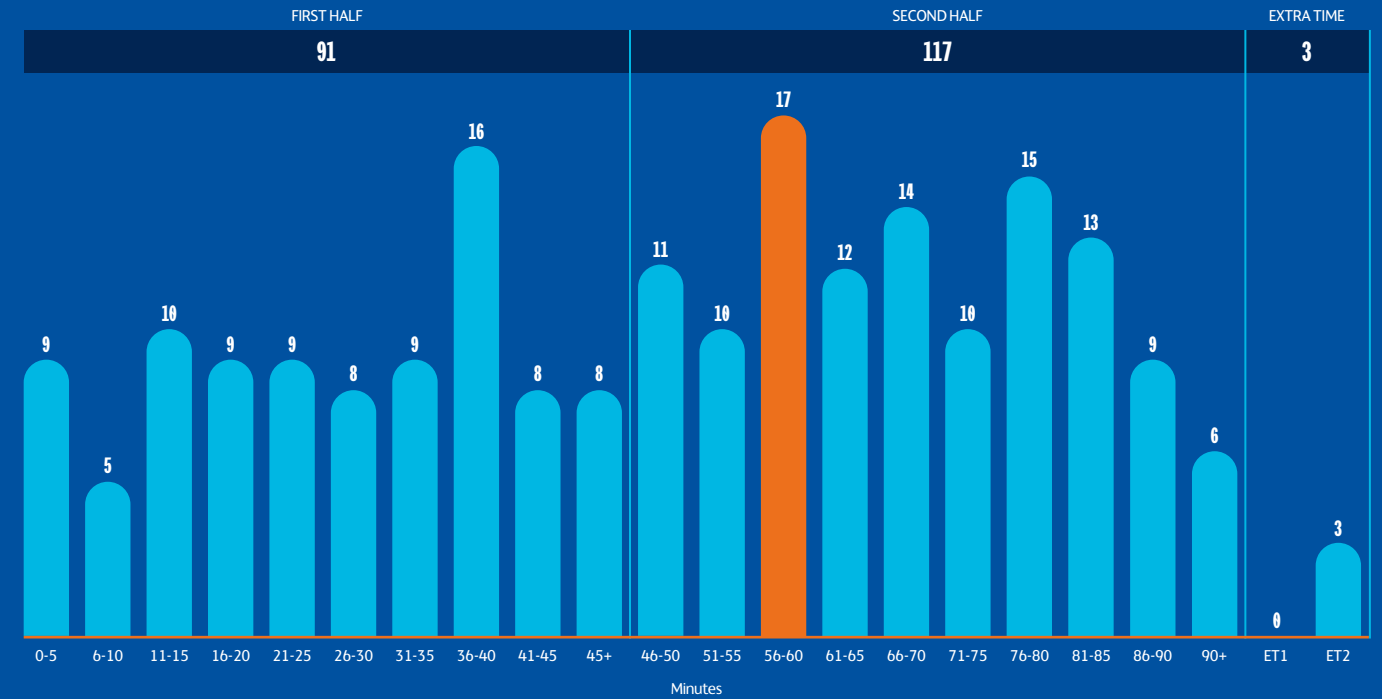
With nearly 3.5 goals per game there was plenty to celebrate during a campaign where finalists Barcelona impressed with their finishing and Wolfsburg dominated in the air

The 211 goals at 3.46 per game represented a marginal downturn (4%) on the previous season. The group stage yielded 177 and the 13 knockout ties a further 34, even though the first legs of the quarter-finals all ended with a 1-0 scoreline, three of them in favour of the away team.

Unsurprisingly, 56% of the 208 scored in normal time hit the net after the half-time interval, but a breakdown into five-minute segments reveals that the penultimate five minutes of each half were unusually productive, producing 14% of the total. Statistics confirmed that the opening half-hour was the cageiest phase of matches with 50 goals scored compared with 73 in the 60 to 90 minute segment. The average time for an opening goal just squeezed into the first half-hour at 29 minutes and 43 seconds.

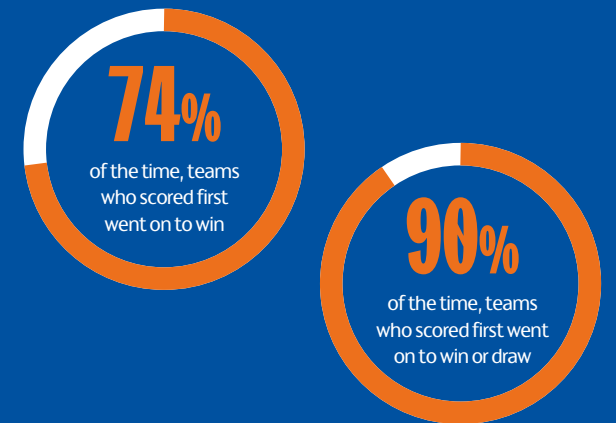


WHEN THE GOALS WERE SCORED



HOLDING FIRM

The season's goalscoring pattern also undermined the notion that a large number of games are decided in the final 15 minutes. Only three of the 48 group matches were won and lost in the last quarter-hour: the away wins by Roma and Bayern against St. Pölten and Benfica; plus St. Pölten's late winner against Slavia in Prague. There was also late drama in two knockout ties, with Wolfsburg's winner against Arsenal in the final minute of extra-time. In London, Lyon's 110th-minute goal seemed to have sealed an aggregate victory only for Chelsea to convert a penalty timed at 120+4 and go on to win the penalty shoot-out.



COMEBACK VICTORIES

- Real Madrid 5-1 Vllaznia, Group stage
- Bayern 2-1 Rosengård, Group stage
- Rosengård 1-3 Benfica, Group stage
- St. Pölten 3-4 Roma, Goup stage
- Benfica 2-3 Bayern, Group stage
- Arsenal 2-3 Wolfsburg, Semi-final second leg
- Barcelona 3-2 Wolfsburg, final

IMPORTANCE OF SCORING FIRST

The season produced only three goalless draws: Real Madrid v Paris Saint-Germain, Wolfsburg v Slavia Praha and Lyon v Juventus – all in the group phase. In the 58 matches where the ball hit the net, 74% were won by the team scoring first and 90% emerged with at least a draw. Barcelona's second-half reaction in the final was one of seven comeback victories for teams conceding the first goal. Roma, in their 4-3 win at St. Polten, and Bayern, 3-2 winners at Benfica, joined Barcelona in the trio of teams who bounced back from a 2-0 deficit to win. Prior to the Eindhoven final, Wolfsburg had also surrendered a 2-0 lead in the home leg of the semi-final, allowing Arsenal to secure a 2-2 draw.



ROMA HIT THE MARK

In terms of efficiency in front of goal, Roma were ahead of the field among the top eight with 44% of their goal attempts on target, ahead of Wolfsburg (41%) and Barcelona (40%). The two French teams propped up this particular ranking. Paris Saint-Germain were accurate with 34% of their finishing and defending champions Lyon 32%. Benfica topped the accuracy ranking among group stage fallers with 40% of their attempts on target, narrowly ahead of St. Pölten (39%), Real Madrid (38%) and Rosengård (37%). On the other hand, Slavia Praha's average of 17% signified that only one in six of their finishes obliged goalkeepers to do some work.

BARÇA TAKE THEIR CHANCES

Barcelona's impressive figures of 25 attempts per game on average and 3.6 goals put the champions well ahead of the field in terms of attacking potential. Interestingly, Roma (18.8 attempts), Lyon (18.6) and Wolfsburg (18) were their closest rivals, yet Lyon's shot conversion rate was surpassed by all the knockout teams and six of the group fallers. Only Slavia Praha and Zürich posted lower averages than the defending champions' 8%. All the figures, incidentally, have been converted pro rata to 90-minute values to ensure valid comparisons – bearing mind that four of the top eight would have totals inflated by extra time.

QUICKFIRE DOUBLES

Barcelona's morale-boosting start to the second half of the final was not a one-off occurrence during the season. On 24 occasions, teams found the net again within five minutes of having scored. Those follow-up goals accounted for 11.4% of the season's total – a percentage substantial enough to provoke debate on what coaches can do to prevent their players from adding psychological impact to the blow of conceding. As Jonatan Giráldez remarked after Barça had conceded an early goal in the final, "The important thing is how you react." The other side of that coin is the widespread belief among coaches that teams are especially vulnerable if there is a spell of euphoria after scoring. During the season, this vulnerability was illustrated by 12 goals conceded within five minutes of scoring.

SET-PLAY GOALS DOWN

Dead-ball situations accounted for 25.1% of the season's goals – a low percentage in comparison with the previous campaign (26.4%) and especially the 33.7% registered at Women's EURO 2022. The codicil is that the group stage had yielded 26.6% and that, in the knockout ties, only six goals were set plays, three of them for Wolfsburg and one apiece for Arsenal, Barcelona and Chelsea.

WOLFSBURG USE THEIR HEADS

The percentage of headers among goal attempts offers an indication of playing styles. Wolfsburg, playing to the aerial strengths of Alex Popp (33% of her attempts were headers) and Ewa Pajor (38%), topped the team rankings with 27%. They were ahead of Lyon, whose frequent use of far-post crossing meant that 25% of their finishing was with the head (as were 41% of the attempts by striker Melvine Malard), while Chelsea's supply to Sam Kerr was influential in their high average of 23%. The remainder of the knockout teams ranged between Arsenal's 15% and Barcelona's 19% while the group fallers generally produced lower figures – notably Benfica, whose preference for low deliveries from wide areas meant that only 6% of their finishing was with the head.



25.1%

Dead-ball situations accounted for 25.1% of the season's goals

25

Champions Barcelona had an average of 25 attempts per game

58.8%

Lyon's Melvine Malard hit the target with 58.8% of her attempts

58

58 of the 61 matches featured one or more goals

24

On 24 occasions, teams found the net again within five minutes of having scored, 11.4% of the season's total

3.6

Barcelona led the way with 3.6 goals per game



Melvine Malard impressed with her accuracy, hitting the target with 58.8% of her shots

DISTANCE SHOOTING

Long-range shooting remained as a weapon in attacking armouries against deep defensive blocks with the other 14 teams exceeding the base rate of 26% set by Barcelona and Chelsea. Percentages were substantially higher among sides eliminated in the group stage with Rosengård and Zürich delivering over half their finishing from outside the box. No less than 80% of the goal attempts by debutants Villaznia were from long range.

MALARD HITS THE TARGET

In terms of accuracy, Malard was one key striker who stood out from the crowd, hitting the target with 58.8% of her finishing, ahead of players like the Barcelona duo Mariona Caldentey (56.5%) and Patri Gujjarro (50%) or, notably, Benfica's Cloé Lacasse. With 56.3% of attempts on target and a shot conversion rate of 31.3%, Lacasse posted some of the season's most impressive figures. Roma's efficiency in front of goal – albeit with less overall impact – was illustrated by the stats of Benedetta Glionna, Valentina Giacinti and Manuela Giugliano with 69.2%, 54.2% and 52.6% of their finishing accurately directed at goal. Without pointing fingers, attackers from other teams registered averages as low as 5.9%.



BUILDING ATTACKS

With most teams looking to play out of defence, centre-backs assumed a key role in beginning forward moves



Defender Dominique Janssen was key to Wolfsburg's build-up play

Most teams preferred to build from the back. Centre-backs were key components in advancing the ball from defensive to midfield thirds while full-backs or wing-backs took up more advanced positions to contribute to wing play. Wolfsburg's Dominique Janssen was the outstanding example of efficient construction work with 137 successful progressions. During the semi-final matches against Arsenal the left centre-back had 96 and 110 touches of the ball – far more than any of her team-mates.

The Barcelona duo of Irene Paredes and Mapi León jointly accounted for 221 successful progressions from defence to midfield with forward passing the dominant feature of their game. During the home leg against Chelsea, 59% of León's passes and 48% of Paredes' were forward into midfield; the former also distributed preferentially to the right, the latter to the left.

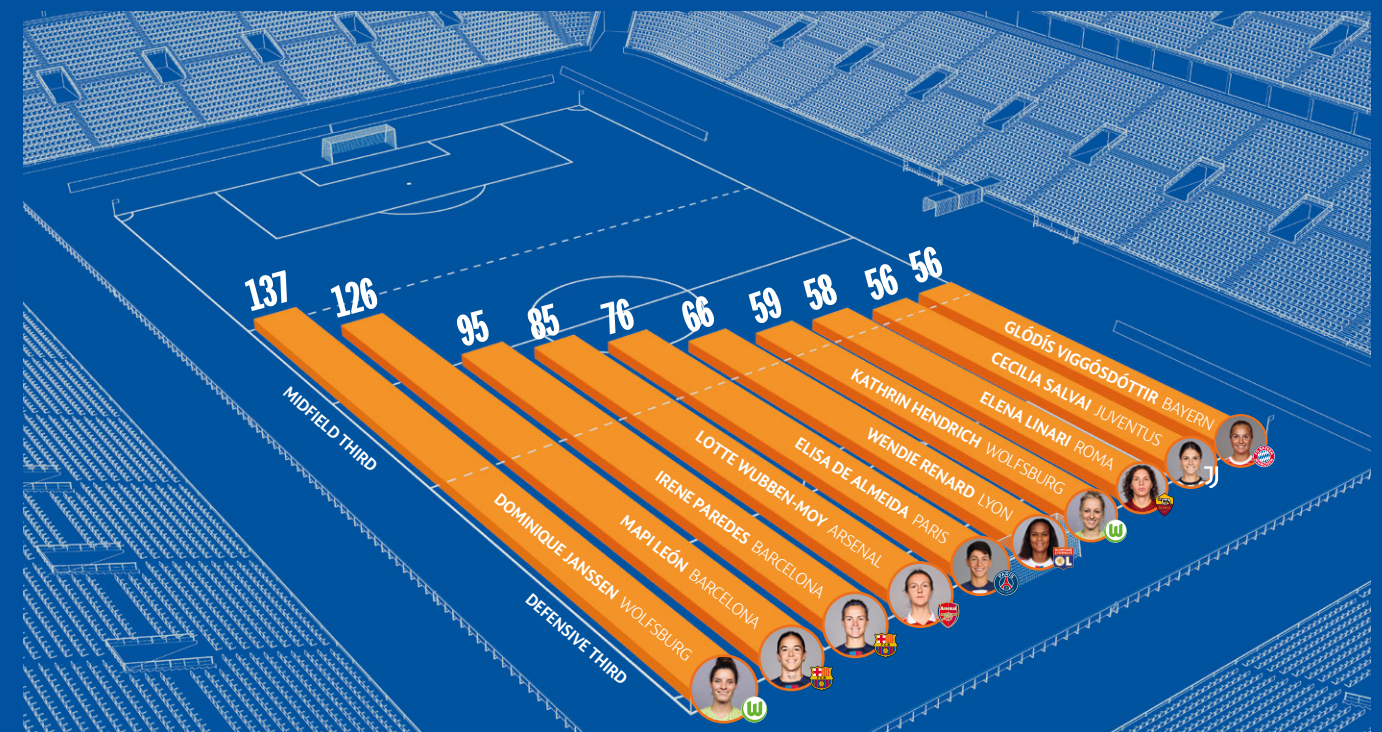
As Barcelona demonstrated during the second half of the final, centre-backs were frequently targeted for high pressing – meaning that alternative solutions were required. As an antidote to Arsenal's high press during the quarter-final, Bayern midfielder Georgia

Stanway dropped deep to offer herself as a passing option to goalkeeper and centre-backs and took responsibility for building attacks via through passes or switches of play. Her 86 touches during the home leg were more than any other player on the pitch.

Roma, forced on to the back foot for most of the quarter-final against Barcelona, nevertheless bravely attempted to build from the back despite Barcelona's high press, with right-back Elisa Bertoli often moving inside to add to passing options, create central overloads and permit midfielders either to progress in the wide areas, make direct deliveries to striker Valentina Giacinti or into spaces behind the opponent's high back line – notably behind Barça's advanced full-backs.

In terms of progression from defence to midfield, Barcelona were successful with 77% of their attempts over the season, followed by Paris (75%) and Arsenal (72%) while Chelsea's more direct approach signified the lowest success rate (60%) among the top eight. As reference figures, group stage fallers Juventus and Zürich averaged 70% and 56% respectively.

TOTAL PROGRESSIONS FROM DEFENSIVE THIRD TO MIDFIELD THIRD



Roma's positional flexibility in the build-up phase against Barcelona



Wolfsburg used a variety of ways to progress up the pitch when building from the back



GOING FORWARD

Barcelona favoured a patient attacking approach that made frequent use of the wings while Chelsea employed a more direct style to get into the final third

THE ATTACKING THIRD

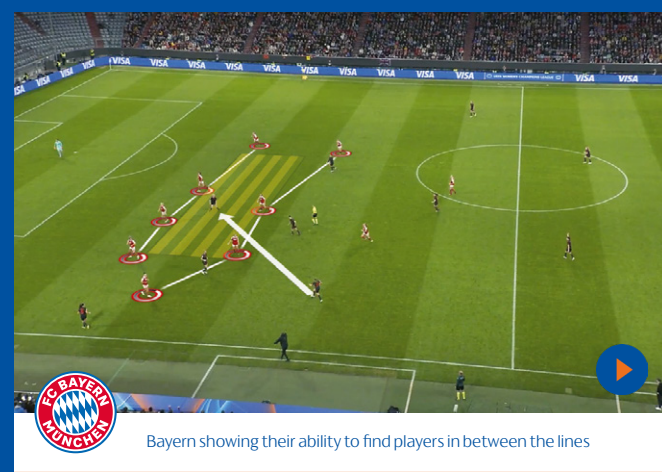
Over the season, 59% of the top eight teams' entries into the attacking third were preceded by one or two passes, with the club-by-club figures ranging from Barcelona's 50% to Chelsea's 78% - statistics which illustrate the direct attacking style employed by Emma Hayes' team. During their four knockout games only 8% of their entries involved more than five passes – halving the average among the top eight clubs. One quarter of Chelsea's advances were via a long ball, including 4% played by Ann-Katrin Berger – more than any other goalkeeper among the quarter-finalists. Although Bayern were not averse to vertical passing movements or direct supply to striker Lea Schüller, their approach play was more elaborate than any other of the top eight teams with 11% of their entries into the final third based on moves of more than ten passes, compared with 8% by Barcelona or, by contrast, 2% by Chelsea, Roma and Lyon.

High-pressing teams like Barcelona, Arsenal (60%) or Lyon (64%) often earned high regains that afforded quick access to the final third without the need for elaborate passing. No less than 89% of the entries into the attacking third by Sonia Bompastor's OL side were facilitated by five passes or less.

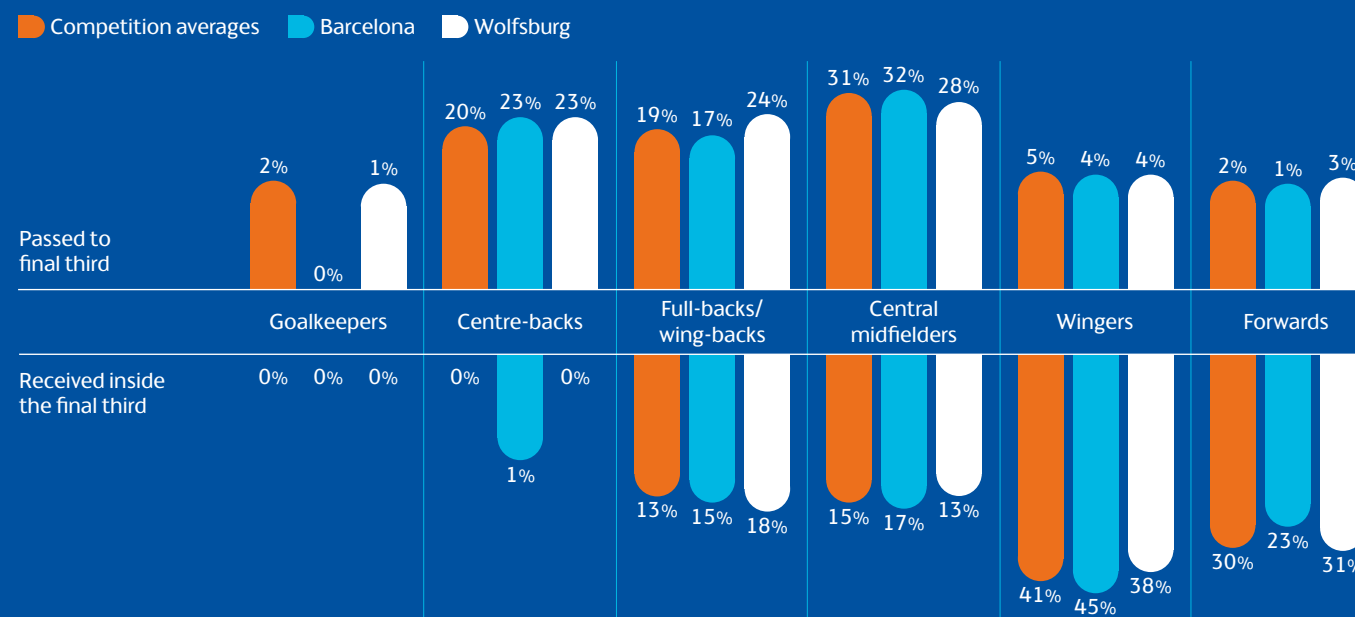
However, the directness of Lyon's style was reflected by a high percentage of long deliveries (23%) – a sharp contrast to Barcelona's 10%. The two French clubs relied the most heavily on individual actions to progress into the attacking third (Lyon 25%

and Paris 24%). The defending champions relied less on penetrating passes from central and wide midfielders than any other team in the knockout rounds (23%). Wolfsburg made extensive use of their wide defenders with 18% of their passes into the final third received by their full-backs. Even so, 28% were passes by central midfielders while the other six quarter-finalists posted percentages between 30% (Paris) and 39% (Bayern).

While high regains can facilitate rapid progressions into attack, the fact that all but 4% of Roma's final-third entries were achieved with five passes or less was attributable to their rapid transitions from deep defending. Against Barcelona, almost half of their attacks (48%) were counters and the through pass accounted for 47% of their final-third entries. Significantly, 20% of the passes were delivered by a wide attacker, whereas the figures for the other quarter-finalists ranged from 1% to 8%. "Roma predominantly played from the centre to a medium-high full-back, aiming to play wide and then inside," Joe Montemurro observed after watching the home leg against Barcelona. "A recurring tactic was for Manuela Giugliano to make a run to the right to open more space for winger Annamaria Serturini in a deeper position on the wing, leading to a ball behind the high back line."



POSITIONS PASSED TO AND PASSES RECEIVED INSIDE FINAL THIRD



Roma signified an exception to the rule, with centre-backs and full-backs accounting for only 7% and 9% of deliveries into the attacking third whereas defenders in the other top teams provided as many as 47% (Wolfsburg). Centre-backs were significant providers, especially Lyon (25%), Arsenal, Barcelona and Wolfsburg (all 23%). The Barcelona and Roma goalkeepers may have made a sporadic delivery into the final third but not frequently enough to reach 1% of the total.

Contrasting with Wolfsburg's use of their full-backs as passing options in the attacking third, Paris relied heavily on their wingers as recipients of 26% of their passing into the advanced zone while full-backs accounted for no more than 5%. Chelsea returned a similar figure (6%) with their wide defenders, in their four knockout matches, required to deal with the rampant wing play of Lyon and Barcelona. "Chelsea played a 1-5-3-2 formation out of possession," Gemma Grainger reported after their home leg against the eventual champions, "with Eve Périsset and Jess Carter as wing-backs in a low block. In mid-block situations, the ball-side wing-back would stay higher but the one on the opposite side stayed deep to form a back four."

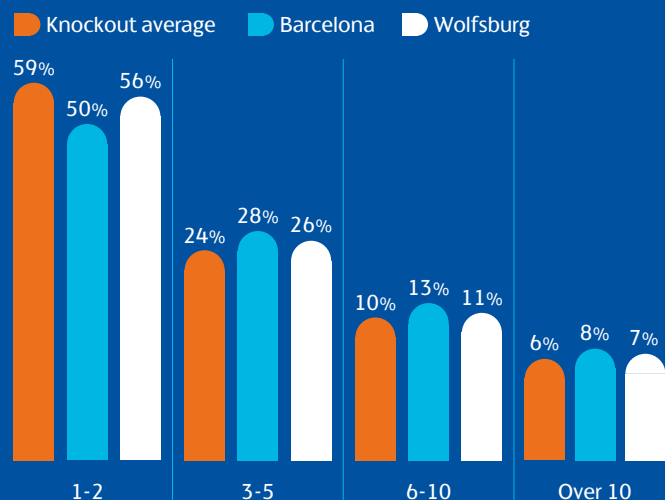
Barcelona's possession-based style meant that they mostly used non-penetrative passing as a way of entering the final third – far

more than any other team in the top eight. The champions' ability to force opponents into deep-block defending frequently meant that there was little need for a penetrating pass to gain entry into the third zone. Even so, Jonatan Giráldez's team shared second place with Bayern 1% behind Arsenal, for whom the penetrative pass generated 15% of their access – compared with 4% and 5% by Roma and Chelsea respectively.

Many of these indicators of playing styles are illustrated by the graphics which divide the attacking third into five lanes with 1 and 5 as the channels on the left and right between touchlines and the extended sidelines of the penalty area. These two accounted for 59% of Barcelona's progressions in the final third: 24% on the right, where Caroline Graham Hansen exhibited her 1v1 skills, and 35% on the left, Barça's favourite territory for creating overloads and exploiting overlapping and underlapping by the outstanding Fridolina Rolfö.

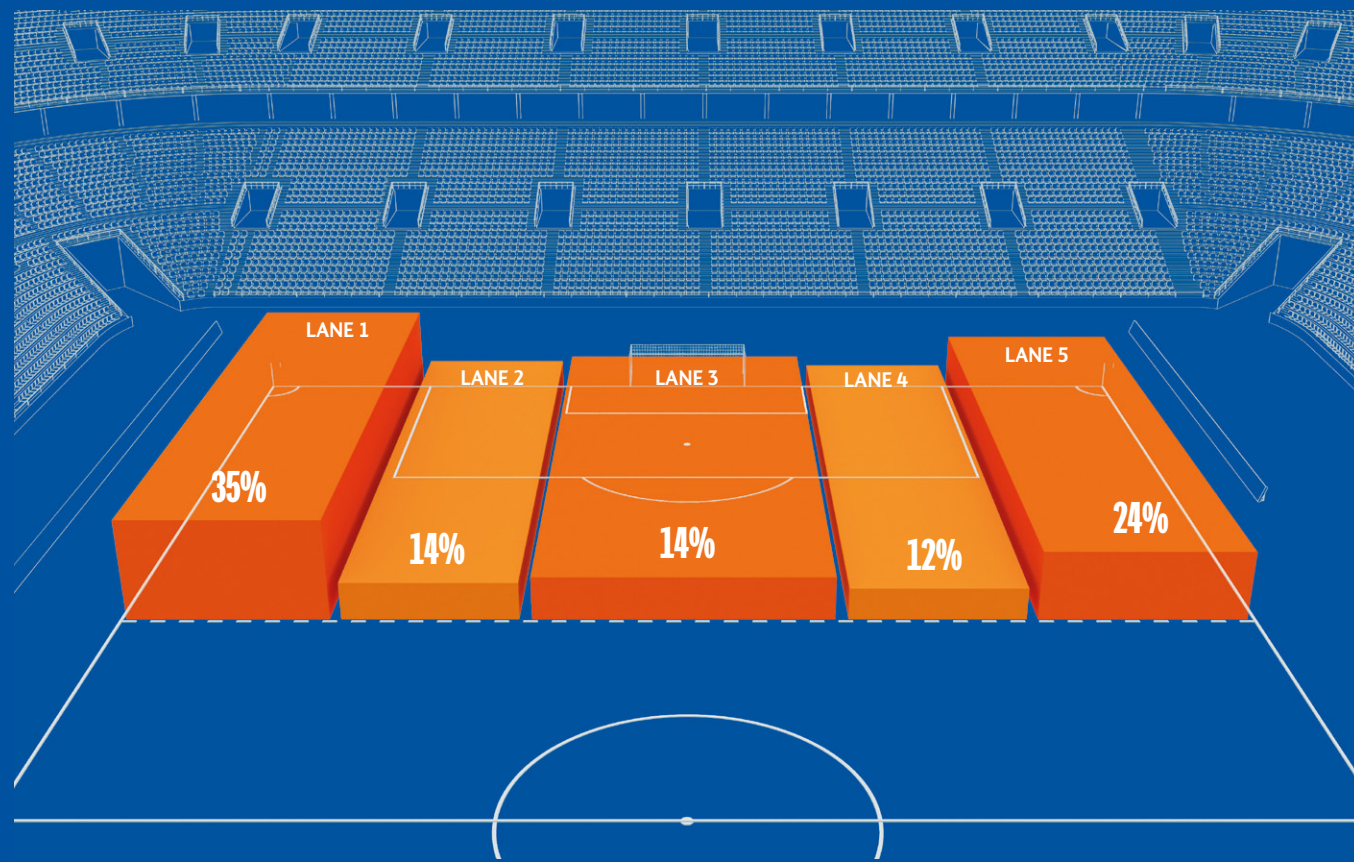
Among the top eight, no team used the central Lane 3 less than Barcelona – and no team used it more than Roma. No team used the right-wing Lane 5 more than Lyon with Ellie Carpenter delivering crosses. Wolfsburg also preferred the right – and no team used the left channel less than they (and Lyon) did. Chelsea's attacking was mostly left-sided with the Kerr-Reiten duo preferring to operate in Lane 2.

PASSES PRIOR TO ENTERING FINAL THIRD

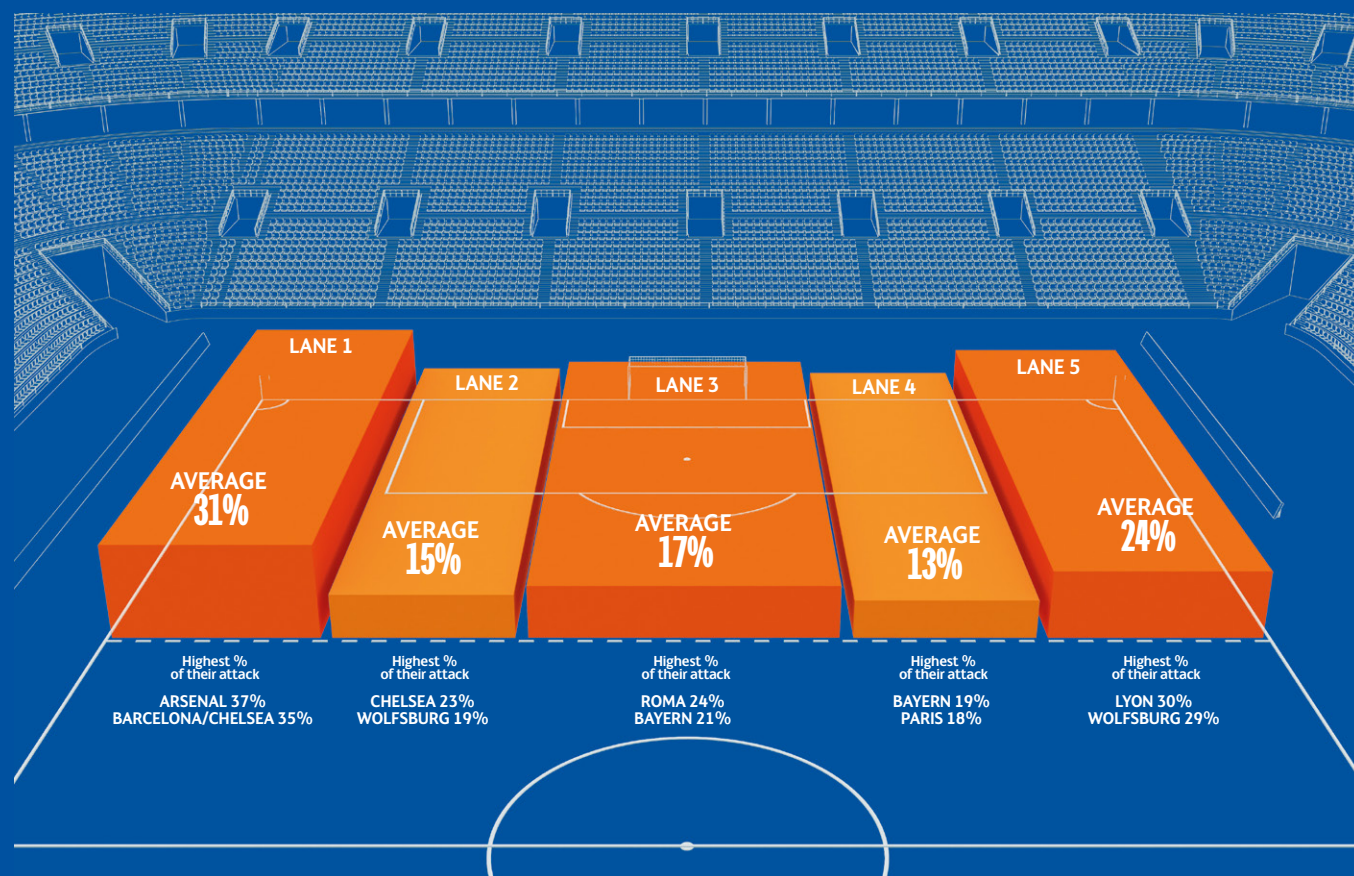




BARCELONA'S FINAL THIRD ENTRY LANES



AVERAGE FINAL THIRD ENTRY LANES



PRESSING IN THE FINAL

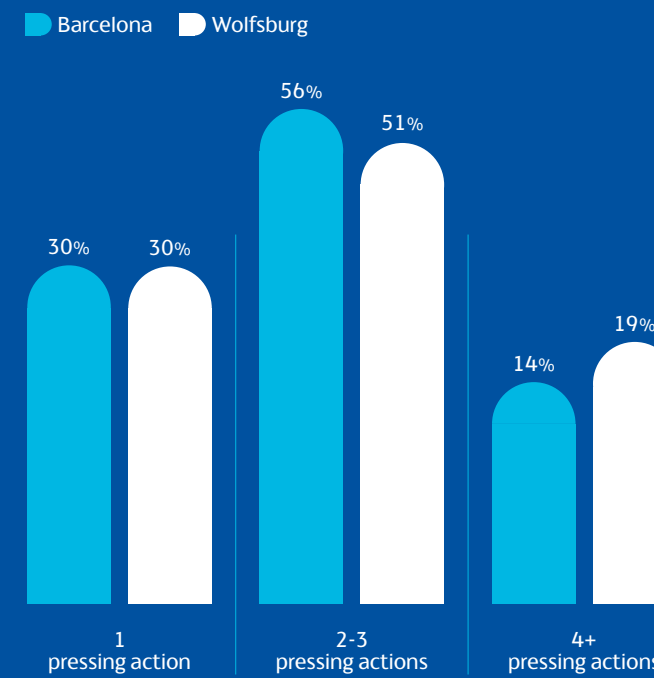
Barcelona and Wolfsburg both took risks to commit to a high press, but it was the champions whose approach proved more efficient and effective

THE PRESSURE GAUGE

Both finalists were proficient in aggressive pressing. Both were prepared to take risks by committing numbers to collective high pressing. Both had experienced difficulties with opponents' pressing strategies en route to the final. Roma had occasionally broken Barcelona's press with central overloads near their own box and deliveries into space behind full-backs. Chelsea, as Gemma Grainger noted, "counter-pressed aggressively in Barcelona's half of the pitch, marking player for player to prevent them from having comfortable possession when building".



HOW TEAMS PRESS



Wolfsburg, as Jorge Vilda commented, "had real difficulties to get out of pressure by Paris" and, as Jayne Ludlow added, "struggled to find solutions when Arsenal pressed with intensity and commitment, effectively preventing Wolfsburg's central build-up". It prompted analysis of pressing techniques when the two teams faced off in Eindhoven.

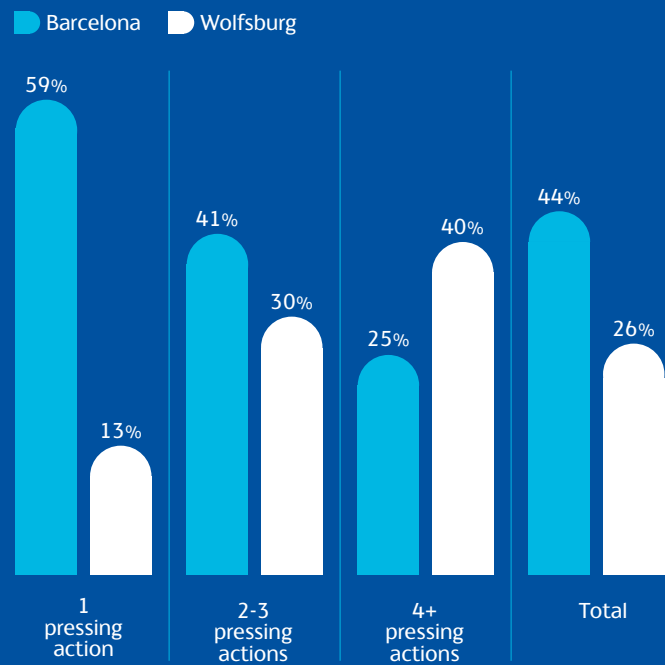
Firstly, analysts looked at the number of 'pressing moments' within single situations. There was equality between the teams in that 30% of their pressing was based on one action. But 56% of Barcelona's pressing required two or three actions while 19% of Wolfsburg's pressing was based on four or more, as opposed to only 14% by their opponents. This implied that Barcelona's pressing was more effective and did not require so many 'pressing moments'.

This was borne out by measurements of efficiency with 59% of Barcelona's regains resulting from a single pressing action, compared with Wolfsburg's 13%. The champions maintained their advantage when two or three actions were required and it was not until the press needed four or more actions that Wolfsburg's percentage exceeded Barça's.



Barcelona full-back Lucy Bronze (right) challenges Wolfsburg forward Ewa Pajor

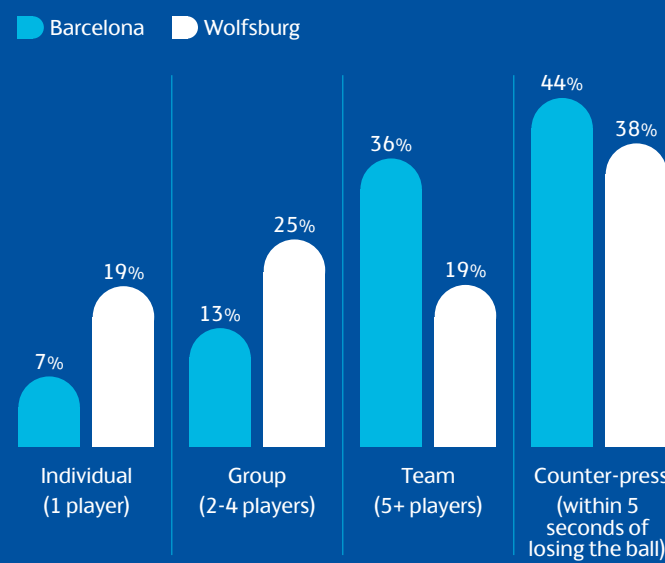
SUCCESSFUL REGAINS



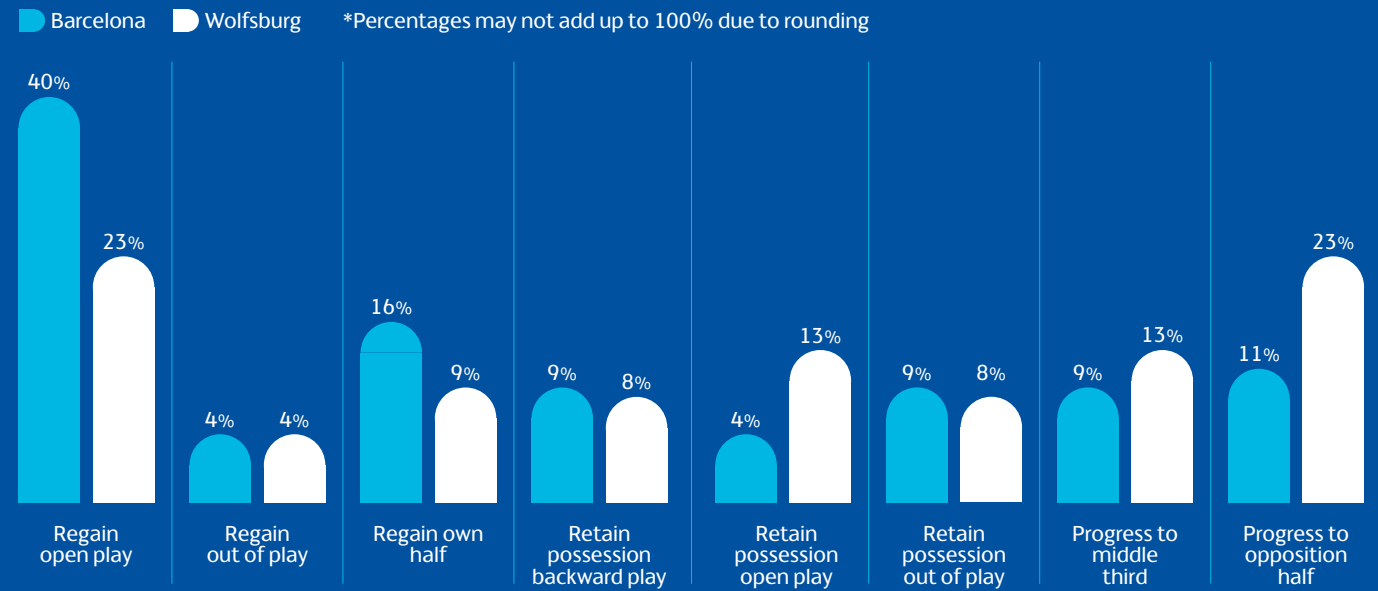
The next step was to examine the number of players involved. Participation by two to four players was labelled 'group pressing' while collective efforts by four or more were classed as 'team pressing'. Only 7% of Barcelona's pressing was executed by an

individual player, as opposed to Wolfsburg's 19%, and Jonatan Giráldez's team almost doubled the Wolfsburg figure in terms of collective team pressing. Even though they relied much less on the individual press, their success rate was significantly higher – and they were also more efficient when two, three or four players were involved. On the other hand, Wolfsburg had a significantly higher success rate when it came to collective team pressing.

TYPES OF PRESS



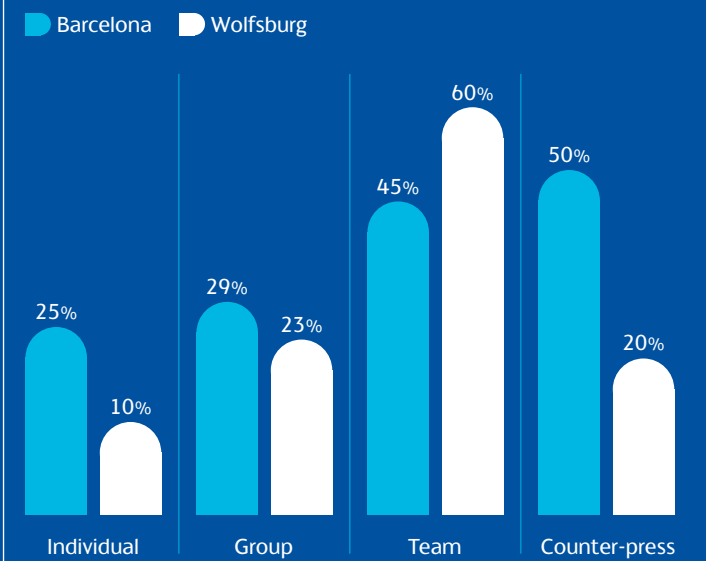
OUTCOME OF PRESSING/COUNTER-PRESSING ACTIONS*



The analysis also reveals that Barcelona achieved considerably (74% to be precise) more regains in open play and in the percentage of regains when Wolfsburg attempted to play over the halfway line into Barça territory and were unsuccessful in doing so. The two finalists were equal in the small percentages of regains from dead-ball situations (regain out of play in the graphic) and also in terms of retaining possession after dead-ball situations in their favour.

The two teams also registered approximate parity in the number of situations where they played the ball back with a view to retaining possession. The areas where Wolfsburg achieved higher figures were in terms of retaining possession, either without making forward progress or advancing from the defensive third to midfield or managing to shift the ball into Barcelona territory even when being pressed in their own half, as they demonstrated on a number of occasions during the second half when they managed to play forward to Ewa Pajor in the space behind right-back Lucy Bronze.

PRESS SUCCESS RATE



Successful counter-press allowed Barcelona to sustain their attacks and prevent dangerous counterattacks

Barça also held a statistical advantage in terms of counter-pressing – working to win the ball back within five seconds of losing possession. They engaged more frequently in this facet of the game with a 50% success rate compared with Wolfsburg's 20%. It was a counter-press by Aitana Bonmatí which laid the foundations for the crucial first goal in Barça's comeback victory.



Barcelona's Aitana Bonmatí slides in to win possession



CROSSING

With Barcelona and Lyon the most effective in defending crosses, getting players into the box was vital for attacking sides

CROSS-CHECKING

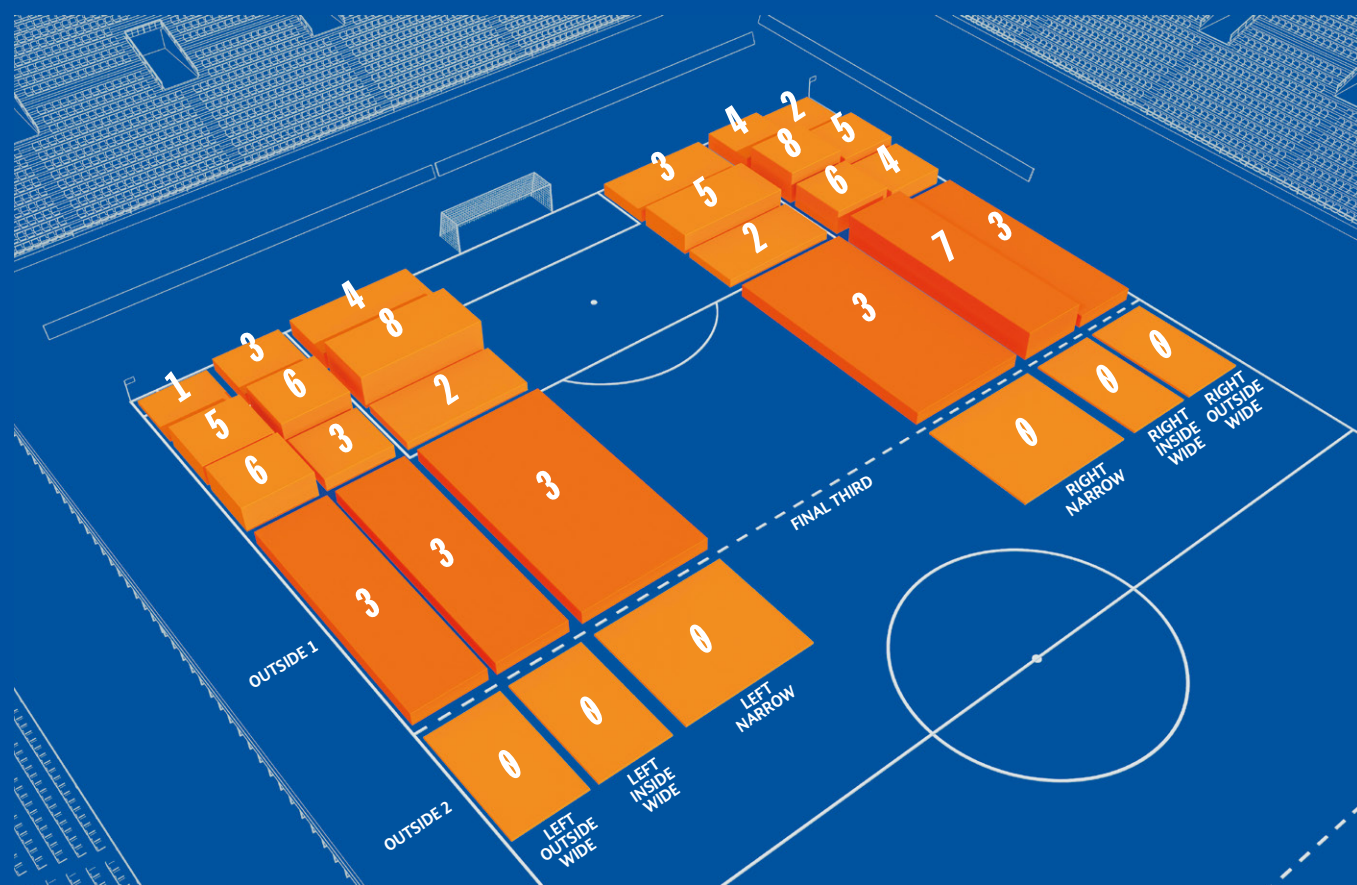
One of the topics to emerge from the Women's EURO in 2022 was the defence of wide areas. Germany were especially proficient in this department – notably in the knockout rounds when they allowed Austria to deliver six crosses; France eight; and England ten in the two hours of the final. Spain, with 14 in the group game, were the most successful in penetrating Germany's defensive work on the flanks. "In the semi-final," Grainger recalled, "I thought that I had never seen a team defend so well against the France wingers."

Bearing in mind that, in the Women's Champions League, opponents so frequently try to exploit the spaces behind Barcelona's advanced full-backs, the champions were

surprisingly effective, restricting Wolfsburg to eight open-play crosses in the final, Chelsea to 11 in the three hours of the semi-final (only four during the first leg in London) and Roma to 11 in the quarter-final (only two at the Camp Nou). In the meantime Barça were delivering 17, 29 and 39 respectively.

The overview, however, revealed interesting patterns when it came to delivering crosses and defending against them. To pinpoint the preferred locations for delivery, the graphic divides the attacking third into seven channels; two narrow lanes between touchlines and the penalty area; two broader pathways within the width of the box; and a central channel where deliveries were not crosses. Interestingly, 25% of crosses had their origin on the right, in the channel nearer the edge of the box rather than the touchline. The left flank produced marginally fewer

CROSS LOCATION (%)



crosses. But the preferred channel was the one between the edges of box and goal area – the source of 17% of the total.

The most frequent points of delivery were not in the advanced area near the byline. The preferred area could be located by extending the lines of goal area and penalty spot across the pitch. This horizontal band accounted for 37% of deliveries, while 22% were crosses (often early) from longer distance outside the line of the penalty box. In both graphics, decimal points account for the missing 1%.

Deliveries are one thing; receiving them is another. The season's statistics indicate that 56% of crossing occurred when the attacking team had three or more players in the box. Three was the most common figure (28% of the total excluding blocked crosses) and the nuance is that there were more often one or two (38%) than there were four or five (25%).

Statistics confirmed that there is strength in numbers. The presence of four or six attackers proved to be the most efficient method of ensuring first contact on a cross, with success rates of 41% and 71% respectively. But the general trend, of course, was for attackers to be outnumbered when crosses were delivered. Only 8% caught the defending team with two or less players in the box (plus the goalkeeper) and 76% encountered four or more defenders in the penalty area, with most of the top teams – Arsenal, Chelsea, Wolfsburg, Roma and, as Britta Carlson remarked, Bayern when they switched to a three-centre-back formation in the second half of the return leg against Arsenal – quickly transitioning into back lines of five.

A total of 34% of crosses had to contend with six or more players of the defending team. In terms of team shapes, default settings meant that 36% of crosses were delivered against teams defending with a back line of four. If, say, a holding midfielder drops into the back line, the statistics code it as a back line of five. The few situations where teams have to defend crosses with one or two players are usually associated with rapid transition play.

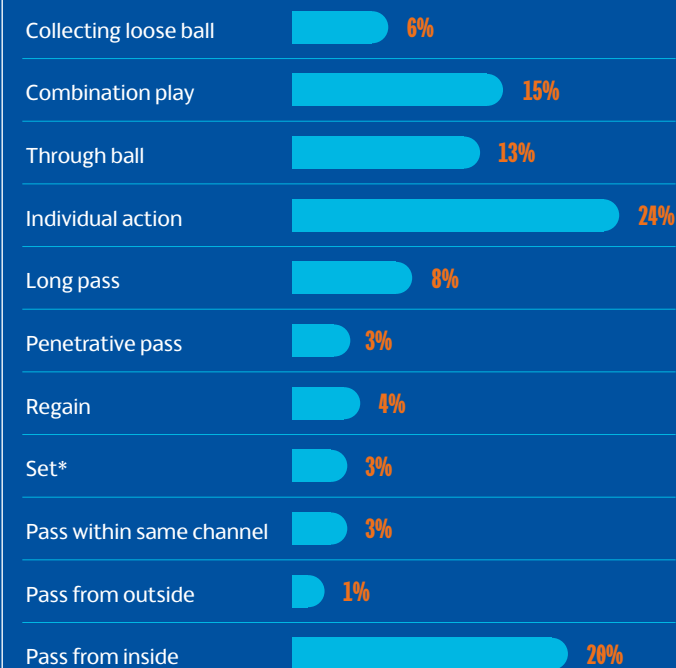
The last two champions emerged as the most successful in defending crosses, with Lyon defenders or goalkeeper making first contact with 88% efficiency, while Barcelona averaged 75% despite a low percentage when they had three defenders in the box. Paradoxically, the champions' two-player defending – usually by centre-backs Irene Paredes and Mapi León while the full-backs were upfield – was of a high standard. The graphic illustrating the efficiency of the top eight teams in terms of earning the first touch by defenders or goalkeeper reveals an overall average of 60% with Lyon and Roma providing the top and tail of the percentages.

With regard to the attacking aspect, almost one-quarter of the crossing opportunities stemmed from individual actions while

FIRST CONTACT BY DEFENDER OR GOALKEEPER



ACTION PRIOR TO CROSSING

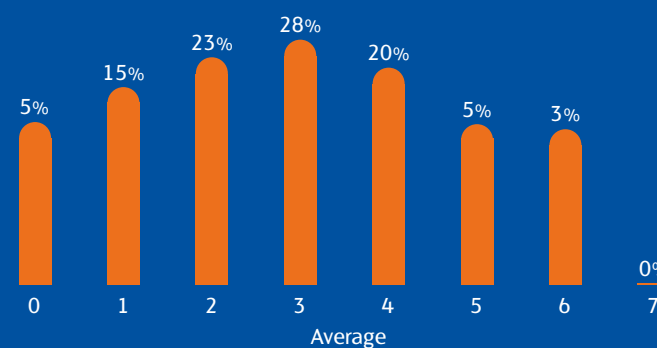


*Backwards or sideways pass for first-time delivery

one-fifth were triggered by a pass from inside channels towards the flank, with combination moves and through balls jointly providing the prelude to almost 30% of crosses. The Lyon v Chelsea quarter-final offered an interesting case history. "Lyon's attacking game was based on overloading central areas and leaving the wide areas to the full-backs," Martin Sjögren commented after the first leg.

Jayne Ludlow after the return leg remarked "Ellie Carpenter was very expansive on the right, creating many delivery opportunities throughout the game." Chelsea reacted to the central overloads with narrow defending – which allowed Lyon to deliver 49 open-play crosses during the tie. "Chelsea prioritised closing the space in front of the back line with Melanie Leupolz and Sophie Ingle," Sjögren added, "accepting that Lyon would attack them with crosses. They were strong in positioning and defensive duels from the crosses and controlled their box from start to finish."

ATTACKERS IN BOX WHEN CROSS DELIVERED



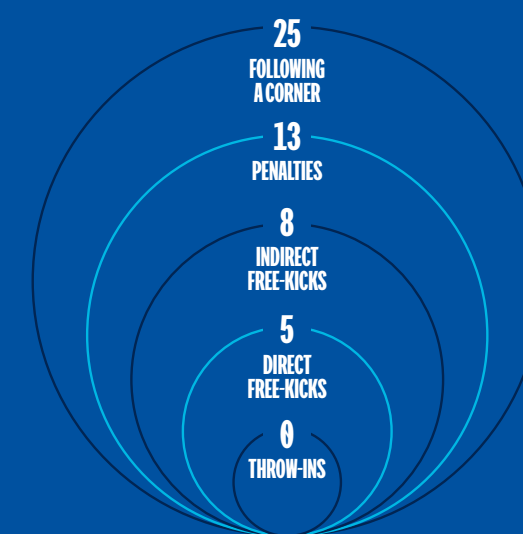


Chelsea's Maren Mjelde delivers a corner in the quarter-final second leg against Lyon

SET PLAYS

Although goals from dead balls dropped overall, Chelsea and champions Barcelona still enjoyed plenty of success via that route while corners remained particularly productive

Dead-ball situations accounted for 24% of the season's 211 goals – a slight downturn compared with the 26% in the previous campaign but a substantial drop on the 34% posted at the UEFA Women's EURO in 2022. During the group stage, it has to be said, dead-ball scenarios accounted for 26.6% of the 177 goals – a figure diluted during the knockout rounds where, arguably, coaching staffs have greater opportunities to study opponents' set-play strategies. If penalties are excluded from the equation only 19% of the season's goals were derived from set pieces. This is 2% down on the total for the previous season.



SIGNIFICANT STRIKES

Relatively scant dividends from set plays provoke perennial debate on the value of training-ground time invested in rehearsals. But the numbers do not always reflect the importance of set-play goals or their psychological impact. Needing an away win against Slavia Praha to reach the quarter-finals, Roma had 61% of the ball but needed two set plays to find a route to the net and a 3-0 win. Beth Mead's direct free-kick on the stroke of half-time sent defending champions Lyon to the dressing-room with a psychologically damaging 1-3 deficit in their 1-5 home defeat by Arsenal, whose semi-final against Wolfsburg was also marked by set plays.

In Germany, a corner headed in by defender Rafaelle at the far post threw the Gunners a lifeline after conceding two early goals – “a mental blow just before half-time,” commented Jorge Vilda, “that marked Wolfsburg emotionally in the second half”. And three of the five goals in the return leg were set plays, two of them allowing Wolfsburg to convert a one-goal deficit into a one-goal lead. The first originated in a free-kick wide on the left at a considerable distance from goal. Arsenal set themselves up with eight players holding a line at the edge of the box and Alex Popp, although the obvious aerial threat, made a run away from goal to connect with a clever delivery and head across goal for midfielder Jill Roord to score with a low volley. The second stemmed from the left-footed delivery of a corner on the right. Five Arsenal and three Wolfsburg players lined up in the vicinity of the goalkeeper while three other visiting players remained unmarked on the edge of the box. Arsenal opted not to protect the near post and this area was exploited by Popp who, first to the ball, scored with a glancing header.

Interestingly, the teams who scored the most set-play goals were the only two not to concede any. Chelsea's seven successes represented 32% of their total for the season, while Barcelona's six represented 15% of the champions' tally. At the other end of the scale, Vllaznia and Zürich conceded five apiece, the latter being one of three teams (all group stage fallers) who had no success with the dead ball, while Real Madrid's total of four represented 67% of the goals conceded by Alberto Toril's side. Their goalkeeper Misa was beaten only twice in open play.

SET-PLAY GOALS

Scored Conceded

	Chelsea	7	0
	Barcelona	6	0
	Arsenal	5	4
	Wolfsburg	4	2
	Roma	3	2
	Lyon	3	1
	Juventus	3	1
	Bayern	2	1
	Paris	1	1
	Real Madrid	1	4
	St. Pölten	1	2
	Rosengård	1	4
	Vllaznia	1	5
	Benfica	3	0
	Slavia	3	0
	Zürich	0	5



FREE-KICKS

Free-kick successes were few and far between, with only 13 hitting the net. Two of the five direct free-kicks that did so were struck by one team: Arsenal. After Mead's goal in Lyon, the other success was the right-footed goal from Frida Maanum that opened the scoring in Zürich on the final matchday of the group stage. A handful of successes in 61 matches inevitably raises questions about the time dedicated to the development of free-kick specialists. With free-kicks accounting for such a slim slice of the cake, it meant that, discounting the 13 converted penalties, two-thirds of the season's set-play goals stemmed from corners.

SCORING FROM CORNERS

The season was punctuated by 651 corner kicks, resulting in 25 goals at a success ratio of 1:26 compared with the 1:18 at the Women's EURO. The global success rate, however, concealed huge variations. Juventus scored three at the season's best rate of 1:10; Chelsea earned five goals at a ratio of 1:14; champions Barcelona had four successes at 1:26 whereas Paris Saint-Germain scored once from 59 corners – the inswinging delivery from the left which allowed centre-back Éliça De Almeida to head Gérard Prêcheur's team 1-0 ahead in the home game against Real Madrid. Roma also scored only once, with the codicil that Alessandro Spugna's team generated 34 goal attempts from their 51 corners yet enjoyed a solitary success – the second of their three goals away to Slavia Praha. Curiously, apart from Barcelona, Chelsea and Lyon, who conceded none, Slavia's defence of

corners was outstanding. Of the 51 they faced, that Roma goal was the only one to ruffle their net. Slavia, however, were among the five teams who failed to score from a corner kick, alongside St. Pölten, Vllaznia, Zürich and Benfica. Fellow group stage fallers Juventus, on the other hand, posted the best success ratio of one goal per ten corners.

The two German clubs were among the half-dozen who conceded only once, Bayern falling 1-0 behind to Rosengård in Sweden on Matchday 1 and then successfully defending corners in their ensuing seven fixtures for a final balance of 1:47. Arsenal's semi-final goal was the only one (of 43) conceded by Wolfsburg but, whereas Jonas Eidevall's side restricted opponents to 24 corners in ten games, they conceded twice. Arsenal's ratio of 1:12 was only marginally better than Zürich, beaten four times while defending 44 corners, two of them on a snowy night in Turin when Juventus scored their opening two goals via inswinging deliveries to the near post from the left and right respectively.

DELIVERY FROM CORNERS

Two trends emerged clearly from the teams' modus operandi. No less than 57% of deliveries were inswingers struck with the 'wrong' foot while the more traditional outswinging corner accounted for only 21%. In this respect, the Chelsea vs Lyon fixture in the quarter-finals provided an interesting case history with Lyon's left-back Selma Bacha taking corners on both flanks. Her left-footed deliveries from the right were delivered towards the edge of the goal area which Lyon crowded with four or five players. With Chelsea setting out to defend with individual marking, a block by Lindsey Horan on centre-back Kadeisha Buchanan allowed Lyon centre-back Vanessa Gilles to connect with a free header. When Bacha delivered from the left, the approach was different. Only one Lyon player was positioned centrally in the goal area while five team-mates were on the edge of the penalty area, ready to attack the outswinging delivery.

With a tiny percentage of corners driven straight into the box, the other noticeable trend was towards the short corner which also represented 21% of the total – as many as the outswinger. The champions delivered a variety. Jonatan Giráldez's team was by no means averse to a traditional lofted delivery looking for centre-back Irene Paredes or, citing as an example, Barça's fifth goal at home to Roma, a right-footed delivery from the left for midfielder Patri Guijarro to meet in the near-post area and send a glancing header into the net. The short corner also came in a variety of guises with, occasionally, a player coming off the near post to look for a 2v1 situation between goal area and edge of box. Or a short corner in the wide area looking to create a 3v2 numerical advantage and an opportunity to initiate a combination move into the 'assist zone' on the fringes of the penalty area.

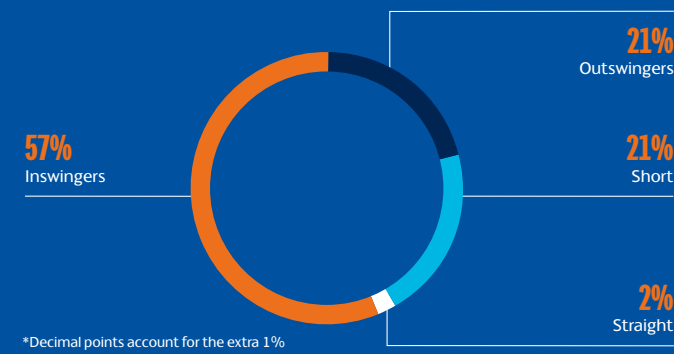
ATTACKING CORNERS

		GOALS FROM CORNERS	CORNERS PER GOAL
J	Juventus	3	10
CS	Chelsea	5	14
FCR	Rosengård	1	14
FCB	Bayern	2	19
W	Wolfsburg	3	19
OL	Lyon	2	22
FCB	Barcelona	4	26
Arsenal	Arsenal	2	29
RM	Real Madrid	1	40
Roma	Roma	1	51
PSG	Paris	1	59
Benfica	Benfica	0	–
SLAVIA	Slavia Praha	0	–
St. Pölten	St. Pölten	0	–
Vllaznia	Vllaznia	0	–
Zürich	Zürich	0	–

DEFENDING CORNERS

		GOALS CONCEDED FROM CORNERS	CORNERS PER GOAL CONCEDED
CS	Chelsea	0	–
OL	Lyon	0	–
FCB	Barcelona	0	–
SLAVIA	Slavia Praha	1	51
FCB	Bayern	1	47
W	Wolfsburg	1	43
J	Juventus	1	39
St. Pölten	St. Pölten	1	37
FCR	Rosengård	2	25
PSG	Paris	1	24
Vllaznia	Vllaznia	4	21
Roma	Roma	2	21
RM	Real Madrid	2	18
Benfica	Benfica	3	14
Arsenal	Arsenal	2	12
Zürich	Zürich	4	11

GOALS FROM CORNERS*





GOALKEEPING

Olivie Lukášová stood out for her brilliant shot-stopping, but keepers increasingly need to impress with their passing as well as their saves

SAVE THE DAY

In modern football, there is more to goalkeeping than shot-stopping. But it still tops the list of priorities. The group stage offered opportunities for keepers to exhibit their qualities, especially when facing pre-season favourites. None more so than Slavia Praha's Olivie Lukášová – to the extent that UEFA's technical observer panel picked her out for the Player of the Match award after her team's 0-0 draw in Wolfsburg and the 1-1 draw against St. Pölten in Austria. Their opinion is endorsed by statistical evidence. She made 51 saves during her team's six games – 14 of them in Wolfsburg, where she registered the season's highest total. Her average of 3.95 goals prevented per game was a competition best, as was Lukášová's save percentage of 87%.

The Slavia keeper was closely challenged by the 86% posted by Juventus keeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin, also the winner of a Player of the Match award after the goalless draw with the defending champions in Lyon. Peyraud-Magnin was one of five

goalkeepers who kept three clean sheets, one fewer than Lyon's Christiane Endler and Wolfsburg's Merle Frohms. Peyraud-Magnin made 19 saves, averaged 1.18 in the goals-prevented column, and conceded only three times as Joe Montemurro's team was eliminated in a tough Group C. Only Chelsea conceded fewer goals, with Emma Hayes' first-choice keeper Ann-Katrin Berger posting a shot-stopping ratio of 77%. That allowed her to share third place with Bayern's Maria Luisa Grohs, who made 30 saves and was second to Lukášová in the goals-prevented ranking with an average of 2.67 per match.

GOALS PREVENTED PER GAME

	Olivie Lukášová	Slavia	3.95
	Maria Luisa Grohs	Bayern	2.67
	Misa Rodríguez	Real Madrid	1.74
	Pauline Peyraud-Magnin	Juventus	1.18
	Sarah Bouhaddi	Paris	0.87
	Camelia Ceasar	Roma	0.4

SAVE PERCENTAGE

	Olivie Lukášová	Slavia	87%
	Pauline Peyraud-Magnin	Juventus	86%
	Ann-Katrin Berger	Chelsea	77%
	Maria Luisa Grohs	Bayern	77%
	Christiane Endler	Lyon	71%
	Merle Frohms	Wolfsburg	69%

CLEAN SHEETS

	Christiane Endler	4
	Merle Frohms	4
	Maria Luisa Grohs	3
	Pauline Peyraud-Magnin	3
	Camelia Ceasar	3
	Ann-Katrin Berger	3
	Sandra Paños	3

BUILDING FROM THE BACK

Debutants Vllaznia provided an exception to the rule. In the Albanian side's six matches, not one of their goal kicks was passed to a player inside the penalty area during a season when 36% of all goal kicks were received inside the box. St. Pölten and Rosengård were not quite as allergic to the short goal kick (11% and 17% respectively) but preferred long clearances towards the halfway line with a view to minimising risks. And there were risks – as illustrated by Arsenal's defensive mishap which allowed Wolfsburg to take a 2-0 lead in the first leg of the semi-final. St. Pölten's average passing distance was 47.4m, Vllaznia's 43.8m and Rosengård's 39m, contrasting sharply with Benfica, whose keeper Rute Costa's goal kicks travelled, on average, a distance of 17.6m. This demonstrated that the long goal kick was not exclusive to group stage fallers. After watching Chelsea in action at home to Lyon, Jayne Ludlow commented: "Ann-Katrin Berger constantly utilised long goal kicks, pushing her team up to compete for first contact."

No fewer than 76% of Chelsea's goal kicks were long, with an average distance of 40.9m. Bayern followed in their tracks with 73% played long to an average distance of 37.3m. Champions Barcelona, despite a strong preference for building from the back, posted middle-of-the-table averages (41% of goal kicks received in the box and a pass distance of 29m) largely attributable to Sandra Paños' ability to deliver middle-distance passing to break the first line of press. Wolfsburg's 63% of short goal kicks allowed them to share second place with Real Madrid behind Roma's 65% and a pass distance of just 20m.

However, Merle Frohms, selected as goalkeeper in UEFA's team of the season, was alert to counterattacking opportunities, as illustrated in the home leg against Paris when, as Jorge Vilda noted, "the keeper executed a long goal kick, taking advantage of Paris's defensive disorganisation and quickly reached the opponents' goal with a situation of real danger." Frohms generally preferred to build from the back with short passing – as she demonstrated when Arsenal pressed high and centrally when she was in possession during the semi-final, detecting and delivering passes into midfield, notably for Jill Roord to immediately link up an attacking move.

GOAL KICKS RECEIVED INSIDE BOX

	Roma	65%
	Wolfsburg	63%
	Real Madrid	63%
	Benfica	52%
	Arsenal	49%
	Zürich	43%
	Paris	43%
	Lyon	42%
	Juventus	42%
	Barcelona	41%
	Slavia	30%
	Bayern	27%
	Chelsea	24%
	Rosengård	17%
	St. Pölten	11%
	Vllaznia	0%

AVERAGE PASS DISTANCE FROM GOAL KICKS (M)



FITNESS

Caroline Graham Hansen hit the top speed with Barcelona while Lyon's Lindsey Horan covered the most ground on average per match



Barcelona's Caroline Graham Hansen in action against Roma



SPEED QUEENS

The season demonstrated that benchmarks are being consolidated at the peak of club football, underlining the relevance of pace and stamina in job descriptions all around the team. Six of the previous season's top ten in terms of sprint speeds maintained their positions in 2022/23 but the emphasis on pace in the wide areas was slightly watered down. Attacking spearheads Ewa Pajor and Kadidiatou Diani were joined by two Barcelona signings: Brazilian attacker Geysel and Salma Paralluelo, a 19-year-old sprinter who parked a career in athletics to accelerate a career in football.

Even though some of the names remained the same, the wide players took on a slightly different complexion. Delphine Cascarino, for example, worked inner channels in the Lyon attack, creating space for right-back Ellie Carpenter to become the protagonist along the touchline. Wolfsburg's Sveindís Jónsdóttir, as she demonstrated in the final, operated in more of a box-to-box role than an outright winger.

Dealing with pace in attack requires pace in defence – as demonstrated by the presence on the list of Wolfsburg centre-back Kathrin Hendrich. For the second successive season, Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Laurina Fazer also topped 30km/h during her box-to-box duties which included activity in the team's high press.

The top speed of the season, however, belonged to Barcelona right-winger Caroline Graham Hansen who clocked in at 32.4km/h during the home leg of the quarter-final against Roma. "She is a player of high value," commented Joe Montemurro after watching her decisive contribution in the semi-final against Chelsea. "She has pace and quality and something proactive is going to happen when she receives the ball wide or in the channel between full-back and centre-back. Whether running with the ball or playing neat combinations in and around the box, she is a constant threat."

FASTEST SPRINTS (KM/H)

	Caroline Graham Hansen	Barcelona	32.4
	Delphine Cascarino	Lyon	32.2
	Geysel	Barcelona	31.3
	Ewa Pajor	Wolfsburg	31.2
	Salma Paralluelo	Barcelona	31.2
	Kadidiatou Diani	Paris	30.8
	Sveindís Jónsdóttir	Wolfsburg	30.6
	Ellie Carpenter	Lyon	30.6
	Kathrin Hendrich	Wolfsburg	30.5
	Laurina Fazer	Paris	30.5

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS

In the previous season, Bayern München had dominated the ranking in this facet of athletic conditioning, taking the leading six places and having a seventh player in the top ten. No player from that ranking reappeared in the 2022/23 list, where Lyon's Lindsey Horan posted the highest average and the longest distance covered in a single game. She ran 14.99km in the return leg of the quarter-final against Chelsea when, it has to be added, extra time inflated the statistics.

She was one of the midfielders to stand out, along with the Arsenal duo of Lia Wälti and Frida Maanum, the latter taking UEFA's Player of the Match award in two games – a recompense for tireless work in linking midfield and attack.

Likewise, Manuela Giugliano covered a lot of ground as a key component in Roma's transition play. The physical requirements of the wing-back role are illustrated by the presence of Katie McCabe and Steph Catley, protagonists in the Arsenal side which was among the few to use the three-centre-back formation. Although Alex Popp led the Wolfsburg attack in the final, her inclusion among the leaders in the distance-covered ranking illustrated that she had generally worked from a deeper position in the wake of Ewa Pajor. Providing assists rather than goals, she was, as Jayne Ludlow put it, "very active in midfield rotations to create spaces for herself and for others".

AVERAGE DISTANCE PER MATCH (PLAYERS)

Lindsey Horan (Lyon)	13.25km
Lia Wälti (Arsenal)	12.14km
Frida Maanum (Arsenal)	12.01km
Ellie Carpenter (Lyon)	11.85km
Felicitas Rauch (Wolfsburg)	11.84km
Vanessa Gilles (Lyon)	11.45km
Katie McCabe (Arsenal)	11.3km
Steph Catley (Arsenal)	11.21km
Alexandra Popp (Wolfsburg)	11.18km
Manuela Giugliano (Roma)	11.08km

RUNNING DEBATE

The season's statistics served food for thought. Lyon, who last season covered the lowest distance, this time averaged the most. Was it coincidence that the champions in the last two seasons were way down in the distance-covered ranking?

In 2022/23 Lyon covered 20% more than the 104.16km per game they had averaged in the previous season. And there was a substantial role reversal between the two French clubs in the knockout rounds. Paris, second only to Bayern in the 2021/22 ranking, plummeted to last place while Lyon were rising to the top. The salient feature, however, was that distances were creeping up. The Paris total that had earned them second place a year previously would have given them fifth place in 2022/23. Bayern's distance declined by 9%. Barcelona's also decreased – but only by 1%. The statistics raise questions about whether compactness in an advanced block translates into greater fuel economy in the running of the team.

AVERAGE DISTANCE PER MATCH (TEAMS)

	Lyon	125.06km
	Arsenal	120.34km
	Wolfsburg	118.71km
	Chelsea	116.76km
	Roma	112.84km
	Bayern	112.79km
	Barcelona	109.09km
	Paris	104.82km



FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN



GER

GROUP D		QUARTER-FINALS		SEMI-FINALS		FINAL	
ROS W 2-1	BEN W 2-3	FCB L 3-0	FCB W 3-1	ROS W 0-4	BEN W 2-0	ARS W 1-0	ARS L 2-0

Matches: Orange = home, white = away; grey = final; see page 5 for full club names

AVERAGES

POSSESSION	POSSESSION POSITION*
51%	First third 37%
Max. 69% v Rosengård (h)	Middle third 45%
Min. 31% v Barcelona (a)	Attacking third 18%
UWCL rank: 9	

481 PASSES ATTEMPTED	84% PASS ACCURACY
Max. 660 v Rosengård (h)	Max. 91% v Rosengård (h)
Min. 319 v Barcelona (h)	Min. 72% v Barcelona (h)
UWCL rank: 4	UWCL rank: 2

PASS DISTANCE*		
Long	46 (10% of total)	UWCL rank: 7
Medium	197 (41%)	UWCL rank: 7
Short	239 (50%)	UWCL rank: 4

PASSES PER DEFENSIVE ACTION**	Average	UWCL rank
	11.8	7

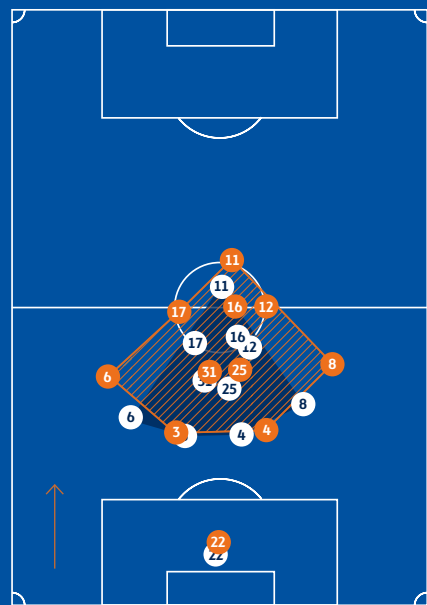
RECOVERIES IN ATTACKING THIRD	Average	UWCL rank
	7	8=

*Decimal points account for the extra/missing 1%
 **Number of passes conceded in opposition and middle thirds divided by number of defensive actions. A lower PPDA indicates a higher degree of pressing.

SHAPE

Example: v Arsenal (h)

3 In possession | 3 Out of possession



COACH

ALEXANDER STRAUS



BORN: 20/10/1975, Bergen (NOR)
 NATIONALITY: Norwegian
 HEAD COACH: Since 13/06/2022
 UEFA CLUB TROPHIES WON: 0

	Matches	W	D	L	Win%
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UEFA Women's Champions League (Group stage to final) 8 6 0 2 75%

European club competition (including qualifying) 10 8 0 2 80%

SQUAD

	App	Min	G	A
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GOALKEEPERS

22 Maria-Luisa Grohs 8 720

DEFENDERS

4 Glódís Viggósdóttir 7 630
 6 Tuva Hansen 2 180
 8 Maximiliane Rall 7 605 1 1
 13 Tainara 5 365 1
 14 Emilie Bragstad 5 11
 30 Carolin Simon 6 533 1 1
 35 Julia Landenberger 2 9 1

MIDFIELDERS

3 Saki Kumagai 8 565
 10 Linda Dallmann 2 146 1
 12 Sydney Lohmann 7 417 1 1
 16 Lina Magull 7 541 1 2
 17 Klara Bühl 8 672 3
 20 Franziska Kett 7 225
 23 Karólína Vilhjálmisdóttir 2 7
 25 Sarah Zadrazil 8 708 1
 31 Georgia Stanway 8 719 3 3

FORWARDS

9 Jovana Damjanović 4 127 1
 11 Lea Schüller 8 585 2 1
 27 Emelyne Laurent 6 150
 37 Ivana Rudelic 3 5

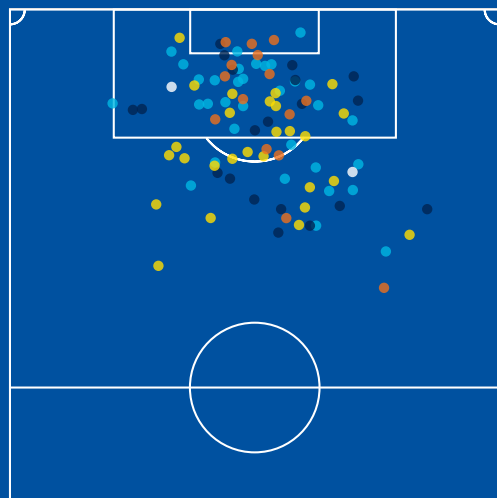
App = Appearances; Min = Minutes played; G = Goals; A = Assists

AVERAGE AGE	CARDS
25.7	14 0

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1 with fast transitions to 1-4-5-1 or 1-5-3-2 mid-low defence
- Switch to 1-3-5-2 for more proactive approach in second half v Arsenal
- Mix of short-passing construction and direct supply to striker Schüller
- The two holding midfielders dropping deep to catalyse build-up play
- Magull aiming to receive between lines; penetrating wing play by Bühl
- High press in 1-4-4-2 formation; if unsuccessful, rapidly into defensive block
- Key box-to-box role by Stanway, initiating attacks, dictating tempo
- Dangerous counterattacks via wide areas, crosses for upfield runners

ATTEMPTS



15 GOALS
1.9 per match; UWCL rank: 6

10 EXPECTED GOALS (xG)
1.3 per match; UWCL rank: 11

97 GOAL ATTEMPTS
12.1 per match; UWCL rank: 11

36 ON TARGET
4.5 per match; UWCL rank: 10

GOALS	13%
SAVED	32%
BLOCKED	23%
WOODWORK	2%
OFF TARGET	31%

PLAYER STATISTICS

Where totals are equal, rank is decided by next value

GOALS	G	S	OT	xG
1 Georgia Stanway	3	16	7	1.0
2 Klara Bühl	3	16	4	2.4
3 Lea Schüller	2	18	5	2.2

G = Goals; S = Shots; OT = On Target; xG = Expected Goals

PASSES	Att	R	S%	PF%
1 Georgia Stanway	523	430	84	27
2 Saki Kumagai	473	398	93	32
3 Glódís Viggósdóttir	446	357	87	42

Att = Attempted; R = Passes Received; S = Successful; PF = Pass Forward

CHANCE CREATION	A	KP	xA
1 Georgia Stanway	3	11	0.8
2 Lina Magull	2	5	1.0
3 Carolin Simon	1	9	1.0

A = Assists; KP = Key Passes; xA = Expected Assists

DEFENDING	BR	TW	I
1 Georgia Stanway	75	21	13
2 Klara Bühl	53	5	5
3 Sarah Zadrazil	49	20	12

BR = Balls Recovered; TW = Tackles Won; I = Interceptions



SL BENFICA



POR

GROUP D		QUARTER-FINALS		SEMI-FINALS		FINAL	
FCB L 9-0	BAY L 2-3	ROS W 1-0	ROS W 1-3	FCB L 2-6	BAY L 2-0		

Matches: Orange = home, white = away; grey = final; see page 5 for full club names

AVERAGES

POSSESSION	POSSESSION POSITION*
44%	First third 40%
Max. 57% v Rosengård (a)	Middle third 42%
Min. 34% v Barcelona (h)	Attacking third 19%
UWCL rank: 11	

398 PASSES ATTEMPTED	79% PASS ACCURACY
Max. 492 v Rosengård (h)	Max. 83% v Rosengård (h)
Min. 300 v Barcelona (h)	Min. 74% v Barcelona (h)
UWCL rank: 10	UWCL rank: 9

PASS DISTANCE*		
Long	36 (9% of total)	UWCL rank: 15
Medium	169 (42%)	UWCL rank: 10
Short	193 (48%)	UWCL rank: 10

PASSES PER DEFENSIVE ACTION**	Average	UWCL rank
	13.1	10

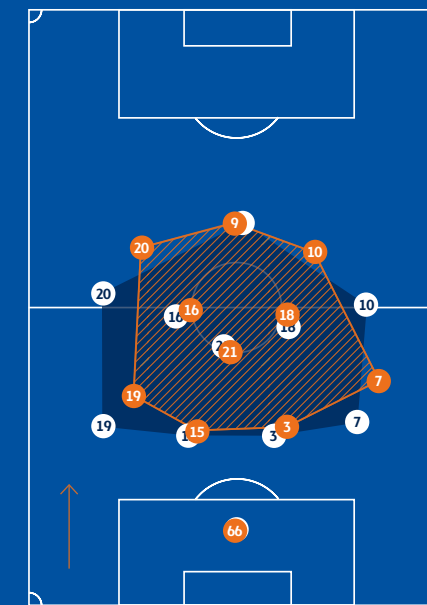
RECOVERIES IN ATTACKING THIRD	Average	UWCL rank
	9	4=

*Decimal points account for the extra/missing 1%
 **Number of passes conceded in opposition and middle thirds divided by number of defensive actions. A lower PPDA indicates a higher degree of pressing.

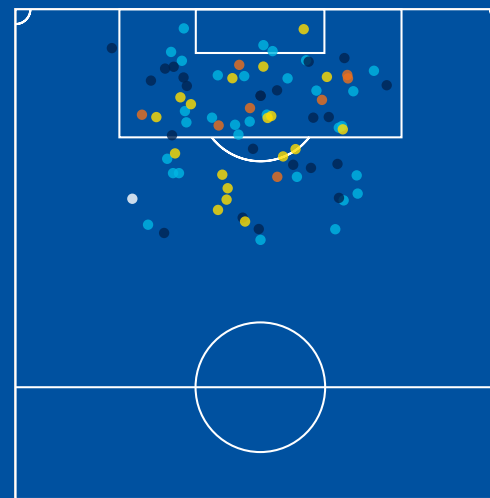
SHAPE

Example: v Rosengård (a)

3 In possession | 3 Out of possession



ATTEMPTS



8 GOALS
1.3 per match; UWCL rank: 11

9.7 EXPECTED GOALS (xG)
1.6 per match; UWCL rank: 9

81 GOAL ATTEMPTS
13.5 per match; UWCL rank: 8

32 ON TARGET
5.3 per match; UWCL rank: 8

GOALS	9%
SAVED	36%
BLOCKED	19%
WOODWORK	1%
OFF TARGET	36%

PLAYER STATISTICS

Where totals are equal, rank is decided by next value

GOALS	G	S	OT	xG
1 Cloé Lacasse	5	16	9	2.6
2 Nycole Raysla	2	7	4	1.3
3 Jéssica Silva	1	5	3	0.6

G = Goals; S = Shots; OT = On Target; xG = Expected Goals

PASSES	Att	R	S%	PF%
1 Carole Costa	323	226	82	41
2 Kika Nazareth	240	193	86	19
3 Pauleta	240	171	81	36

Att = Attempted; R = Passes Received; S = Successful; PF = Pass Forward

CHANCE CREATION	A	KP	xA
1 Kika Nazareth	2	11	0.8
2 Ana Vitória	2	1	0.2
3 Cloé Lacasse	1	7	1.2

A = Assists; KP = Key Passes; xA = Expected Assists

DEFENDING	BR	TW	I
1 Pauleta	48	3	15
2 Catarina Amado	37	10	8
3 Cloé Lacasse	36	8	2

BR = Balls Recovered; TW = Tackles Won; I = Interceptions

COACH

FILIPA PATÃO



BORN: 06/03/1989, Lisboa (POR)
 NATIONALITY: Portuguese
 HEAD COACH: Since 01/07/2021
 UEFA CLUB TROPHIES WON: 0

	Matches	W	D	L	Win%
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UEFA Women's Champions League (Group stage to final) 6 2 0 4 33%

European club competition (including qualifying) 13 6 0 7 46%

SQUAD

	App	Min	G	A
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GOALKEEPERS

1 Katelin Talbert 1 90

66 Rute Costa 5 450

DEFENDERS

3 Ana Seïça 4 360

13 Lucia Alves 4 209

14 Carolina Correia 1 90

15 Carole Costa 6 540

19 Catarina Amado 5 370

71 Daniela Ferreira Silva 2 88

MIDFIELDERS

6 Andreia Faria 5 174

10 Ana Vitória 6 513 2

16 Christy Ucheibe 6 381

17 Andreia Norton 5 208

21 Pauleta 6 540 1

FORWARDS

7 Valéria Silva 6 411 1

8 Marta Cintra 3 14

9 Nycole Raysla 6 246 2 1

18 Kika Nazareth 6 423 2

20 Cloé Lacasse 6 539 5 1

77 Jéssica Silva 6 294

App = Appearances; Min = Minutes played; G = Goals; A = Assists

AVERAGE AGE	CARDS
25.8	8 0

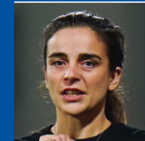




FC ROSENGÅRD



COACH RENÉE SLEGRS



BORN: 05/02/1989, Someren-Eind (NED)
NATIONALITY: Dutch
HEAD COACH: Since 01/08/2021
UEFA CLUB TROPHIES WON: 0

	Matches	W	D	L	Win%
UEFA Women's Champions League (Group stage to final)	6	0	0	6	0%
European club competition (including qualifying)	10	1	2	7	10%

SQUAD

	App	Min	G	A
GOALKEEPERS				
12 Angel Mukasa	3	208		
18 Teagan Micah	4	332		

DEFENDERS				
3 Gudrún Arnardóttir	6	540		
8 Rebecca Knaak	1	63		
15 Jessica Wik	6	513		
25 Emma Berglund	3	259		
28 Bianca Schmidt	3	73		
36 Athinna Persson	3	200		

MIDFIELDERS				
4 Halimatu Ayinde	2	120		
6 Ria Öling	6	478		
7 Fiona Brown	4	169		
13 Frederikke Thøgersen	6	136		
19 Sofie Bredgaard	6	387		
20 Mia Persson	6	522	1	
27 Gina-Maria Chmielinski	4	69		
29 Olivia Holdt	6	303	1	
40 Bea Sprung	4	174		

FORWARDS				
9 Loreta Kullashi	6	358	1	
11 Mimmi Larsson	5	370		
21 Karin Lundin	5	162		
22 Olivia Schough	6	490	1	1
23 Stefanie Sanders	1	14		

App = Appearances; Min = Minutes played; G = Goals; A = Assists

AVERAGE AGE	CARDS
25.7	6 0



Mia Persson has a shot at goal

GROUP D	QUARTER-FINALS	SEMI-FINALS	FINAL
BAY L 2-1	FCB L 1-4	BEN L 1-0	BEN L 1-3
BAY L 0-4	FCB L 6-0		

Matches: Orange = home, white = away; grey = final; see page 5 for full club names

AVERAGES

POSESSION	POSESSION POSITION*
36%	First third 44%
	Middle third 45%
	Attacking third 12%

346 PASSES ATTEMPTED	75% PASS ACCURACY
Max. 49% v Benfica (a)	Max. 83% v Bayern (h)
Min. 26% v Barcelona (a)	Min. 59% v Barcelona (h)
UWCL rank: 14	UWCL rank: 11

PASS DISTANCE*	Average	UWCL rank
Long	44 (13% of total)	UWCL rank: 11
Medium	145 (42%)	UWCL rank: 13
Short	157 (45%)	UWCL rank: 12

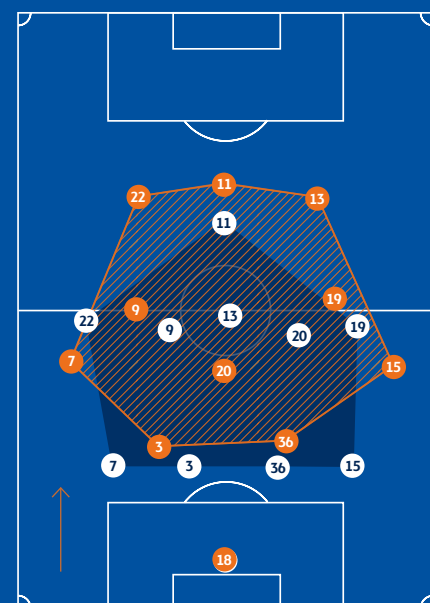
PASSES PER DEFENSIVE ACTION**	Average	UWCL rank
	16.8	15

RECOVERIES IN ATTACKING THIRD	Average	UWCL rank
	5	13=

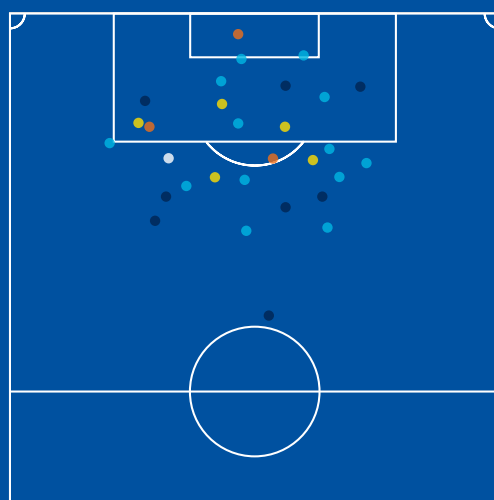
*Decimal points account for the extra/missing 1%
**Number of passes conceded in opposition and middle thirds divided by number of defensive actions. A lower PPDA indicates a higher degree of pressing.

SHAPE

Example: v Benfica (h)
In possession Out of possession



ATTEMPTS



3 GOALS	0.5 per match; UWCL rank: 13
1.4 EXPECTED GOALS (xG)	0.2 per match; UWCL rank: 15
30 GOAL ATTEMPTS	5 per match; UWCL rank: 15
11 ON TARGET	1.8 per match; UWCL rank: 14

GOALS	SAVED	BLOCKED	WOODWORK	OFF TARGET
9%	32%	15%	3%	41%

PLAYER STATISTICS

Where totals are equal, rank is decided by next value

GOALS	G	S	OT	xG
1 Olivia Schough	1	5	3	0.1
2 Olivia Holdt	1	5	2	0.2
3 Loreta Kullashi	1	4	1	0.4

G = Goals; S = Shots; OT = On Target; xG = Expected Goals

PASSES	Att	R	S%	PF%
1 Mia Persson	250	164	82	32
2 Gudrún Arnardóttir	239	164	83	35
3 Jessica Wik	221	168	76	52

Att = Attempted; R = Passes Received; S = Successful; PF = Pass Forward

CHANCE CREATION	A	KP	xA
1 Olivia Schough	1	5	0.9
2 Mia Persson	1	2	0.1
3 Sofie Bredgaard	0	2	0.2

A = Assists; KP = Key Passes; xA = Expected Assists

DEFENDING	BR	TW	I
1 Mia Persson	50	10	11
2 Jessica Wik	36	11	12
3 Ria Öling	36	6	18

BR = Balls Recovered; TW = Tackles Won; I = Interceptions



SK SLAVIA PRAHA



COACH KAREL PITÁK



BORN: 28/01/1980, Hradec Králové (CZE)
NATIONALITY: Czech
HEAD COACH: Since 14/07/2022
UEFA CLUB TROPHIES WON: 0

GROUP B	QUARTER-FINALS	SEMI-FINALS	FINAL
ROM L 1-0	WOL L 0-2	STP L 0-1	STP D 1-1
WOL D 0-0	ROM L 0-3		

Matches: Orange = home, white = away; grey = final; see page 5 for full club names

AVERAGES

POSESSION	POSESSION POSITION*
37%	First third 46%
	Middle third 40%
	Attacking third 15%

266 PASSES ATTEMPTED	57% PASS ACCURACY
Max. 50% v St. Pölten (h)	Max. 61% v Roma (h)
Min. 25% v Wolfsburg (a)	Min. 45% v Wolfsburg (a)
UWCL rank: 13	UWCL rank: 15

PASS DISTANCE*	Average	UWCL rank
Long	53 (20% of total)	UWCL rank: 2
Medium	91 (34%)	UWCL rank: 15
Short	122 (46%)	UWCL rank: 15

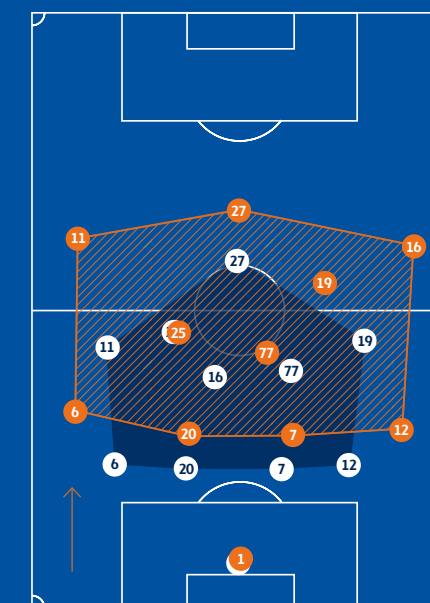
PASSES PER DEFENSIVE ACTION**	Average	UWCL rank
	13.2	11

RECOVERIES IN ATTACKING THIRD	Average	UWCL rank
	5	13=

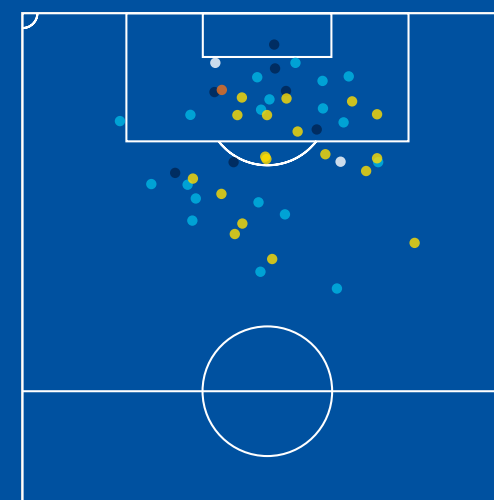
*Decimal points account for the extra/missing 1%
**Number of passes conceded in opposition and middle thirds divided by number of defensive actions. A lower PPDA indicates a higher degree of pressing.

SHAPE

Example: v St. Pölten (h)
In possession Out of possession



ATTEMPTS



1 GOAL	0.2 per match; UWCL rank: 15=
3.2 EXPECTED GOALS (xG)	0.5 per match; UWCL rank: 14
47 GOAL ATTEMPTS	7.8 per match; UWCL rank: 13
8 ON TARGET	1.3 per match; UWCL rank: 15

GOALS	SAVED	BLOCKED	WOODWORK	OFF TARGET
2%	16%	38%	4%	40%

PLAYER STATISTICS

Where totals are equal, rank is decided by next value

GOALS	G	S	OT	xG
1 Kristýna Růžičková	1	2	2	0.4
2 Tereza Szewieczková	0	7	1	0.3
3 Michaela Khýrová	0	6	1	0.2

G = Goals; S = Shots; OT = On Target; xG = Expected Goals

PASSES	Att	R	S%	PF%
1 Olivie Lukášová	221	57	51	78
2 Diana Bartovičová	168	70	64	52
3 Michaela Khýrová	165	112	50	66

Att = Attempted; R = Passes Received; S = Successful; PF = Pass Forward

CHANCE CREATION	A	KP	xA
1 Tereza Kožárová	1	2	0.6
2 Denisa Veselá	0	5	0.4
3 Tereza Szewieczková	0	4	0.3

A = Assists; KP = Key Passes; xA = Expected Assists

DEFENDING	BR	TW	I
1 Michaela Khýrová	52	10	3
2 Denisa Veselá	45	11	12
3 Diana Bartovičová	44	9	10

BR = Balls Recovered; TW = Tackles Won; I = Interceptions

SQUAD

	App	Min	G	A
GOALKEEPERS				
1 Olivie Lukášová	6	540		

DEFENDERS				
7 Simona Necidová	6	540		
12 Denisa Veselá	6	540		
14 Lucie Bendová	1	3		
15 Sejde Abrahamsson	2	12		
20 Diana Bartovičová	6	540		
77 Alicka Keene	6	437		

MIDFIELDERS				
4 Denisa Tenkrátová	5	309		
6 Michaela Khýrová	6	540		
10 Martina Šurnovská	3	163		
16 Tereza Szewieczková	3	242		
18 Albina Goretikiová	1	2		
25 Tereza Krejčířiková	4	323		

FORWARDS				
8 Kristýna Růžičková	5	273	1	
9 Marjolen Nekesa Wafula	6	279		
11 Franny Černá	6	358		
17 Gabriela Šlajsová	2	83		
19 Petra Divišová	5	283		
27 Tereza Kožárová	6	473	1	

App = Appearances; Min = Minutes played; G = Goals; A = Assists

AVERAGE AGE	CARDS
25.4	13 0



Tereza Szewieczková on the ball against St. Pölten

Barcelona lift the trophy for the second time after overturning a 2-0 half-time deficit against Wolfsburg in Eindhoven



ROLL OF HONOUR

- 2023 Barcelona
- 2022 Lyon
- 2021 Barcelona
- 2020 Lyon
- 2019 Lyon
- 2018 Lyon
- 2017 Lyon
- 2016 Lyon
- 2015 1. FFC Frankfurt
- 2014 Wolfsburg
- 2013 Wolfsburg
- 2012 Lyon
- 2011 Lyon
- 2010 Turbine Potsdam
- 2009 Duisburg
- 2008 1. FFC Frankfurt
- 2007 Arsenal
- 2006 1. FFC Frankfurt
- 2005 Turbine Potsdam
- 2004 Umeå
- 2003 Umeå
- 2002 1. FFC Frankfurt

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