



English Premier League (EPL) Team of the Season 2020/21 The Sun

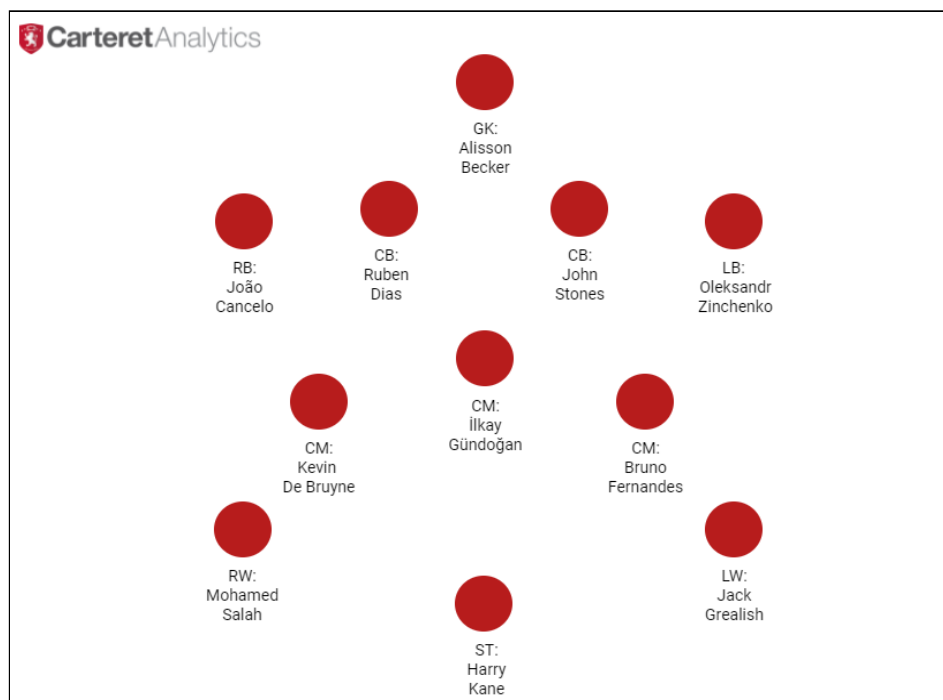
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1. Abstract

This research paper utilises purely objective, quantitative player performance analysis to construct the English Premier League (EPL) Team of the Season (2020/21). Manchester City midfielder **İlkay Gündoğan** has been identified as the best player to compete in the EPL this season, with a **Carteret Rating*** of **285.8**. Manchester United's **Bruno Fernandes** followed closely with a **Carteret Rating** of **284.6**, just **0.4%** lower than **Gündoğan**. The data analysis indicated that Tottenham Hotspur's **Harry Kane** is the best centre forward in the EPL this season, scoring a total of 21 goals so far (up to and including EPL round 35).

2. The EPL Team of the Season 2020/21

Exhibit 1: The EPL Team of the Season determined by Carteret Analytics based on a player's objective performances this season (2020/21)



**Carteret Rating*: this is a proprietary method of determining how good a player really is. It is a significant and leading-edge algorithm. We assess a player by identifying every match in which he has been involved (for which we have data) and identifying the key events in each and every one of those matches. These Key Match Events ("KMEs") are events that led to a goal being scored; could have led to a goal being scored; led to a goal being conceded; or could have led to a goal being conceded. Then, for each and every KME, in each and every single match, we analyse that player's contribution to each of those KMEs. This is a substantial piece of analysis, and one which produces a unique *Carteret Rating* for the player. It is a dynamic rating, and it changes with each additional match played.

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3. Headlines

- Manchester City midfielder **İlkay Gündoğan** is the EPL Player of the Season 2020/21, with the highest **Carteret Rating (285.8)** of any player competing in the EPL this season. Manchester United's **Bruno Fernandes** followed closely with a **Carteret Rating of 284.6** - just **0.4%** lower than **Gündoğan**.
- **Alisson's** in... but where is **Ederson**? Liverpool's **Alisson (Carteret Rating 231.9)** made the EPL Team of the Season. Manchester City's **Ederson** missed out on a place in the team, despite his high level of passing accuracy and a save percentage of **76.3%**.
- Manchester City's **John Stones (Carteret Rating 272.3)** and **Ruben Dias (Carteret Rating 269.7)** form the EPL Team of the Season's defensive partnership. But it was close! Objective data analysis found that Chelsea's **Kurt Zouma (Carteret Rating 265.2)** and **Thiago Silva (Carteret Rating 249.5)** are the next best performing defenders in the EPL.
- England captain **Harry Kane (Carteret Rating 283.7)** is the best centre forward in the EPL - scoring 21 goals for Tottenham Hotspur so far this season. The quantitative, player performance analysis suggests that **Kane** has received little competition, with a significant **Carteret Rating** delta of **29.4%** between him and closest competitor, Everton's **Dominic Calvert-Lewin (Carteret Rating 219.3)**.
- Despite his injury, Aston Villa's **Jack Grealish (Carteret Rating 280.4)** secured a place in the EPL Team of the Season. Tottenham Hotspur's **Son Heung-Min** was close competition, with a **Carteret Rating** of **256.6** - just **9%** lower than **Grealish**.
- **Mohamed Salah (Carteret Rating 263.7)** has defied the downward trend of many Liverpool players, having scored more goals this season than he did during Liverpool's title winning campaign last year. **Salah's** performance levels are up **2%** from last season (**Carteret Rating 259.1**).

Exhibit 2: Table outlining the best EPL players, based on their objective performance levels this season (2020/21)

CarteretAnalytics		EPL Team of the Season 2020/21	
Player	Principal Position	Team	Carteret Rating
Alisson Becker	Goalkeeper	Liverpool	231.9
João Cancelo	Right-back	Manchester City	214.7
John Stones	Centre-back	Manchester City	272.3
Ruben Dias	Centre-back	Manchester City	269.7
Oleksandr Zinchenko	Left-back	Manchester City	213.0
Kevin De Bruyne	Midfielder	Manchester City	256.0
İlkay Gündoğan	Midfielder	Manchester City	285.8
Bruno Fernandes	Midfielder	Manchester United	284.6
Mohamed Salah	Attacking Midfielder	Liverpool	263.7
Jack Grealish	Attacking Midfielder	Aston Villa	280.4
Harry Kane	Centre Forward	Tottenham Hotspur	283.7

4. A little bit of science...

At Carteret Analytics we have developed the quantitative analysis utilised to good effect in investment banking for trading strategy, portfolio optimisation, derivatives pricing and hedging, and risk management by our sister corporate finance firm, Carteret Capital - and applied it to football. **In particular, our work provides an objective measure of how good a football player really is - removing all the subjective noise and opinions.**

An integral part of the analysis is to calculate a **Carteret Rating** for every football player, which rates and values a player's contribution to his team winning football matches. It is incredibly accurate at predicting a player's capabilities. Indeed, we always start with the premise that a professional football club's primary objective is to win matches - and therefore the more a player contributes to his team winning matches, the better the player.

5. About Carteret Analytics

Carteret Analytics is part of the Carteret Group of companies, based in the City of London, New York and Geneva. It provides leading-edge quantitative analysis and commercial analytics to clients worldwide, with particular expertise in the sports sector. In football our work includes player rating and valuation, head coach assessment, team performance analysis, and applying proprietary analytics to transform commercial revenues.

Further information and contact details

If you have any questions, or would like to enquire about further services provided by the Carteret Group, then please feel free to contact one of the team members listed below.

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Appendix

EPL Team of the Season 2020/21 A detailed analysis by position

A.1 Goalkeeper of the Season

Alisson Becker - Carteret Rating 231.9 (Liverpool)

Liverpool's **Alisson Becker** is this season's best performing goalkeeper, according to objective, quantitative data analysis. **Alisson's Carteret Rating** is **5%** higher than that of closest rival - Manchester City's **Ederson**, who has a **Carteret Rating** of **219.7**. Ultimately, the data analysis suggests that both **Ederson** and Chelsea's **Mendy (Carteret Rating 209.3)** failed to make the team due to the limited number of saves that they were required to make this season - busier goalkeepers have greater opportunity to demonstrate their performance capabilities. However, at **76.3%**, **Ederson** has a higher save percentage than **Alisson (74.7%)** and **Mendy (70.3%)**, indicating that he is the most efficient goalkeeper when required to make a save.

A.2 Defenders of the Season

The player performance analysis identifies **Oleksandr Zinchenko**, **John Stones**, **Ruben Dias** and **João Cancelo** as the best performing defenders in the EPL this season. Each of these players play for title winners Manchester City, highlighting the club's defensive strength. This appears to have been the main difference between Manchester City and their rivals this season. Interestingly, if we were to exclude Manchester City defenders from our analysis, the back four would be made up of Manchester United left-back **Luke Shaw**, Chelsea's central defensive pairing; **Kurt Zouma** and **Thiago Silva**, and Manchester United right-back **Aaron Wan-Bissaka**.

Right-back: João Cancelo - Carteret Rating 214.7 (Manchester City)

João Cancelo secured the right-back position in the EPL Team of the Season, but it was Manchester United's **Aaron Wan-Bissaka** who challenged him for the top spot, with a **Carteret Rating (211.6)** just **1.5%** lower than **Cancelo**. **Wan-Bissaka** possesses a more defensive style of play, with a tackle success rate of **88%** - a significant **23%** higher than **Cancelo's**. However, **Cancelo** completed 47 successful dribbles this season, compared to **Wan-Bissaka** (29) and Liverpool's **Trent Alexander-Arnold** (28). This suggests that **Cancelo** has been utilised as a second winger this season, rather than a full-back.

Centre-back: John Stones - Carteret Rating 272.3 (Manchester City)

Manchester City's **John Stones** has the highest **Carteret Rating** of all EPL defenders, with his biggest strength being his passing accuracy and dribbling ability. **Stones** has succeeded in 1,499 of his 1,607 attempted passes and performed nine successful dribbles this season - more than double of centre-back **Kurt Zouma**, who has completed 4 dribbles so far this season. The **9% Carteret Rating** delta between **Stones (272.3)** and Chelsea rival, **Thiago Silva (249.5)**, emphasises how close the performance levels have been between the top four centre-backs this season.

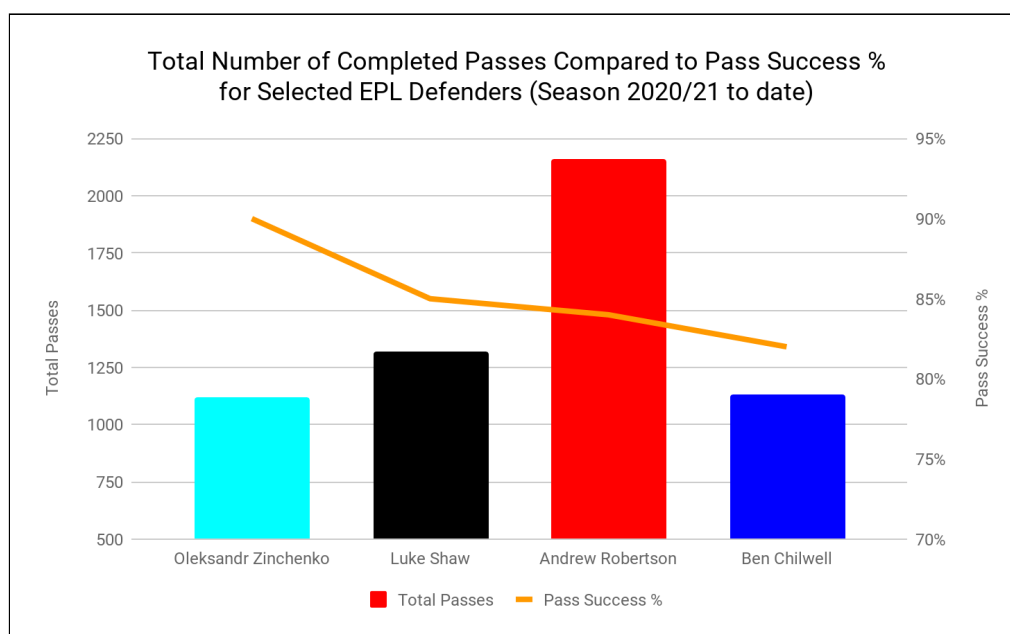
Centre-back: Ruben Dias - Carteret Rating 269.7 (Manchester City)

Manchester City's Ruben Dias made the EPL Team of the Season, but he was challenged closely by Chelsea's Kurt Zouma (**Carteret Rating 265.2**) and **Thiago Silva** (**Carteret Rating 249.5**). The top four centre-backs of the season; **Stones, Dias, Zouma** and **Silva** all maintain a passing accuracy of over **85%**. This is an essential ability for players if they are to successfully implement the possession-based philosophies of Pep Guardiola and Thomas Tuchel.

Left-back: Oleksandr Zinchenko - Carteret Rating 213.0 (Manchester City)

Manchester City's Oleksandr Zinchenko is the best left-back in the EPL this season. It is his passing accuracy which sets him apart from his rivals (accuracy **90.2%**). Manchester United's Luke Shaw is a close second, with a passing accuracy of **85.2%**. **Shaw** has committed a higher number of fouls (41) than **Zinchenko** (8) this season, suggesting that **Shaw** must apply more discipline to his gameplay if he hopes to challenge **Zinchenko** for a place in the EPL Team of the Season 2021/22.

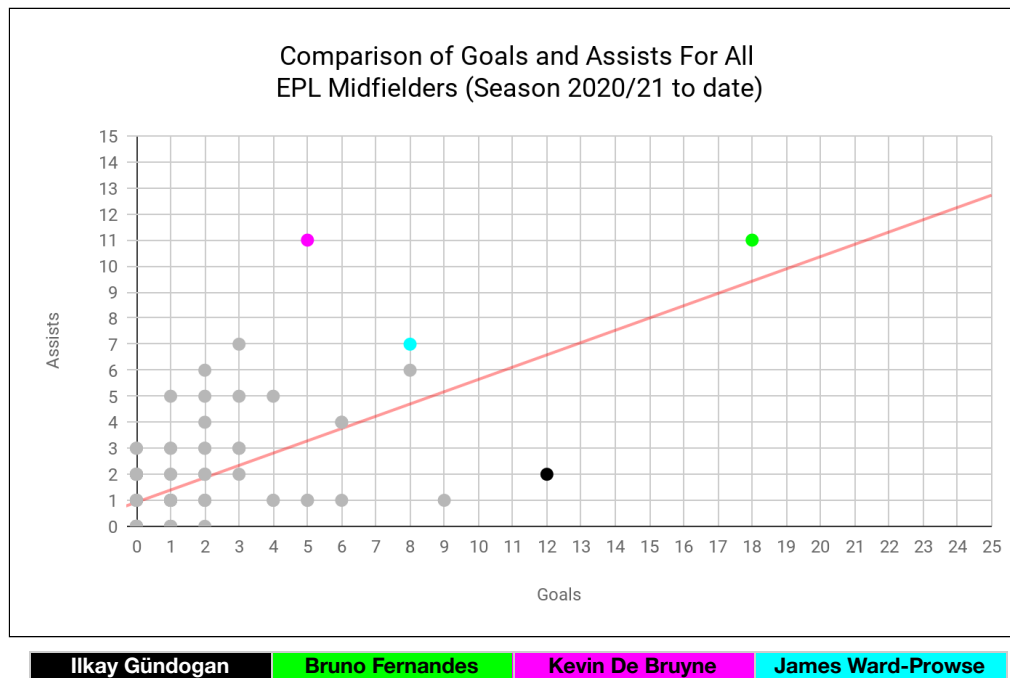
Exhibit 3: A bar chart comparing the number of completed passes and pass success (%) for selected EPL defenders this season (2020/21)



A.3 Midfielders of the Season

İlkay Gündoğan, **Bruno Fernandes** and **Kevin De Bruyne** have been recognised as the best performing midfielders in the EPL (season 2020/21), according to objective, quantitative data analysis.

Exhibit 4: A scatter chart comparing goals scored and assists provided for all EPL midfielders this season (2020/21)



Central Midfield: İlkay Gündoğan - Carteret Rating 285.8 (Manchester City)

Manchester City's **İlkay Gündoğan** is the EPL Player of the Season, with the highest **Carteret Rating** of any player competing in the EPL. **Gündoğan** has scored an impressive 12 goals (season to date), with 10 of those being in the second half of the season - emphasising the clear development in his performance this season. Southampton's **James Ward-Prowse** failed to make the team, with his **Carteret Rating** of **252.4**, down **11%** from his **279.0** peak last year. The objective data analysis suggests that this is due to **Ward-Prowse** not making as many accurate crosses and long ball passes - which is where he excelled last season.

Central Midfield: Bruno Fernandes - Carteret Rating 284.6 (Manchester United)

According to objective, quantitative analysis, Manchester United's **Fernandes** is currently playing at a similar level to **Gündoğan**, achieving the second highest **Carteret Rating** of any player in the EPL Team of the Season. **Fernandes** has scored 17 goals so far this season, which is more than any other EPL midfield player - five more than **Gündoğan**.

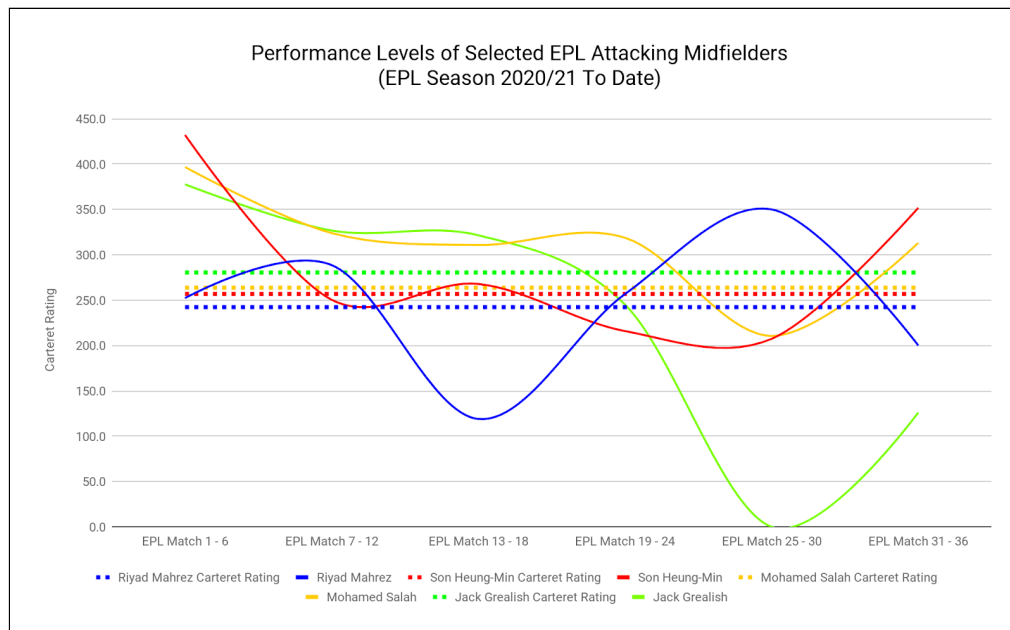
Central Midfield: Kevin De Bruyne - Carteret Rating 256.0 (Manchester City)

There is a **Carteret Rating** delta of just **11%** between Manchester City's **Kevin De Bruyne** and **Fernandes**. **De Bruyne** has played consistently well this season, providing 11 assists so far - more than any other midfielder in the EPL. This emphasises **De Bruyne's** significant contribution to a team.

A.4 Attacking Midfielders of the Season

The quantitative data analysis has determined that **Jack Grealish** and **Mohamed Salah** are this season's best performing EPL attacking midfielders - therefore appearing in the EPL Team of the Season 2020/21.

Exhibit 5: A line graph comparing objective performance levels for selected EPL attacking midfielders this season (2020/21)



Attacking Midfielder: Jack Grealish - **Carteret Rating 280.4** (Aston Villa)

Although **Grealish** has not played a game since sustaining a shin injury in February, his performance levels were still strong enough this season, to make him the best performing attacking midfielder in the EPL Team of the Season 2020/21. However, **Grealish** has committed 38 fouls so far this season, and his gameplay therefore requires more discipline. **Grealish's** closest rival for the left-sided attacking position is Tottenham Hotspur's **Son Heung-Min**, with a **Carteret Rating** of **256.6** - just **9%** lower than **Grealish**. Interestingly, **Heung-Min's** form has declined during the second half of the EPL season, having had an impressive average **Carteret Rating** of **320.5** for the first half of the season.

Attacking Midfielder: Mohamed Salah - **Carteret Rating 263.7** (Liverpool)

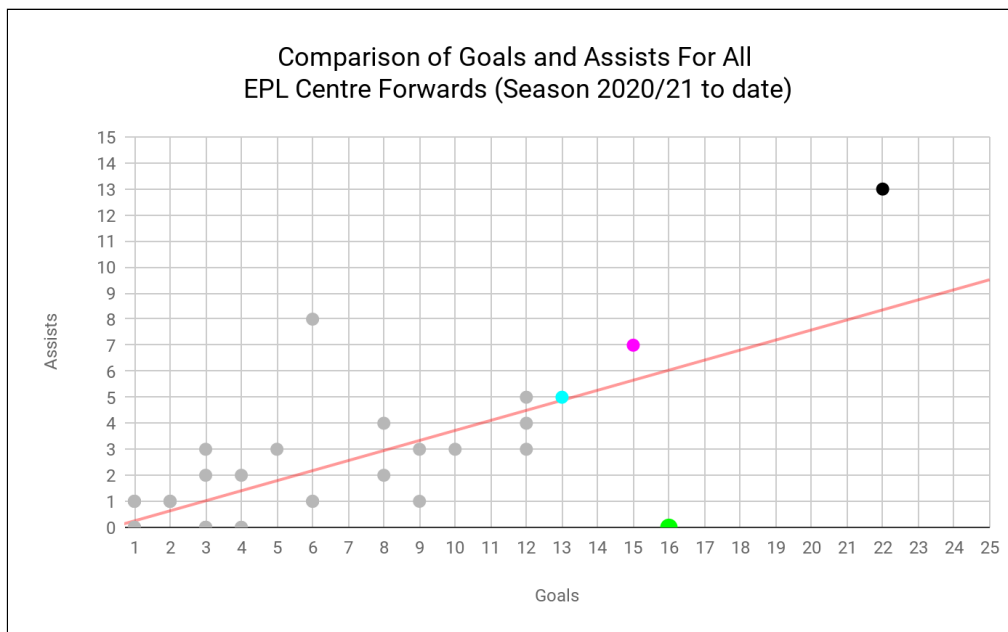
Salah has continued to improve his gameplay this season, with a **2%** rise from last season's **Carteret Rating** (**259.1**). **Salah** is also 2 goals up on his EPL goal scoring tally, in comparison to last season when Liverpool won the Premier League. In-form **Riyad Mahrez** would have made the EPL Team of the Season 2020/21, if his excellent run of form had begun earlier in the season. **Mahrez** had an average **Carteret Rating** of **255.1** over the first half of the season, compared to a significantly higher average **Carteret Rating** of **286.1** over the second half of the season.

A.5 Centre Forward of the Season

Centre Forward: Harry Kane - *Carteret Rating* 283.7 (Tottenham Hotspur)

The data analysis has objectively determined **Harry Kane** as the best centre forward to compete in the EPL this season 2020/21.

Exhibit 6: A scatter chart comparing goals scored and assists provided for all EPL forwards this season (2020/21)



Harry Kane

Dominic Calvert-Lewin

Patrick Bamford

Ollie Watkins

Kane has demonstrated significant improvement (**18%**) in his performance this season - achieving a ***Carteret Rating*** of **239.7** for last season (2019/20). **Kane** has already exceeded last season's 18 goal total, scoring 22 goals so far this season. Everton's **Dominic Calvert-Lewin** missed out on a place in the team, with a ***Carteret Rating*** of **219.3**, a significant **29.4%** lower than **Kane**. **Calvert-Lewin** is yet to provide an assist this season.