

EURO 2020 FANTEAM MD7 DRAFT USING DATA MODEL

The moment of reckoning is here! It's Italy vs England in the battle for glory. Will it be coming home, or will it be going to Rome?! Only 1 match remains as we near the conclusion of the FanTeam Euro2020 tournament, and unfortunately there are no more transfers to be made. Only changes to the line-up and captain can be made, and this article will therefore not focus on an EV-maximised XI due to the nature of variance within a single match. Instead, we will try to explore the captaincy options for MD7.

Due to lack of reliable resources such as [FPL Review](#), and a lack of expected data for international events such as World Cup 22 Qualifiers, Euro 20 Qualifiers, Nations League, etc. from the normally reliable [FBREF](#), I decided to build my own data model for the Euro Fantasy game. There are individuals with tremendous knowledge of the analytical aspect in the FPL community, so if someone wants to build their own data model, I would highly recommend [Corridor of Uncertainty FPL podcast](#) as the starting point. A brief "peek under the hood" has been explored in the first article of this series (<https://www.fanteamfocus.com/strategy/euro-2020-fanteam-md3-draft-using-data-model>).

Before we look at the captaincy options, let's review how the EV-optimised team for MD6 performed:



The MD6 draft had an EV of **54.2 xPts** and it ended up scoring **30.0 Pts**! Backing England heavily did not pay off this time around, with Kane and Sterling returning after Full Time (i.e., in Extra Time), and a lack of certainty regarding the RW position for England meant that Bukayo Saka was missing from the draft. Apart from that, Federico Chiesa returned and Insigne blanked, and Mikkel Damsgaard was benched due to the quadruple-up on the English defence! This kind of variance is to be expected when you have only 4 teams to choose from, and they play each other. Emerson Palmieri is the only defender who registered a cleansheet in MD6, courtesy of an early substitute, which is a very unpredictable element of the game.

Captaincy options for MD7 are rather straightforward, and with good reason. There are 3 of the model's top picks and one slightly left-field pick (no pun intended) which are summarised in order to justify their selection:

1. HARRY KANE (FWD – 0.43 oxG*; 0.13 oxA*)

Harry Kane has the highest oxG of any player in the final. He is on penalties, is generally a volume shooter (good for SoT points) and is playing at home in front of a 60k-odd crowd. He has scored 4 goals in 3 knockout games leading up to the final. Even if he does drop deep into midfield, his assist potential is pretty decent, as is evident by his oxA (7th highest overall). England are the slight favourites to win in 90 minutes (W - 37% and L – 33%), which also affects impact points, and Kane will play for 90 minutes, (unless he suffers an injury) which adds another point to his tally. Need we say more?!

2. RAHEEM STERLING (MID – 0.24 oxG; 0.13 oxA)

Raheem Sterling is nailed-on to start and has the highest oxG of all midfielders. He has been sensational for England in this tournament and is the odds-on favourite for picking up the Golden Boot award. He also has decent oxA, which is the same as Kane (7th overall). England has 40% cleansheet odds, which could boost his score, apart from the fact that he is likely to play the full 90. His impact points potential is the same as Kane. All these factors make Raheem Sterling a very attractive captaincy option for MD7.

3. LORENZO INSIGNE (MID – 0.19 oxG; 0.18 oxA)

If you are planning on backing the home team who is playing away in the form of Italy, Lorenzo Insigne is a pretty decent bet. His oxG is the second best amongst all midfielders, and his oxA is second only to Jadon Sancho amongst all players available for the final. He is on set-pieces and nailed-on to start as well, which makes him a pretty decent option. In the event that the match goes into extra-time, there is a chance that he will complete 90 minutes, and Italy have decent cleansheet odds (~33%) as well. If you are backing Italy to do well, Lorenzo Insigne is a pretty good asset to captain.

4. LUKE SHAW (DEF – 0.14 oxA)

Time to tap into some variance with the final captaincy option. Luke Shaw has continued his exploits down the left wing for Manchester United, in the Euros as well. He is on many set-pieces and is also a general threat from open-play as well. He has the best odds for providing an assist of all defenders (14%), which is the 6th best overall. If England manage to keep a cleansheet (which is a return in itself), it will not come as a surprise if Shaw ends up with a goal contribution as well, like he did against Ukraine! Captaining defenders is always risky, but if you are in need of a points boost, with very limited resources at hand, Luke Shaw is your best bet.

*A note about the term **oxG (odds xG)**: While it may seem to be a conflicting term, odds xG implies the xG calculated by using the odds for a player scoring exactly one goal, two goals, three goals and so on. For example, if a player has 40% probability of scoring exactly 1 goal, 15% of scoring exactly 2 goals, and 3% probability of scoring exactly 3 goals, the odds xG is $(1 \cdot 0.4 + 2 \cdot 0.15 + 3 \cdot 0.03) = 0.79$. A similar logic can be applied for the term oxA (odds xA).

According to the model projections, the top players for MD7 are*:

Player	Country	Pos.	MD7 xPts
Harry Kane	England	FWD	5.47
Raheem Sterling	England	MID	5.04
Lorenzo Insigne	Italy	MID	4.62
Harry Maguire	England	DEF	4.11
Luke Shaw	England	DEF	4.03
Jorginho	Italy	MID	3.95
Ciro Immobile	Italy	FWD	3.88
John Stones	England	DEF	3.77

*Assuming the player starts



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