



Recommendations to improve defensive quality for Brighton & Hove Albion

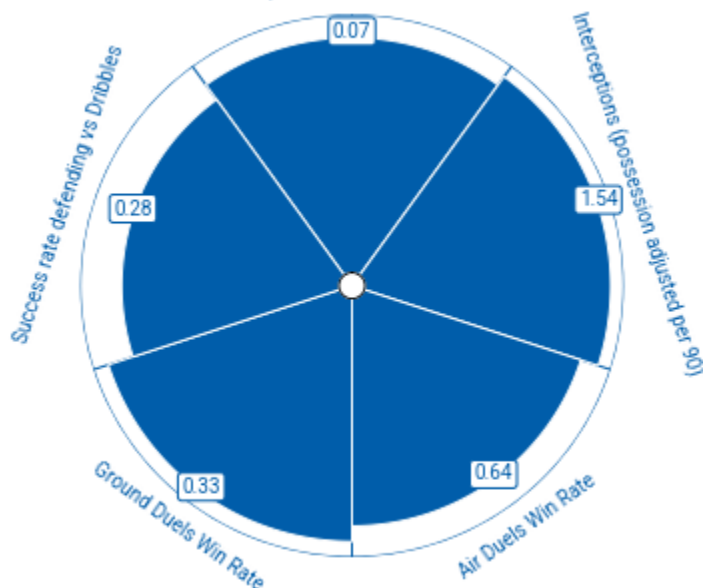
By Yannik Holzer

To make the strengths and weaknesses of our main defensive players visible and more easily interpretable, I created **player radars** for them. Those **radars** include the following metrics:

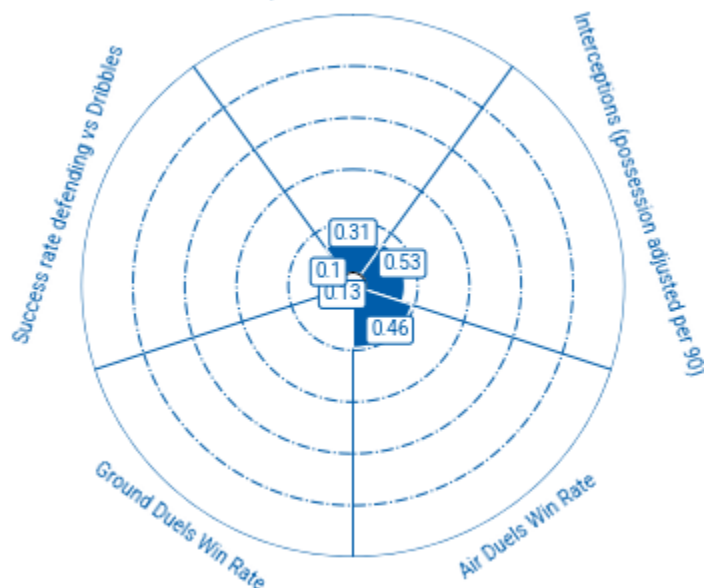
- **Fouls per won duel in own half:** Shots and passes from free kicks pose a noticeably bigger threat than shots and passes in similar positions from open play, penalties of course even more. This metric shows the ability of a player to resolve dangerous situations without conceding fouls, thereby keeping the expected threat of that situation to a minimum.
- **Interceptions:** Shows the ability to intercept passes. Is calculated per 90 minutes played and adjusted for the opponent's possession to account for playing style and quality of the teams involved.
- **Air Duels Win Rate:** The percentage of clearly won air duels, regardless of what happens after the duel. Shows the ability to beat the opponent in the air.
- **Ground Duels Win Rate:** The percentage of clearly won ground duels, where the player gained possession of the ball from the opponent. Shows the ability to tackle the opponent and win the ball.
- **Success Rate Defending vs Dribbles:** The percentage of dribbling attempts where the opponent couldn't move past the player. Shows the ability to not get beaten by a dribble.

The values in these metrics are compared to every defender in the Premier League who played for at least **400 minutes**. The bigger the slice of the **radar**, the better the player compared to the competition. The **radars** for **our players** can be found on the **next page**. For comparison, below are two radars for one of the best (Vertonghen) and one of the worst (Yedlin) defenders of last season.

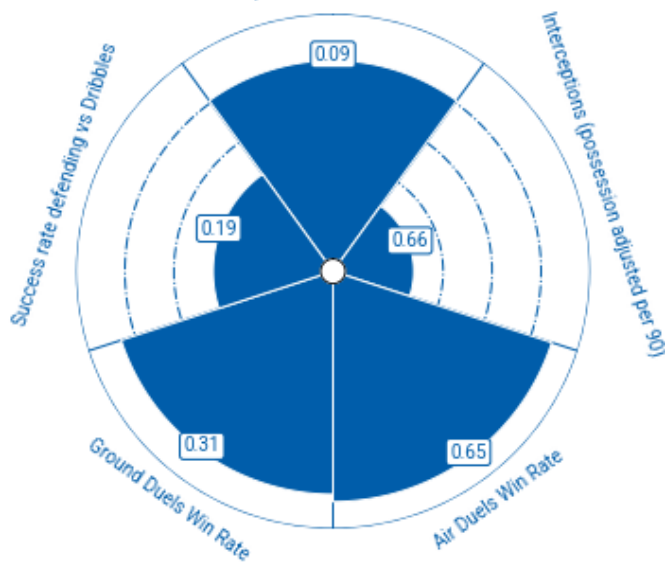
J. Vertonghen (31) - CB - 32M€ - 37.14 90s played - Defensive Stats
Tottenham Hotspur - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



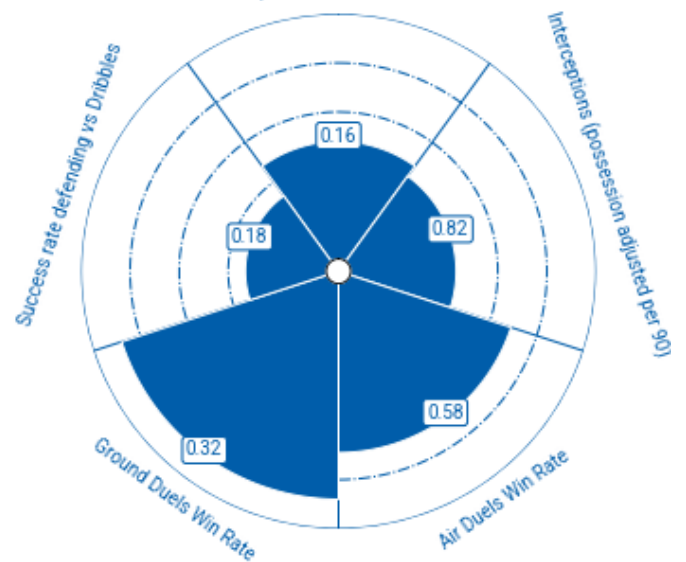
D. Yedlin (25) - RB - 8M€ - 33.08 90s played - Defensive Stats
Newcastle United - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



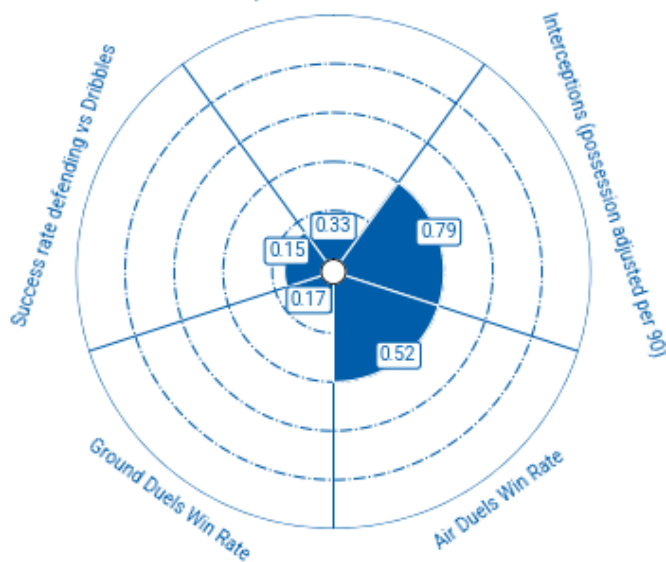
S. Duffy (25) - CB - 12.0M€ - 37.9 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



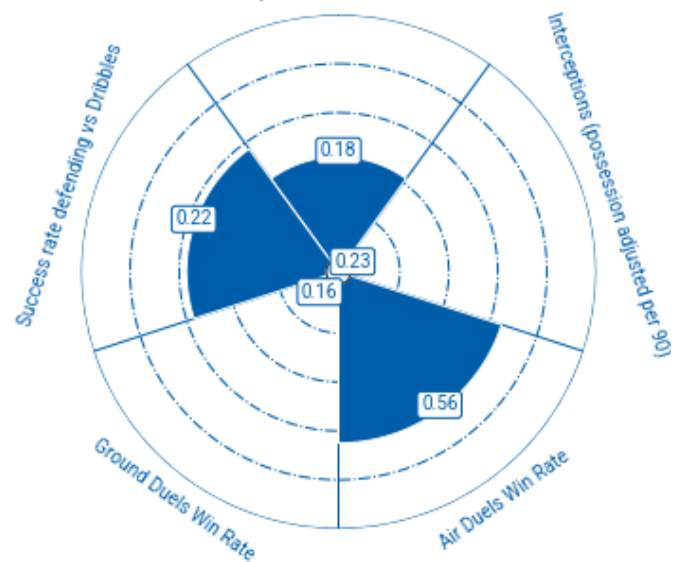
L. Dunk (25) - CB - 10.0M€ - 39.56 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



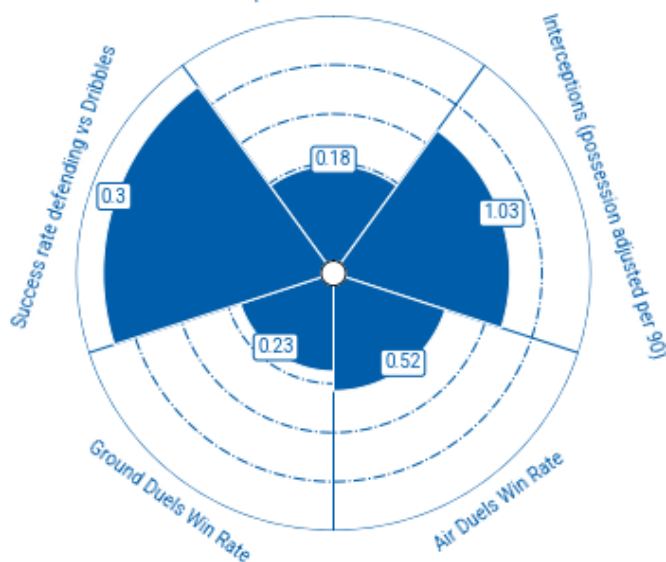
Bruno Saltor (36) - RB - 0.75M€ - 23.27 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



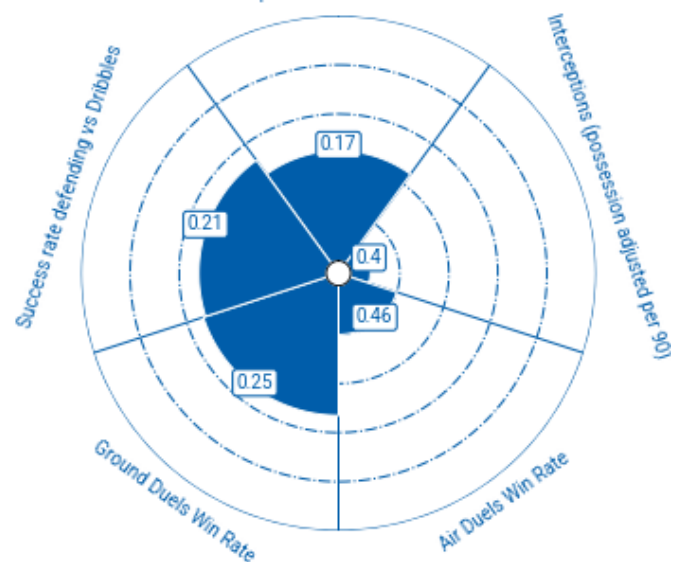
E. Schelotto (28) - RB - 4.5M€ - 15.29 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



G. Bong (29) - LB - 1.5M€ - 25.81 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



M. Suttner (30) - LB - 2.5M€ - 13.66 90s played - Defensive Stats
Brighton & Hove Albion - Premier League | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half





Weaknesses

Metrics

Overall, **interceptions** seem to be our biggest weak point. On average our players are only in the **31st percentile**. For every other metric we sit at **about league average**.

Considering only our **best back four** (Bong – Duffy – Dunk – Schelotto) we're **slightly above average** for every metric except **interceptions**, where we are still in the **34th percentile**.

Positions

While our **center backs** perform slightly above average, it doesn't look as good for our **full backs**. Only our **left back G. Bong** looks **decent**, but **neither** his replacement **M. Suttner** nor our options at **right back** look **adequate**. Especially right back **Bruno Saltor** doesn't seem to be able to perform on Premier League level.

Replacements

To find a replacement I looked at the top 10 players regarding interceptions in the Bundesliga from last season. Of those 10, I would recommend two players:

LB - M. Halstenberg

RB Leipzig's left back **Marcel Halstenberg** missed the second half of last season due to a **torn ACL** but **should be back in time** for the start of next season. He seems like a bit high of a target, but if they have doubts whether he can come back to full strength he could be available for **8M€**. Before his injury he was the **4th best** defender regarding **interceptions** and additionally performed **well in the air** and regarding **fouls per won duel**. He also gained some experience in the **Champions League** and debuted for the **German national team** last November.

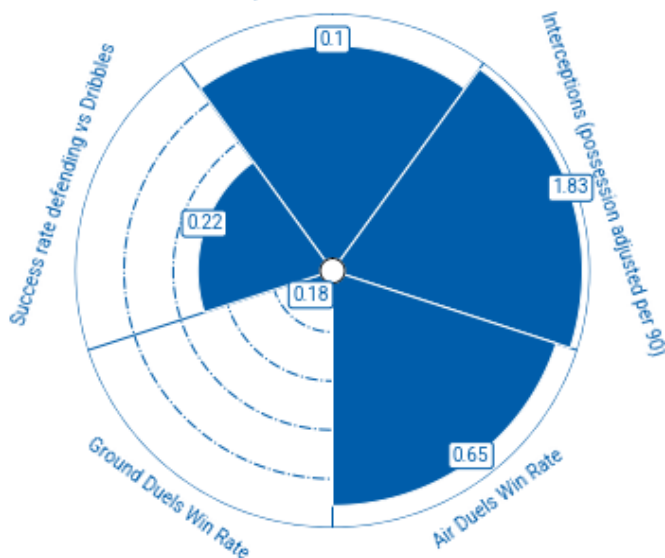
RB - R. Oxford

18 year old **Reece Oxford** of **West Ham United** spent the last season on loan at **Gladbach**. Although possibly skewed by the **few minutes** he played, he has great numbers concerning **interceptions**, **fouls per won duel** and **success rate against dribbles**. He is valued at about **5M€** and currently misses experience at the top level, but if he is available for cheap he could be worth a punt.

Conclusion

A back four of **Halstenberg – Dunk – Duffy – Oxford** would provide a well **rounded defensive force** with the full backs and the center back on their respective side **cancelling out each others weaknesses**.

M. Halstenberg (25) - LB - 8.0M€ - 13.51 90s played - Defensive Stats
RB Leipzig - Bundesliga | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half



R. Oxford (18) - RB - 5.0M€ - 5.38 90s played - Defensive Stats
Borussia M'gladbach - Bundesliga | Season 2017-18
Fouls per won Duel in own Half

