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## Chelsea

12:25 BST 21 October

### Maresca on Fernandez's fitness, red cards and Ajax

**Nat Hayward**

BBC Sport journalist

Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca has been speaking to the media before Wednesday's Champions League game against Ajax at Stamford Bridge (20:00 BST).

Here are the key lines from his news conference:

- Maresca began by confirming Enzo Fernandez trained yesterday and is in contention to play on Wednesday: "We have one more session this afternoon and we will decide with him tomorrow. It is not something we have to be worried about. It's to try and protect Enzo."
- He also provided an update on Liam Delap's fitness: "Liam is very close. He is not working with us yet. He is still out. Hopefully in the next days he can start training with us."
- On adapting without multiple injured players: "It's difficult, especially because most of the injuries we had were one or two days before the game. We are trying to adapt. It's complicated because sometimes you

plan for some players to play one week, but then you need that player because of another injury."

- On his side's run of red cards: "For sure, it's something we can do better. Some of the red cards, we can avoid that. Personally, I'm not that kind of manager to punish players. In my view, I don't think it is the right way to do things. I prefer to help them understand and then do the right things. It depends. They are different kinds of red cards."
- Asked about his comments around a year ago asking for more leadership from captain Reece James, Maresca said: "It's much better compared to one year ago. I think Reece has improved a lot. We are very happy with Reece."
- On 19-year-old defender Josh Acheampong: "We are very happy with Josh since last season. When you are 18, 19 there are many thing you can do better. Josh is hard worker, humble for sure and wants to learn. He can be a better player in the future."
- On Ajax, who have lost their opening two Champions League fixtures: "They always try to play their football. For sure, it will be a difficult game. They are a club that have won this competition in the past. They want to prove to everyone that they can come here and beat us. We are going to try and do exactly the same."

**Follow all of Tuesday's European news conferences and the rest of the day's football news**

**Listen to live commentary of Chelsea v Ajax from 20:00 on Wednesday on BBC Sounds**

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09:59 BST 21 October

## Acheampong 'the perfect modern defender'

**Will Faulks**

Fan writer

### FAN'S VOICE



GETTY IMAGES

It is a great day to talk about Josh Acheampong.

The defender has been highly rated at Chelsea for years, but his appearances so far have largely been limited to the youth teams and to the Conference League last season, where he made his senior breakthrough.

But a start, and the opening goal against **Nottingham Forest** at the weekend have brought him to the attention of a broader audience, and his renown is only going to grow if he continues to perform at such a high level.

He is a perfect modern defender - technical, athletic, versatile and intelligent. The Chelsea academy has a well-earned reputation for producing quality players, but it is in defence that they excel in particular.

Why were the Blues not keen to replace (academy product) Levi Colwill with (academy product) Marc Guehi when the former picked up an injury in the summer?

Largely because they had (academy product) Acheampong waiting in the wings. On Saturday, he put in a great showing alongside (academy product) Trevoh Chalobah at the back.

Questioned in the past about when the young defender will get more first-team chances, Enzo Maresca has pointed out Acheampong is already more than just an emergency option. He played in league games last year when senior defenders were available, and it was the same story on Saturday. He started while Tosin Adarabioyo sat on the bench.

The question now is what Acheampong needs to do to become truly first choice for Maresca. Colwill will likely miss the whole season, Benoit Badiashile is out injured again and Wesley Fofana's status is always in question.

The 19-year-old has a superb chance over the next few weeks to continue proving he should be starting even when everyone around him is fit.

On the evidence of what we have seen in his young career so far, we back him to take it.

*Find more from Will Faulks at [Chelsea News](#)*

*Do you agree with Will on Acheampong's future?*

*How can he establish himself as first choice at Stamford Bridge?*

**Tell us here**

# HAVE YOUR SAY



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09:59 BST 21 October

## Maresca building 'escape velocity'

**Nizaar Kinsella**

Chelsea reporter at Stamford Bridge



GETTY IMAGES

Chelsea are trying to build enough 'escape velocity' to see off problems related to injury, form, and a high workload caused by the Club World Cup in the summer.

Escape velocity, in space exploration and astronomy, is the momentum needed to propel an object away from a gravitational centre - like a planet.

In this case, those aforementioned problems were apparent despite Chelsea's 3-0 win at **Nottingham Forest** on Saturday – an even match that the Blues won through superior finishing rather than brilliant all-round play.

Dutch giants Ajax, in their current guise, are very beatable, and a win would be Chelsea's fourth in a row across all competitions, putting them in a strong position in the Champions League.

That would nicely tee up a busy period of six games in 18 days from the end of October to the mid-November international break.

After that, Maresca would hope the likes of Cole Palmer and Liam Delap return from injury, with Benoit Badiashile also out until December and Levi Colwill out for most of the season after knee surgery.

Leading into Maresca's press conference on Tuesday, key themes might be:

- Enzo Fernandez's fitness,
- The importance of Reece James,
- The emergency of Josh Acheampong,

- And Jorrel Hato facing his former club.

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13:36 BST 20 October

## Discipline a historical issue for Chelsea

**Nizaar Kinsella**  
Chelsea reporter



Historically, Chelsea's disciplinary problems have been poor under the current ownership. They break records for yellow cards and they are bottom of the combined Fair Play table since 2022-23.

In 2022-23, Chelsea accumulated 86 points in the Fair Play table (the sixth most in the Premier League) and in 2023-24 they had 117 under former manager Mauricio Pochettino, including a Premier League record 105 yellow cards.

That was followed by a 106-point season under Enzo Maresca to finish second-bottom in the table.

A total of 301 yellow cards is the most in the Premier League over three years.

Meanwhile, 12 red cards place Chelsea second behind **Wolves** (13) over the same period.

Under Maresca, Chelsea are a team that look to control games through possession and clever pressing, but it is notable to break down what the Blues have received bookings for since 2022-23:

- Tactical fouls: 89 (highest in the Premier League)
- Reckless offences: 89 (second, behind **Crystal Palace**)
- Dissent/arguments: 67 (highest)
- Time-wasting: 38 (second, behind **Aston Villa**)
- Diving: Seven (highest)
- Excessive celebration: Four

A total of 113 of their 301 yellow cards have come in the final 15 minutes of matches.

In that time, Chelsea have had 15 cards for dissent (fourth most), 10 for arguments (joint third most) and two for simulation (joint most).

The trend of yellow cards - 2.8 per game under Pochettino and 2.6 under Maresca - highlights that it could be more than a tactical issue and may be linked to how a youthful squad built under Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital handle their emotions.

The average age of the Chelsea squad is just over 24 and, on Saturday, Maresca named the youngest XI in the Premier League so far this season.

The question now is whether the Italian can resolve the issue.

His low-hanging fruit would be to ensure his players get fewer bookings for dissent and poor behaviour on the pitch.

It may take Chelsea simply becoming a better team to avoid receiving bookings for reckless offences and tactical fouls, while the squad may naturally mature over time as they build their experience together.

**Read more on whether Chelsea have a discipline problem**

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09:48 BST 20 October

## Nottingham Forest 0-3 Chelsea - the fans' verdict

# YOUR OPINIONS



09:01

**MATCH OF THE DAY HIGHLIGHTS**

 **Premier League**

We asked for your thoughts after Saturday's Premier League game between **Nottingham Forest** and Chelsea.

Here are some of your comments:

**Hecksy:** We look a better team when playing on the front foot, and have so many attacking players, yet still we play with the handbrake on. I understand you can't be gung-ho for 90 minutes, but we just keep on gifting chances when doing this, especially when playing out from the back. Lucky not to be punished in the first half. Still, three points and a clean sheet.

**James:** Good performance against a struggling side. However, what can't be overlooked is the lack of discipline. While on this occasion it wasn't costly, that is not always going to be the case. Thought Reece James was excellent - hopefully he can stay fit and get a good run of games.

**Jack:** We're fast becoming Second Half FC. It is great that Enzo Maresca is able to make tactical changes at half-time and tweak things, but frustrating that the first halves are quite often really shaky. Would be nice to play 90 consistent minutes. A boy can dream.

**Martin:** Nice to get the three points but still not very convincing. Any other team could have beaten us in the first half. They definitely need to get this discipline sorted. We can't afford any more red cards - it will cost us more games.

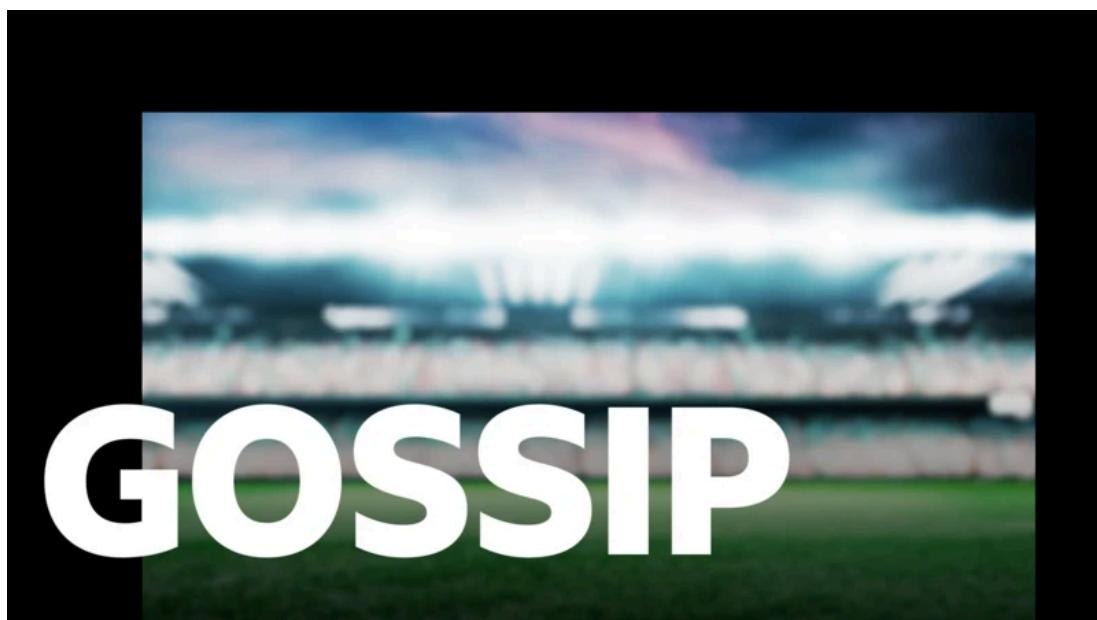
**Nick:** Happy with the result, but if we give better teams than Forest that many chances we will come unstuck - and the lack of discipline is becoming a real issue.

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06:57 BST 20 October

## Gossip: Chelsea prepared to splash the cash on Omorodion



Chelsea are ready to offer more than 100m euros (£87m) to sign 21-year-old Spain striker Samuel Omorodion from Porto next summer. ([Fichajes - in Spanish](#))

Meanwhile, the Blues are in talks to appoint former [Liverpool](#) director of scouting and recruitment Dave Fallows, who helped secure deals for Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane at Anfield. ([Sun](#))

**Want more transfer news? Read Monday's full gossip column**

**Follow the gossip column on BBC Sport**

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10:30 BST 19 October

## Watch Premier League highlights and analysis



Pundits Alan Shearer and Micah Richards join host Gabby Logan to bring you the action and talking points from Saturday's Premier League fixtures.

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- [Manchester City 2-0 Everton](#)
- [Crystal Palace 3-3 Bournemouth](#)
- [Fulham 0-1 Arsenal](#)

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20:55 BST 18 October

**Do Chelsea have a disciplinary problem?**

Chelsea · 142

19:56 BST 18 October

## Analysis: Young talent but poor discipline

**Nizaar Kinsella**

Chelsea reporter



GETTY IMAGES

When Gusto was sent off in the 87th minute, it had no bearing on the result but highlighted Chelsea's disciplinary issues.

That red card was Chelsea's fourth in six matches.

Maresca was also banned for celebrating Estevao Willian's late winner against Liverpool before the international break, resulting in a one-match ban.

It was Chelsea's third red card in the Premier League this season - more than any other club.

This is only the third time Chelsea have had three players sent off after eight matches, having done so in the 2001-02 and 2017-18 seasons.

Despite Maresca playing it down, Chelsea's discipline problem can be costly after causing defeat against Manchester United and Brighton, but not on this occasion.

Maresca must address this or risk it becoming a recurring issue. The squad, despite their talent, lack experience, and it was the Premier League's youngest XI of the season on Saturday.

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15:20 BST 18 October

## Nottingham Forest 0-3 Chelsea: What Maresca and Pedro said



**Enzo Maresca spoke to BBC Match of the Day after Chelsea's victory against Nottingham Forest:** "It's not good [the touchline ban], I don't like, I prefer to be in the dugout. It was a good game, first half we struggled a bit, second half was much better and we controlled the game better.

"We made some mistakes where we gave them a boost in the first half, it's better if we avoid that. Some of my changes [at half-time] were already planned. We know Romeo Lavia can't play a full 90 minutes.

"This season suddenly we have many injuries. One of the main things is to rotate players and manage them."

**On goalscorer Josh Acheampong:** "He's a big name. He scored, but also he played very good. With personality. Since last season we have trusted Josh. He just has to work hard and then the future will be on his side."

**On Ange Postecoglou's sacking:** "They've just told me. Unfortunately it's our job. It's a business where you need to win games and if you don't win games the consequence is always the same."

**Goalscorer Pedro Neto spoke to TNT Sports after Saturday's victory:** "I thought in the beginning of the game we started well, but after that it was a little bit difficult for us. As always, I like to step up in these kinds of moments."

"After the international break the last month, we didn't start well. We didn't win the three games that we had."

"We needed to change some things and be more aggressive and in the second half we kept more of the ball score three goals, and we are really happy."

### Did you know?

- Chelsea are the first team to have two teenagers score in the Premier League this season (Estevao and Acheampong), while it's Chelsea's first time having two teenagers score in the same season since 1998-99 (Mikael Forssell and Celestine Babayaro).
- Reece James made his 200th appearance for Chelsea in all competitions, both scoring and assisting in the same game for the first time since October 2022 against Milan in the UEFA Champions League.

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14:24 BST 18 October

## Nottingham Forest 0-3 Chelsea - send us your thoughts

### HAVE YOUR SAY



Whether you were at the game or following from elsewhere, we want to know what you learned.

[Have your say on Forest's performance](#)

[What did you make of Chelsea's display?](#)

*Come back on Monday for a selection of your replies*

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11:43 BST 18 October

## Nottingham Forest v Chelsea: Team news

**BBC SPORT**


## NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Under-fire Ange Postecoglou makes five changes as he searches for his first win as Nottingham Forest boss.

Taiwo Awoniyi makes his first appearance since being put in an induced coma in May, following urgent abdominal surgery after a collision with the post during last season's game with Leicester.

Murillo, Oleksandr Zinchenko, Douglas Luiz, and Ibrahim Sangare return from the 2-0 defeat at Newcastle while striker Chris Wood is on the bench having picked up a minor knee issue with New Zealand.

**Nottingham Forest XI:** Sels, Milenkovic, Murillo, Morato, Williams, Douglas Luiz, Sangare, Anderson, Zinchenko, Gibbs-White, Awoniyi.

Substitutes: John, Hudson-Odoi, Wood, Ndoye, Domínguez, I. Jesus, Yates, Jair Cunha, Savona.

Trevoh Chalobah, Andrey Santos and Romeo Lavia come in for Chelsea at the City Ground.

Defender Chalobah returns after suspension while Lavia makes his first start of the season with Santo making just his second.

Benoit Badiashile, Enzo Fernandez and Moises Caicedo drop out, although Caicedo is the only one to make the bench.

**Chelsea XI:** Sanchez, James, Acheampong, Chalobah, Cucurella, Gusto, Lavia, Neto, Andrey Santos, Garnacho, Joao Pedro.

Substitutes: Jorgensen, Tosin, Hato, Caicedo, Gittens, George, Guiu, Estevao, Buonanotte.



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11:29 BST 18 October

**Follow Saturday's Premier League games live**



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BBC SPORT

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There are seven games in the Premier League on Saturday and BBC Sport will bring you every moment.

- Nottingham Forest v Chelsea (12:30)
- Brighton v Newcastle
- Burnley v Leeds United
- Crystal Palace v Bournemouth
- Man City v Everton - [listen on BBC Radio 5 Live](#)
- Sunderland v Wolves - [listen on BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra](#)
- Fulham v Arsenal (17:30) - [listen on BBC Radio 5 Live](#)

*Kick-off times 15:00 BST unless stated*

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*You can also listen to today's 5 Live Premier League commentaries on most smart speakers. Just say "ask BBC Sounds to play Fulham v Arsenal", for instance.*

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19:43 BST 17 October

## Nottingham Forest v Chelsea: Key stats and talking points

**Matthew Hobbs**  
BBC Sport journalist

Nottingham Forest resume Premier League proceedings aiming for a first win at the eighth attempt under Ange Postecoglou against a Chelsea side who defeated champions Liverpool last time out.

BBC Sport examines some of the key themes ahead of Saturday's lunchtime clash at the City Ground.

### Postecoglou's poor start

Five defeats, two draws and 15 goals conceded is not the start Ange Postecoglou may have envisaged when replacing Nuno Espírito Santo as Nottingham Forest boss.

The Australian has barely been in the job a month but is already facing question marks over his future, with reports last weekend suggesting former **Everton** manager Sean Dyche is waiting in the wings should Forest's poor form continue.

Postecoglou has now lost 30 of his past 49 Premier League games with former club **Tottenham** and Forest, a recent record that may not help dissuade his detractors.

However, Forest's problems, particularly in defence, predate Postecoglou's arrival: they haven't kept a clean sheet in any of their past 15 Premier League games, their joint-longest run since returning to the competition in 2022.

And the task for Forest's manager does not get any easier. Next up, its Chelsea and Postecoglou has lost all four Premier League meetings against the Blues.

### Chelsea aim to back up Liverpool win

Chelsea counterpart Enzo Maresca had been under some pressure following back to back defeats to **Manchester United** and Bayern Munich, although a 2-1 victory against Liverpool ahead of the international break has assuaged some of the unease at Stamford Bridge.

Willian Estevao's stoppage-time goal knocked Liverpool off top spot in the Premier League and he is one of several key players whom Maresca will rely on as injuries continue to take their toll on Chelsea's squad.

Maresca could be missing up to nine players for the trip to the City Ground, including Cole Palmer, who has been ruled out for another six weeks due to an ongoing groin injury.

In the absence of other star names, Chelsea's key performer so far this season has undoubtedly been Moises Caicedo.

The combative Ecuador international has been one of the most effective midfielders in the Premier League this season, making more tackles and more interceptions than any player so far.

#### Marvellous Moises

His rank among PL midfielders this season

Metric	Tally	Rank
Interceptions	18	1st
Tackles	28	1st
Blocks	5	=2nd
Recoveries	38	4th
Duels won	46	4th
Possession won	38	4th

Source: Opta

BBC

Moises Caicedo has been in impressive form this season for Chelsea

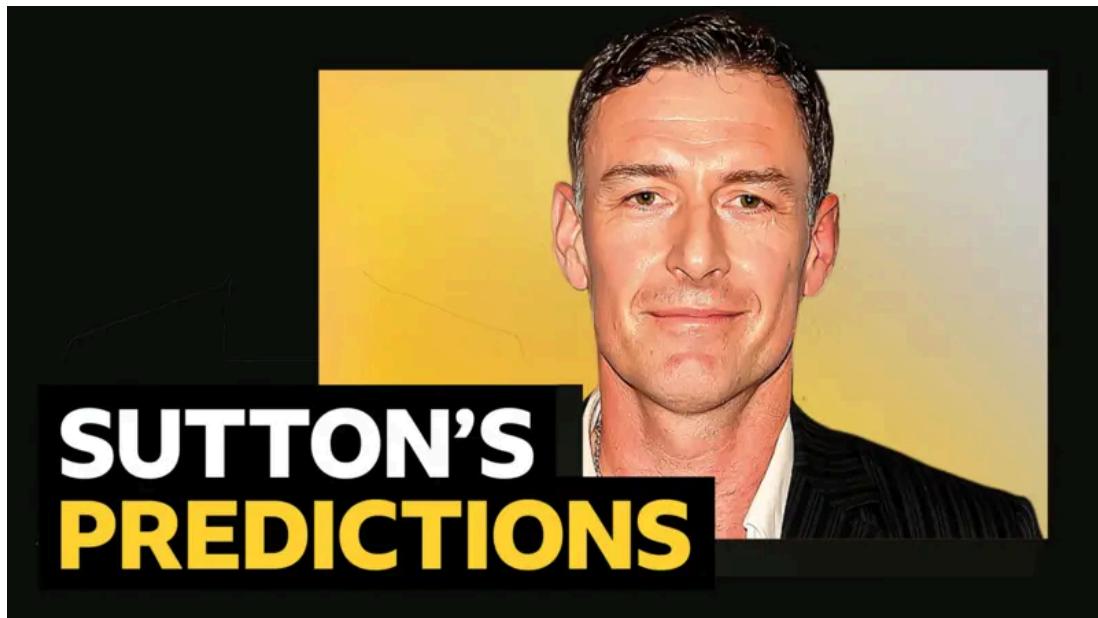
On Saturday he will face another in-form midfielder in the guise of Forest's Elliot Anderson, who again impressed on international duty with England in the World Cup qualifying win against Latvia on Tuesday night.

The 22-year-old has won back possession a league-high 55 times this season and his battle with Caicedo could go a long way to deciding the outcome of a crucial match for Forest's manager.

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19:42 BST 17 October

## Sutton's predictions: Nottingham Forest v Chelsea



The treatment that Ange Postecoglou is getting from Nottingham Forest fans is just ridiculous.

It saddens me, actually, that they are calling for him to be sacked after just seven games - and I don't think it's fair at all.

I covered Forest's defeat at Newcastle before the international break. That was the result I expected, and Newcastle thoroughly deserved to win too, but it still showed all this talk of how Ange can only play one way is wrong, because Forest were not open at all at St James' Park - they tried to contain Newcastle and played on the counter.

The problem they had was that they could not get up the pitch, but if you were a Forest fan watching that game then you would be thinking that Ange did try and play with a bit of balance.

Now they are at home, the onus will be on them to go forward more against Chelsea, whose manager Enzo Maresca has also come under pressure this season.

Chelsea's late victory over Liverpool last time out was important for Maresca after back-to-back league defeats.

In many ways I hope Forest win, to take the heat off Postecoglou a little, but I don't see it happening.

**Sutton's prediction: 1-2**

[Read the full predictions and have your say here](#)

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14:36 BST 18 October

## Chelsea beat Forest before Postecoglou sacked

Premier League · 669

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15:51 BST 17 October

## The unbreakable Caicedo

**Nizaar Kinsella**  
Chelsea reporter



GETTY IMAGES

A recent report from footballers' union Fifpro revealed that Moises Caicedo faces an "unequal workload" compared to other footballers.

The report detailed how Caicedo travelled almost 25,000km (15,500 miles) to play four matches in 14 days for club and country in October 2024.

It read: "In 14 days, Caicedo played a total of 360 minutes across two continents and three countries, with an average recovery time of 110.8 hours, while flying more than half the length of the equator." It also said Caicedo "made 27 trips across borders and was in transit for 175.6 hours" last season.

Chelsea's players had only 20 days off this summer (eight fewer than recommended) and 13 days of pre-season (15 fewer than recommended), because of their Club World Cup-winning campaign, which added seven matches in the US.

Asked about Caicedo after the win over **Liverpool**, assistant manager Willy Caballero said: "He has played a lot of games with the Club World Cup and with the national team, so we need to manage him sometimes."

Caicedo has since received his first break from international duty since joining Chelsea. Sources close to him described him as "exhausted" in recent weeks.

Still, Caicedo takes his international commitments seriously, having helped Ecuador finish second in the South American qualifying group, ahead of Brazil, to qualify for the 2026 World Cup.

Caicedo, the youngest of 10 siblings, grew up in poverty in Ecuador but has lifted himself and his family out of it through football, becoming a footballing icon back home. In a recent interview in Ecuador, one commentator described Caicedo as "our [Michael] Jordan."

Having focused entirely on football until recently, Caicedo is now earning from sponsorships, signing deals worth millions with nine brands over the past year, including Ecuadorian bank Banco Guayaquil and a Chinese internet provider.

A Mini Moi children's cartoon is also in development to share his story with Latin American audiences.

**Read more about how pivotal for Chelsea Caicedo is here**

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12:31 BST 17 October

## Why has Palmer been unable to get over his injury?

**Nizaar Kinsella**  
Chelsea reporter



It is no secret that Cole Palmer is one of Chelsea's star players, so any prolonged absence is a major blow.

The 23-year-old was involved in 39 Premier League goals in 2024 (26 goals and 13 assists), breaking Chelsea's club record for a single calendar year.

Last season, Palmer starred in the Conference League and Club World Cup finals, delivering two goals and three assists across both matches.

Medical staff have since dealt with Palmer's painful recurring groin injury, trying unsuccessfully to manage him through the season so far.

Palmer withdrew from the warm-up minutes before facing **West Ham** in August, pulled out of England international duty in September, and came off after 21 minutes in the defeat at **Manchester United**.

That game at Old Trafford proved to be the final straw, as Chelsea stopped trying to manage Palmer through the season and sought to resolve his injury once and for all.

The current stance from Maresca and the club is that surgery will not be needed, but it remains to be seen whether Palmer can fully overcome the injury after this latest setback within the new time frame.

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11:06 BST 17 October

## I was wrong, Palmer out for six more weeks - Maresca

Chelsea

10:45 BST 17 October

## Maresca on Palmer, 'normal reaction' against Liverpool and set pieces

**Nicola Pearson**

BBC Sport journalist

Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca has been speaking to the media before Saturday's Premier League game against **Nottingham Forest** at the City Ground (kick-off 12:30 BST).

Here are the key lines from his news conference:

- Maresca admitted that he "was wrong" about Cole Palmer returning after the international break and confirmed the forward "needs to be out for six more weeks" so they can "protect" him, but he does not need surgery.
- On if he is confident the extra rest will help: "Yes, but the medical staff are not magicians. You need six weeks and we hope six weeks will be enough. A problem we need to see step-by-step, week-by-week."
- He said it is "difficult to replace Cole" as he is "one of the best players in the Premier League" and is "unique", adding: "With what we have it depends on the gameplan. Against **Liverpool** it was [Malo] Gusto. Against Benfica it was Enzo [Fernandez]. We have to find another player with different qualities because we don't have a player like Cole."
- The Blues boss also confirmed that Reece James is fit but Benoit Badiashile "is out until December with a muscular problem". Maresca said they will have to see if Moises Caicedo, Fernandez and Pedro Neto can train today, otherwise "they will be out tomorrow".
- On his celebration against Liverpool that led to a sending off: "It was a big moment for many reasons. Firstly, it is because, since I joined club, we have never won a game at home in the last minute. The other reason was we were playing, in this moment, the champions of

England. It was an important moment for sure. For me personally, it was a normal reaction and that is all."

- He added: "It was a nice moment. Last season I was banned for one game because of accumulation of yellows. My last yellow card was **Fulham** away when we won in the last minute. It is part of the job. But I think it was very nice for everyone - fans, stadium - and it was just a reaction."
- Maresca said that they have "changed nothing" between last season and this season to improve their set pieces, but "between scoring and conceding, we are doing quite well".
- On Forest conceding a lot of goals after the 70th minute and if that impacts his plans for substitutions: "When we analyse a team we try and consider everything. We have watched all the games with Ange [Postecoglou] in charge, so making changes, you sometimes plan but also it depends on the game. With the amount of games now we need to think of changes not only during, but also the starting XI."

**Follow all of Friday's Premier League news conferences and the rest of the day's football news**

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08:04 BST 17 October

## Maresca in position of strength

**Nizaar Kinsella**

Chelsea reporter at Cobham Training Centre



Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca will speak at his news conference this morning from an increased position of strength.

The last time we saw the Italian, he was sprinting nearly 50 yards to celebrate Estevao Willian's last-minute winner at home against [Liverpool](#) before the international break.

Now, he will have caught his breath, both metaphorically and physically, and the two-week break will have allowed him to reset.

Meanwhile, tiring players Joao Pedro, Moises Caicedo, and Reece James have received full rests from their national teams, while Marc Cucurella and Enzo Fernandez also missed matches.

There is also hope that injured players like Tosin Adarabioyo and Wesley Fofana will return to face an under-fire [Nottingham Forest](#) boss Ange Postecoglou on Saturday.

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10:41 BST 16 October

## Nine Premier League players on Golden Boy shortlist



The 25-player shortlist for the Golden Boy award was revealed on Wednesday, with nine players from the Premier League selected.

The award, created by Italian newspaper Tuttosport, is given to the best under-21 footballer each year, with Barcelona forward Lamine Yamal last year's winner.

For a player to be considered for selection in 2025, they must have been born on or after 1 January 2005 and belong to a squad in one of Uefa's top 25 leagues.

**Arsenal's** Myles Lewis-Skelly and Ethan Nwaneri have both been selected after their breakthrough seasons in 2024-25.

Lewis-Skelly played 40 times across all competitions and also made his England senior debut, while Nwaneri appeared 37 times and scored nine goals.

**Chelsea** are represented twice, with summer arrivals Estevao, who scored his first goal for the club with a dramatic late winner against **Liverpool** before the international break, and defender Jorrel Hato making the shortlist.

**Tottenham Hotspur** also feature, with midfielders Lucas Bergvall and Archie Gray being chosen.

**Manchester United** defender Leny Yoro, **Manchester City** full-back Nico O'Reilly and **Liverpool** centre half Giovanni Leoni - a wildcard choice - have also been selected.

An international jury of 50 journalists will decide the winner, which will be revealed at a news conference in November.

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09:37 BST 16 October

## Chelsea's 'desperately needed' reset

**Nizaar Kinsella**  
Chelsea reporter



GETTY IMAGES

Chelsea may have had back-to-back wins over Benfica and [Liverpool](#), but the international break was a reset the club desperately needed.

The Blues had eight injured players before the 2-1 win at Stamford Bridge against the Reds a fortnight ago, with others beginning to tire or playing through knocks.

Moises Caicedo, Joao Pedro, and Reece James were all allowed to bypass international duty through tiredness. Marc Cucurella and Enzo Fernandez missed matches despite being called up.

Tosin Adarabioyo and Wesley Fofana are expected to return from injury, while Cole Palmer is back in November.

Fernandez withdrew from international duty due to 'inflammation of the knee', according to the Argentine FA.

However, it is understood that the midfielder had always planned to miss the friendly match with Puerto Rico this week and had planned to see family during his leave.

Of course, Fernandez has played a lot this season and featured in the Club World Cup with Chelsea in the summer, so it was more load management than any specific injury.

It means Fernandez will likely be capable of facing [Nottingham Forest](#) on Saturday.

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09:06 BST 16 October

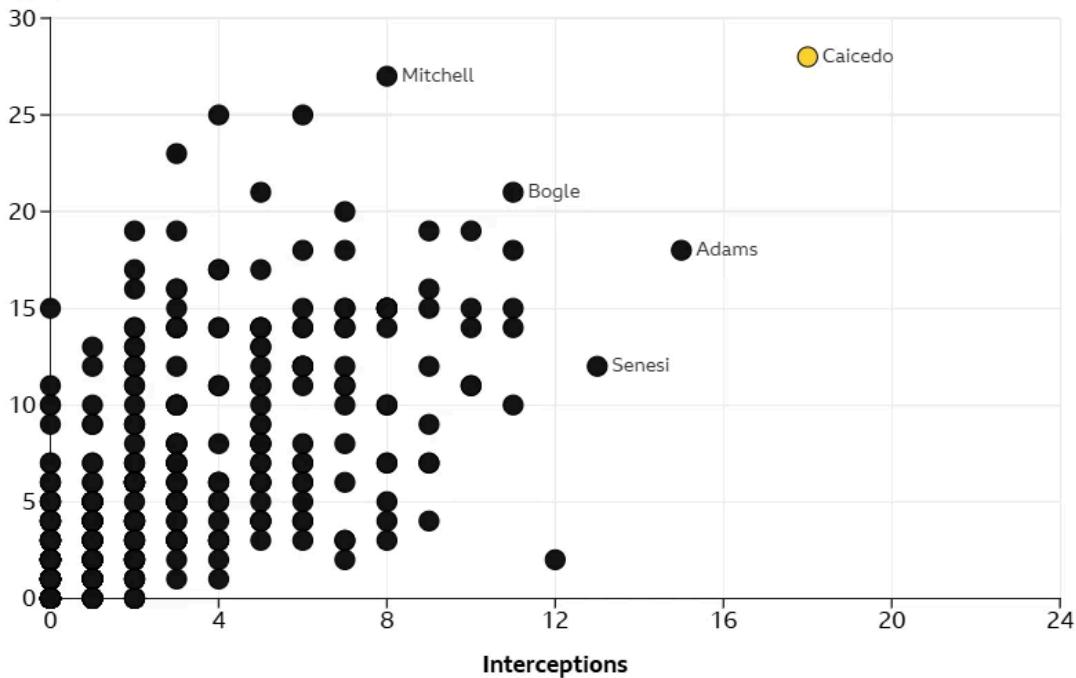
# Is Caicedo the best midfielder in the Premier League?

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Chelsea reporter

## Caicedo has made the most tackles and interceptions in the league

Premier League this season

Tackles



Source: Opta • Hover over dots for player info

**BBC**

The data clearly shows that Moises Caicedo belongs in the debate over the league's top midfielders.

No midfielder in Europe's top five leagues has made more tackles (28) or interceptions (18) this season than Caicedo.

The 28 tackles represent 23% of Chelsea's overall tackles, the second-highest ratio by a player in a season which data analysts Opta have on record since 2006-07.

Only Burnley's Josh Cullen has recorded more defensive blocks among midfielders.

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Since last season, Caicedo has made more tackles (142) than any other player without being sent off or receiving a suspension for yellow card accumulation, showcasing his precise tackling.

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He makes more tackles and wins a higher percentage of duels (59%) than Arsenal's Declan Rice and Liverpool's Ryan Gravenberch, both often considered among the league's best midfielders.

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## Rice offers more going forward but Caicedo impresses most defensively

Premier League since start of last season

	Caicedo	Gravenberch	Rice
Games	45	43	42
Goals	4	2	5
Assists	2	5	9
per 90 minutes			
Passing accuracy	90.3%	89.3%	90.2%
Passes into the box	1.4	1.8	6.7
Tackles	3.2	1.9	1.6
Interceptions	1.5	1.7	0.8
Duel success	59.4%	57.6%	50.4%

Source: Opta

BBC

It is unclear whether Caicedo's attacking output will continue at this level. His three goals this season, from an expected goals (xG) of 0.5, include two from outside the box, tying Bournemouth's Antoine Semenyo for the league's highest total.

Since the beginning of last season, Rice has contributed the most offensively among midfielders, with more goals, assists and passes into the box, aided by his set-piece duties for Arsenal.

Caicedo dominates defensively, while Gravenberch balances defensive and attacking roles. Other top midfielders include former Ballon d'Or winner Rodri, currently sidelined by injury at Manchester City, and Newcastle's Sandro Tonali and Bruno Guimaraes.

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