

Premier League 2015/2016

"Leicester City: The club was a 5000-1 underdog with bookmakers to win the division before the season kicked off. How did they do it."

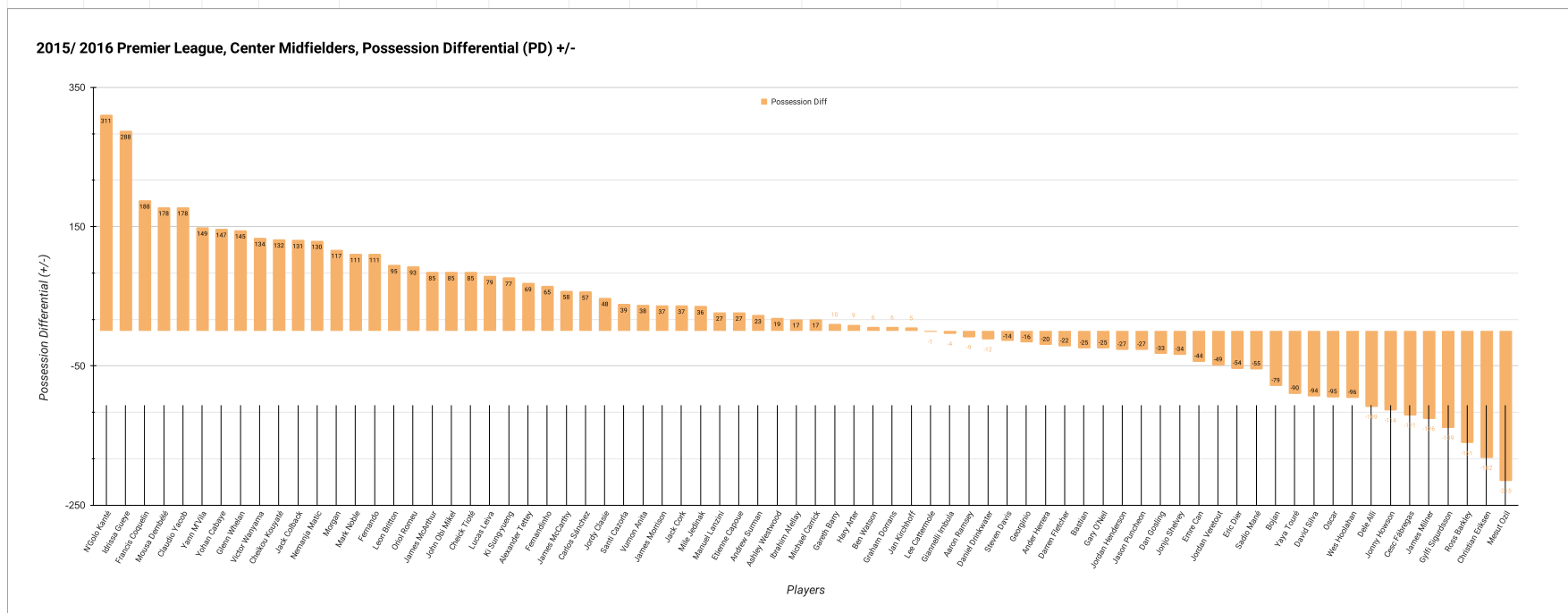
In what was described as one of the greatest sporting stories of all time [2] Leicester were confirmed as champions of the 2015-16 Premier League season on 2 May 2016, finishing top of England's highest league for the first time in the club's history. The club was a 5000-1 underdog with bookmakers to win the division before the season kicked off [3]

A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Analysis
Data from: www.WhoScored.com



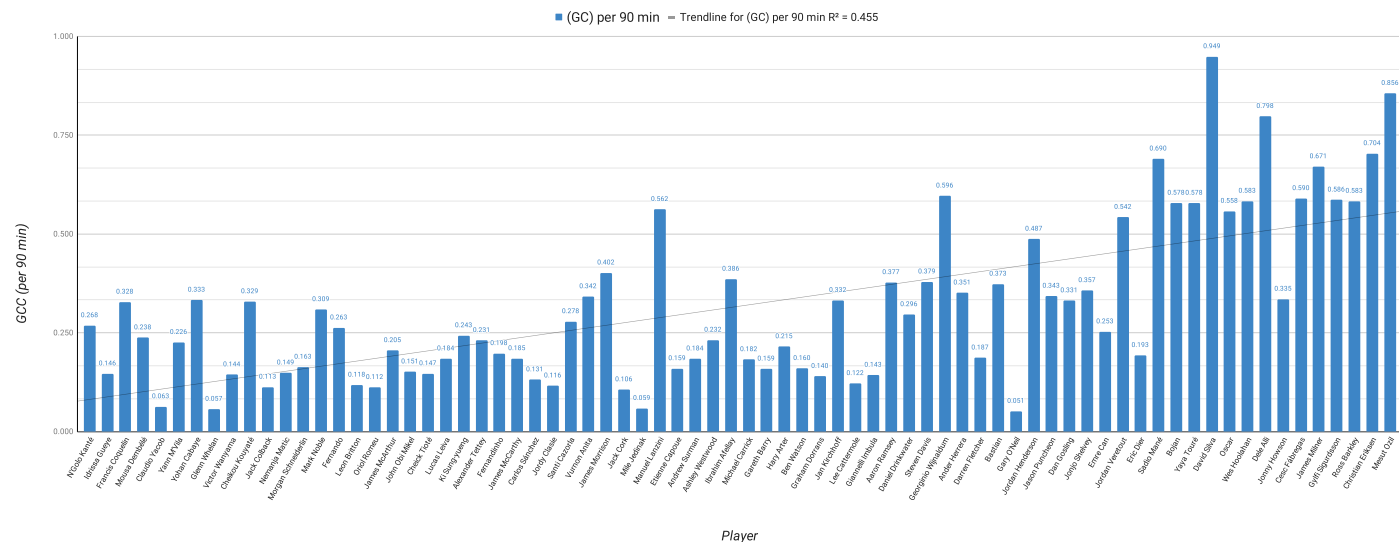
KPI: Possession Differential (PD) (+/-) for the Center Midfielder (CM) position.

			*Minimum 1000 minutes at any of: CDM, CM, or CAM			Positive Contribution (Winning Possession)			(T+H+A) + PW			Negative Contribution (Losing Possession)			(U+D+PL) + PL			PD			Scoring Contributions		
Player Name	Team	Nationality	Total Minutes	Games (Minutes / 90)	Mins at CM, CDM, CAM	Tackles (T)	Interceptions Won (I)	Recoveries (R)	Aerials Won (A)	Total Possessions Won (PW)	Unsuccessful Dribbles (U)	Dispossessed (D)	Inaccurate Passes (Ints Lost) (P)	Aerials Lost (L)	Total Possession Lost (PL)	Possession Diff	Goals	Assists	Second Assists	Goals Created (GC)	GC per 90 min		
N'Golo Kanté	Leicester	France	3020	33.56	2692	175	156	328	38	695	34	27	266	57	374	311	1	4	4	5	0.268		
Idrissa Gueye	Aston Villa	Senegal	3076	34.18	3076	141	141	344	31	660	40	36	269	27	372	288	0	1	4	4	0.146		
Francis Coquelin	Arsenal	France	1647	18.30	1591	66	77	188	19	350	6	19	121	16	162	188	0	0	6	6	0.328		
Moussa Dembélé	Tottenham	Belgium	2273	25.26	1957	104	96	223	31	414	7	63	138	28	236	178	3	1	2	6	0.238		
Claudio Yacob	West Brom	Argentina	2854	31.71	2859	108	118	202	47	475	1	20	237	39	297	178	0	1	1	2	0.063		
Yann M'Vila	Sunderland	France	3189	35.43	3161	101	85	287	46	519	4	25	312	29	370	149	1	4	3	8	0.226		
Yohan Cabaye	Crystal Palace	France	2704	30.04	2659	107	120	193	8	428	12	36	221	12	281	147	5	1	4	10	0.333		
Glen Whelan	Stoke	Ireland	3174	35.27	3174	74	73	286	40	470	19	31	470	31	325	145	0	1	1	2	0.057		
Victor Wanyama	Southampton	Kenya	2901	27.79	2456	94	68	250	64	476	11	25	238	68	342	134	1	1	2	4	0.144		
Cheikou Kouyaté	West Ham	Senegal	3010	33.44	2830	94	76	227	87	556	16	29	252	55	352	132	5	2	4	11	0.329		
Jack Colback	Newcastle	England	2397	26.63	2200	81	61	198	25	335	5	17	162	20	204	131	1	1	1	3	0.113		
Nemane Matic	Chelsea	Serbia	2421	26.90	2333	84	87	228	67	416	15	36	191	44	286	130	2	2	0	4	0.149		
Morgan Schneiderlin	Manchester United	France	2205	24.50	2136	66	73	161	19	319	5	13	153	31	202	117	1	0	4	4	0.163		
Mark Noble	West Ham	England	3205	35.61	3205	103	83	236	17	439	9	40	262	17	328	111	7	4	0	11	0.309		
Fernando	Manchester City	Brazil	1713	19.03	1477	60	43	112	38	253	4	10	101	27	142	111	2	0	3	5	0.263		
Leon Britton	Swansea	England	1528	16.98	1451	41	41	136	9	250	3	20	120	12	155	95	0	0	2	2	0.118		
Orlano Romeu	Southampton	Spain	1609	17.88	1305	77	40	124	25	266	5	15	125	28	173	93	1	0	1	2	0.112		
James McArthur	Crystal Palace	Scotland	2193	24.37	2156	55	66	167	32	320	10	29	154	42	235	85	2	2	1	5	0.205		
John Obi Mikel	Chelsea	Nigeria	1794	19.82	1457	52	32	157	18	259	13	12	130	29	174	85	0	1	2	3	0.151		
Chris Tolan	Newcastle	Ireland	1228	13.64	1157	48	48	125	35	250	6	15	121	23	160	85	0	0	1	2	0.147		
Lucas Leiva	Liverpool	Brazil	1953	21.70	1574	107	52	167	62	388	2	18	246	43	309	79	0	1	3	4	0.184		
Ki Sung-yueng	Swansea	South Korea	1853	20.59	1683	32	28	151	17	228	10	25	106	17	151	77	2	1	2	5	0.243		
Alexander Tettey	Norwich	Norway	1952	21.69	1952	48	164	131	25	285	4	15	172	24	216	69	2	0	3	5	0.231		
Fernandinho	Manchester City	Brazil	2732	30.36	2670	105	36	189	43	393	15	32	235	45	328	66	2	2	2	2	0.198		
James McCarthy	Everton	Ireland	2435	27.06	2435	79	51	135	11	276	3	19	176	20	218	68	2	2	1	5	0.185		
Carlos Sánchez	Aston Villa	Colombia	1371	15.23	1284	53	45	118	27	243	5	7	154	20	186	57	0	0	2	2	0.131		
Jordy Clasie	Southampton	Netherlands	1554	17.27	1478	42	55	120	14	225	14	10	142	24	177	48	0	0	2	2	0.116		
Santi Cazorla	Arsenal	Spain	1293	14.37	1203	28	26	139	26	194	9	20	120	6	155	39	0	3	1	4	0.278		
Vurnon Anita	Newcastle	Netherlands	2108	23.42	1344	74	56	160	16	306	7	16	224	21	268	38	1	3	4	4	0.342		
James Morrison	West Brom	Scotland	1344	14.93	1163	26	43	106	6	181	8	27	97	12	144	37	3	3	0	6	0.402		
Jack Cork	Swansea	England	2845	31.61	2404	77	83	199	58	467	10	36	278	36	380	37	1	2	0	3	0.106		
Mike Jedrak	Crystal Palace	Australia	1531	17.01	1373	50	55	115	102	322	0	29	236	41	286	36	0	0	1	1	0.059		
Manuel Lanzini	West Ham	Argentina	1921	21.34	1276	33	24	161	4	222	36	27	121	11	195	27	6	2	4	12	0.562		
Ellenre Capoue	Watford	France	2622	31.36	2423	95	81	242	37	455	11	46	321	24	428	27	0	1	4	5	0.199		
Andrew Surman	Bournemouth	South Africa	3420	38.00	3420	51	110	240	46	547	5	26	336	57	424	23	0	3	4	7	0.184		
Ashley Westwood	Aston Villa	England	2720	30.22	2704	62	57	207	6	332	9	32	259	20	313	19	2	2	3	7	0.232		
Ibrahim Afellay	Stoke	Netherlands	2099	23.32	1593	27	11	162	14	214	24	25	125	16	197	17	2	2	5	9	0.386		
Michael Carrick	Manchester United	England	1975	21.94	1726	43	45	152	16	256	1	16	212	10	239	17	0	0	4	4	0.182		
Gareth Barry	Everton	England	2837	31.52	2836	96	93	239	66	444	3	31	373	27	434	10	0	1	4	5	0.159		
Harry Arter	Bournemouth	Ireland	1674	18.60	1674	57	25	118	8	208	17	32	145	5	199	9	1	0	3	4	0.215		
Ben Watson	Watford	England	2815	31.28	2762	71	88	180	41	380	5	14	322	33	374	6	2	0	3	5	0.180		
Grigoris Dotsis	Norwich	Scotland	1288	14.31	1153	23	25	79	5	103	6	9	103	12	129	6	0	1	1	2	0.140		
Jan Kirchhoff	Sunderland	Germany	1084	12.04	1053	32	107	107	32	166	41	12	166	41	219	6	0	0	4	4	0.332		
Lee Cattermole	Sunderland	England	2217	24.63	2145	57	52	142	26	277	1	26	226	25	278	-1	0	0	3	3	0.122		
Glennell Imbulu	Stoke	France	1260	14.00	1260	14	7	109	12	142	22	18	94	12	146	-4	2	0	0	2	0.143		
Aaron Ramsey	Arsenal	Wales	2624	29.16	1800	79	84	248	27	410	26	68	299	26	419	-9	5	4	2	11	0.377		
Daniel Drinkwater	Leicester	England	3039	33.77	3039	106	55	342	20	532	17	39	444	44	544	-12	2	7	1	10	0.296		
Steven Davis	Southampton	Northern Ireland	2612	29.02	1397	56	40	216	12	324	5	47	248	38	338	-14	5	3	3	11	0.379		
Georginio Wijnaldum	Newcastle	Netherlands	3169	35.21	1466	38	27	228	25	318	33	68	190	43	434	-16	11	5	5	21	0.596		
Andrés Herrera	Manchester United	Spain	1538	17.09	1354	56	24	118	7	205	32	175	7	7	225	-20	3	2	1	6	0.351		
Darren Fletcher	West Brom	Scotland	3376	37.51	3376	53	51	269	36	409	13	58	323	37	431	-22	1	3	3	3	0.187		
Bastian Schweinsteiger	Manchester United	Germany	1205	13.39	1070	36	23	106	16	181	3	28	153	22	206	-25	1	0	4	5	0.373		
Gary O'Neil	Norwich	Ireland	1749	19.43	1643	41	36	140	23	240	6	17	205	20	265	-25	0	0	1	1	0.051		
Jordan Henderson	Liverpool	England	1293	14.37	1175	41	21	113	21	197	12	12	186	10	224	-27	2	3	2	7	0.487		
Jason Puncheon	Crystal Palace	England	1252	29.17	1252	54	28	219	13	314	28	49	248	16	341	-27	2	3	5	10	0.343		
Dan Gosling	Bournemouth	England	2445	27.17	2373	72	52	156	36	316	25	84	196	43	349	-33	3	1	5	9	0.331		
Jorjo Shreeve	Swansea/ Newcastle	England	2259	25.21	1203	37	45	181	12	17	12	17	264	15	309	-34	1	5	0	9	0.357		
Emre Can	Liverpool	Germany	2493	27.70	2158	79	62	204	45	360	18	40	336	40	434	-44	1	0	6	7	0.253		
Jordan Veretout	Aston Villa	France	1825	20.28	1667	30	27	105	11	173	14	13	168	27	222	-49	0	5	6	11	0.542		
Eric Dier	Tottenham	England	3028	33.71	3177	79	80	151	86	396	6	28	348	68	456	-54	3	2	2	7	0.193		
Sadio Mané	Southampton	Senegal	2608	28.98	1494	54	35	183	29	301	63	40	185	46	256	-55	11	6	3	20	0.650		
Bojan	Stoke	Spain	1712	19.02	1026	18	15	97	2	132	48	38	114	11	211	-79	7	1	3	11	0.578		
Yaya Touré	Manchester City	Ivory Coast	2335	25.84	2259	43	25	158	28	254	16	46	249	33	344	-80	6	5	4	15	0.578		
David Silva	Manchester City	Spain	1802	20.02	1665	36	16	122	9	183	7	18	188	14	277	-84	2						



PD +/- CHART: N'Golo Kante of Leicester led the league in PD (+311). He and Idrissa Gueye (Aston Villa)(+288) were outliers. If we drill down we can see why; they were 1st and 2nd in the league in both Tackles, and Interceptions won, respectively, and were both in the top 3 in Recoveries as well. This undoubtedly played a key role in the team's success as Leicester was simply getting more posessions than there opponents.

2015/ 2016 Premier League, Center Midfielders, Goals Created or Converted (GCC)



GCC Chart: The game is about more than just keeping possession. You must also score more goals than your opponent. There is a wide range of roles for Center Midfielders. Keeping the players sorted by PD.

We can see that there seems to be a trend between those players that focus on winning the possession battle for their teams vs creating chances or goals (GCC per 90 min). Those CM's that have the lowest PD +/- also tend to have more (GCC/90)

They are likely playing in more advanced roles, and may take more risks in possession in order to create chances, like: David Silva (.949), Mesut Ozil (.856) or Dele Alli (.798)

Players like Manuel Lanzini and Georgino Wijnaldum are two examples of players playing the middle ground, who are creating chances at a higher rate than their counterparts, and are well known for their tactical ability.

Kante himself while having a historic season in terms of PD +/- was also crucially performing just better than the median at creating chance or goals (GCC), (.268) for Kante, (.258) median. That's more near as efficient as notorious attacking minded players like Santi Cazorla.

This likely had a huge impact on Leicester City beating historic odds to win the Premier League in 2017