



KYLE DEGELMAN





FUEL FOR FOOTBALL

Change The Game



Dangkor 1 – 2 Kirivong

(10/08/2025)



OVERVIEW

This was a game where you did enough to earn the clean sheet and your team should have closed it out earlier, but the late winner meant the strong defensive work was rewarded in the end. Personally, the biggest theme was managing the distances in front of you to step out, then recover back quickly once unable to directly impact play any further. When you held the defensive line and stayed disciplined, you made key interceptions and gave the opponent very little chance to break through. Equally, when distances allowed and you stepped out aggressively, it was possible to put in big tackles. At other times, you allowed the ball carrier too much space when stepping out, which meant they could still play from there. After stepping, there were also moments where you did not retreat back to the line fast enough, leaving gaps for the opponent to target. In the air you were competitive, but timing the jump earlier and greater body use could will allow you to win a greater share of duels. On the ball, you showed the quality to play line-breaking passes, but also risked possession with switches that were not consistent enough. With the ball at your feet, also retain greater composure to cut against the motion of pressers and play your way out. You have the abilities to do so from playing as a full-back, so utilise them more often instead of forcing passes that are easy to read. The most important area for consistency to add is the coverage of space between the lines so focus on that in the next performance.

STRENGTHS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- *Holding the defensive line*
- *Interceptions*
- *Body shape*
- *Razor passing*
- *Recovering to the line*
- *Closing out on the edge of the box*
- *Switching play*
- *Composure to escape pressure*





▶ GAME ANALYSIS

DEFENSIVE POSITIONING

Firstly, there were strong moments when defending from the line in which you held your position and read the pass in early. Staying compact and disciplined meant you could decisively intercept anything played into your area and was important for defensive protection. Through your smart positioning and body shape, you kept control of the space in behind.



Your body shape was strong here, positioned on the half-turn towards the most dangerous man while checking back towards the ball with your eyeline. This allowed you to read the pass while being ready to intercept it or otherwise drop quickly. As you know, the next level is then clearing the ball with an eye for detail to find teammates simultaneous to eliminating the danger.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

STEPPING OUT

From the edge of the box you recognised situations to step out and engage, but there were times where you did not close the distance aggressively enough. That hesitation meant the opponent was still able to play forwards despite your movement out of the line, which can leave you vulnerable.



Although you naturally will be concerned about being beaten by a cut, once you commit to stepping out, you must arrive tight enough to block the forward pass or shot angles. To do so without compromising yourself, try to stay neutral or weight shifted in the more dangerous direction as well as backwards. You can decelerate later and therefore tighter to the ball carrier but while applying this shift to your body weight ready to react to the next touch. In doing so, you will also make regains in moments like the above where the opponent lost control.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

RETURNING TO THE LINE

When you pressed out man-for-man the initial action was strong, but there were moments where you did not recover back into the line quickly enough. Holding your position too high after the ball had moved on left the defensive unit stretched and offered channels for the opponent to run into or play through. Remember to drop back to the line quickly when you can no longer apply tight pressure or directly affect the play where you are.



The technical detail here is to connect your recovery directly to the pressing action. Once you are no longer affecting play in front, you must immediately backpedal and drop with intensity. Making this reaction automatic will close the window opponents have to exploit and keep the defensive shape compact.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

TACKLES

There were also moments where you stepped out with aggression, anticipated the pass and made big interventions. These were some of your best defensive actions, as they stopped Dangkor from playing before they could build and gave your team the chance to transition quickly after.



Looking at one of the best examples, we can see you reading the cue early, accelerating out with good commitment and arriving to put a firm tackle in and win the ball. Keep being an aggressive player in these areas.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

AERIAL DUELS

In aerial situations you competed but were second best in key moments where the opponent established position and won the header cleanly. Allowing them to get up for these first from the greater ground position gave up the advantage.



The main points to winning a duel like the above are in body use, positioning and timing. Make contact early, using your weight with the intention of gaining the ground position off of the opponent or to at least make it awkward for them to get up and attack. From there, jump earlier and ideally before the opponent to turn these contests in your favour more consistently.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

PASSING

On the ball you showed the ability to open up and outplay the midfield with sharp passing. In particular, the razor pass to quickly find a way through small gaps was ideal for upping the tempo.



This was a well executed ball which quickly made its way through the gap and into the back foot of your teammate between the lines. The next step is to make this a consistent weapon in your arsenal by recognising the pockets that are available pre (through schemes) and during (through scanning off-ball) games. Use this technique to catch them off-guard.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

SWITCH PASSES

There were occasions where your switches of play were intercepted before reaching their target. While the intention to change the point of attack was correct, the passes themselves needed greater direction and a clear focus on the target.



Here, we appreciated the good read of an overload on the far side. Typically speaking, the more direct option and therefore putting a teammate in behind is the best, but the wider and deeper teammate was also open and in position to receive. Either way, a more direct and driven switch with direction towards a specific teammate is needed to make the most of the opportunities available.



▶ GAME ANALYSIS

ESCAPING PRESSURE

Lastly there were some moments where your play became scripted, releasing the obvious pass even when defenders were already shifting across or moving into the passing lane. By sticking to the predictable option in these moments, you risk losses and take away the ability to be more progressive by countering their actions.



Although the situation figured itself out, with the defender shifting to block the passing lane, shaping as though you will release into it, before instead chopping inside against the motion to drive into the open space or find one of many free teammates would have been much greater. You already have this skill from playing full-back and can apply it consistently at centre-back too to turn these moments from high risk – low reward to minimal risk – decent reward.