



# KYLE DEGELMAN





## FUEL FOR FOOTBALL

*Change The Game*

*Hamilton United 3 – 5 Sigma FC*

(15/04/23)



## OVERVIEW

Considering the tough defeat, there were a few important aspects to your play on the defensive end which you should change your mindset around. At least one of these was preventable on a personal level, while you should endeavour to impact on the others indirectly. Speaking on these first, remember to get goalside of opponents after a turnover. It is only natural that you will start the wrong side fairly often given an aggressive mindset to push on in attacks but weak teammates at retaining possession of the ball. There is no excuse for not returning early enough to stop your matchup receiving in front of goal though. It is important that you start to use your body much more often, being a nastier player to be in the vicinity of. This is vital to playing at any professional level in Europe. Obstruct opponents whenever their movement is made within your vicinity. Even more importantly, make it painful to receive the ball in front of you, with aggressive pushing, pulling and grabbing in these tight areas. You must put your opponent off and force early regains rather than giving time to make decisions on the ball. Offensively, it goes without saying that you look very comfortable when on the ball, so we must make the most of this by receiving often and in positions where you can open into dribbles. Beyond this, assume the mindset of any great winger when you are on the last line of defence in the final third. This is where you should cut across the line and then get in behind for goals and assists.

## STRENGTHS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- *Comfort on the ball*
- *Passing accuracy*
- *Defensive positioning*
- *Aggression in 1v1 duels*
- *Being nastier in tight spaces*
- *Recovering goalside in transition*
- *Using your body off-the-ball*
- *Applying intangibles*
- *Getting in behind*





## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### DEFENDING THE PASS AND GO

Defensively, your positioning was largely strong in this game as you kept play in front of you initially and broke up any attempt to pass through the lines. You also did well to cut these forward passing lines in the way you approached the ball carrier while pressing. That said, greater aggression is important all-round in defensive situations. Before we consider those ideas, note that any time you have a disadvantage in pace or with inferior position, using your body is usually the best way to eliminate these.



With this example in mind, you initially did well to slow play while dropping into your defensive line. The pass inside could not be stopped as your teammate had not covered across to support you despite you buying him the time to do so. That is where communication can come in for future situations. Nevertheless, you should have turned along the fastest angle to drop towards the return pass into your marker. It is important to recover quickly in these moments and every fraction of a second is of use. Having turned the way you were already facing, we can also suggest that this is where the intangible use of your body would help you delay the run and regain superior position for yourself. An arm across the body, or better, fully grabbing the defender but only momentarily, would make the difference but without necessarily conceding a foul. There is refereeing leeway given in these situations for, what appears to be, “natural” physical conflict, so make the most of it. All in all, the alternative decision was much greater than diving in late as you attempted here.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### ***OBSTRUCTING OPPONENTS***

The worst-case scenario there is that you are too obvious in your intentions and give away a free-kick, but this is worth it for completely preventing what is otherwise a dangerous situation. Without Kyle Walker levels of speed, it is always wiser to utilise these intangibles than to get into foot races with wingers who could beat you for pace. Another time to get hands on and physical with opponents is anytime they make a movement within your vicinity. These will almost never be called up for fouls as eyes are regularly stuck on the ball, away from the runners.



With the mindset you will need to adopt for playing at higher levels, this goal was actually preventable. As soon as your matchup began to move across the line, it was important to step into his path with a shoulder or elbow in place for extra effect. The aim here is not only to obstruct the run, but also to get into the head of your opponent. Often they will complain in such moments and you should be prepared for this. A winger who starts to get into their self or ego, is one you will generally play with ease. “It’s Football, get on with it” usually suffices. Remember also that they might respond aggressively in the way they press you themselves, but this is to your advantage if you read it and dribble accordingly. Any lashing out also has a greater chance of happening in front of the referee which plays into your favour.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### **MISSED DRIBBLING OPPORTUNITY**

The other preventable goal came in transition, as you were slow to drop back and get goalside of your man. It is perfectly acceptable to be behind your marker in early transition having been caught out while making offensive movements. That said, you should always recover goalside by sprinting back and only resting once in a position where you are defensively secure once again.



This is the type of moment that must be eliminated from future performances, so ensure that you sprint back earlier while putting a defensive shift in. You have the fitness to do so and will be asked to do it less and less the higher quality teammates you gain throughout your career.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### ***PRVENTING RECEPTIONS TO FEET***

Despite generally doing a good job of preventing passes behind you and staying tight to anything into opponent's feet, you were not nearly aggressive enough in the latter. The advantage of being in tight is that you can then use your arms and body to disorient, aggravate and put off your opponents.



We can see a couple examples of exactly the aforementioned right here. Note how you had many of the right ideas in mind, but that it was too nice an experience for the attacker to receive to feet and turn thereafter. For the former, it is true that the opponent could not reach the ball either, however, greater use of your arms to first pull to the inside before diving in towards the outside would have opened the path to the ball. If you go in on one side but do not apply these intangibles, it becomes easy for a smart forward to simply shift across and block you from getting a touch to the ball with their own use of body.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### **MOMENTS TO BE MORE INTENSE**

Remember also that getting tight to an opponent is just a means for being more aggressive rather than a job completed in and of itself. You must take advantage of every loose touch or cut back on oneself to close the distances further and then start using your body to make a subsequent regain.



In this moment, you had multiple opportunities to stop the attack having closed your opponent down, but lacked aggression in the key moments. Your initial sprint out was well made and you slowed at the right time. This forced the attacker to turn back on himself. Rather than simply tracking him when this happens, you must sprint to close in on him to where you can get a hand on his shirt at minimum. For the later moment, you again had a player with his back to you. While it is not necessary to step in and tackle straight away, you should at minimum get tight behind him while using your arms and body to prevent him from dribbling with ease.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### ***ESCAPING PRESSURE***

Offensively, you appeared very comfortable on the ball and should continue to take up every opportunity to dribble or carve open spaces in the opposition defence. This is especially true if other opponents will be weaker than this side.



We can see the ease at which you escaped any pressure in each of these examples. Simple chops against the motion of defenders will often be enough. Keep making accurate passes on the end of these too.



## ► GAME ANALYSIS

### ***MOVING IN BEHIND***

The addition to make on this side of the game is adopting a winger's mindset whenever you reach the final third. Start to think about how you can exploit space in behind with your movements. A classic example to employ which was available in a couple of situations in this game is the run across the last line where you pick up speed and signal to your teammate to slide you in through a gap in the defence.



Again, these moments involved nice dribbles as well as pass and go movements. Thereafter, make your subsequent run from the last line by sprinting laterally where you will remain onside but simultaneously pick up speed. Remember to attack goal after receiving or 1v1 the defender directly in front of you. This is where you can easily tally goals and assists with an offensive-mindset.