

Lamine Yamal | Euro 2024

Luis Enrique’s Spain failure to win Euros 2020 did not come as a surprise considering Spain’s failure to create in the semi-final vs Italy. Doubts loomed over Spain’s ability to create in final third of the pitch considering one dimensional nature of Adama Traore’s game.

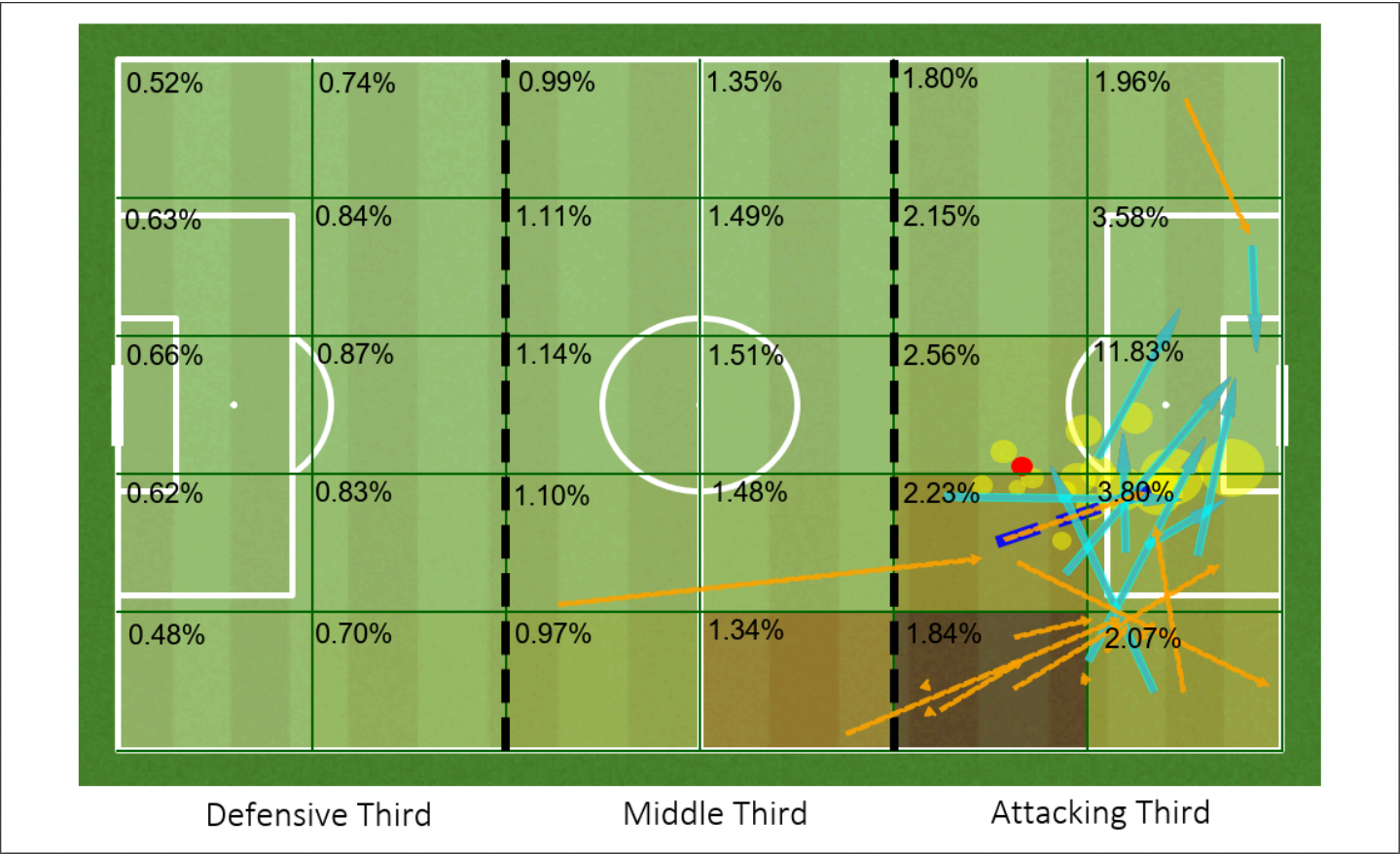
April 2023 gave birth to a potential Leo Messi regen as Lamine Yamal burst onto the scene, Yamal provided a creative force in the final third for Spain that they were missing for a long time.

In the diagram below, I have calculated expected Threat (xT) for Euro 2024, the pitch is divided into 30 (6x5) equal bins. xT is a metric that measures how likely a player's actions are to create a goal-scoring opportunity

It can be seen from the position heatmap that Yamal played most of his game from the right wing and was playing in the bins that have a high probability to create a goal scoring opportunity

Cyan lines in the plot indicate the passes made by Yamal that contribute to Shot Creating Actions.

Orange dotted lines in the plot indicate the carries and dribbles (take on’s) that contributed towards Shot Creating Actions



Shot Creating Actions (SCA) are one of the two last offensive actions in the lead-up to a shot. This can include passes, take-ons, fouls drawn, defensive actions, or even shots that lead to another shot. Goal-creating actions, as the name suggests, are actions leading to a goal.

Yellow circles are the 18 shots that Yamal took while only scoring one goal that is indicated by a Red circle. The area of circle depends on the xG of the shot. As it can be seen from the plot that Yamal did miss a lot of easy chances but he made up for it with a thunderous strike and scored with a low xG.

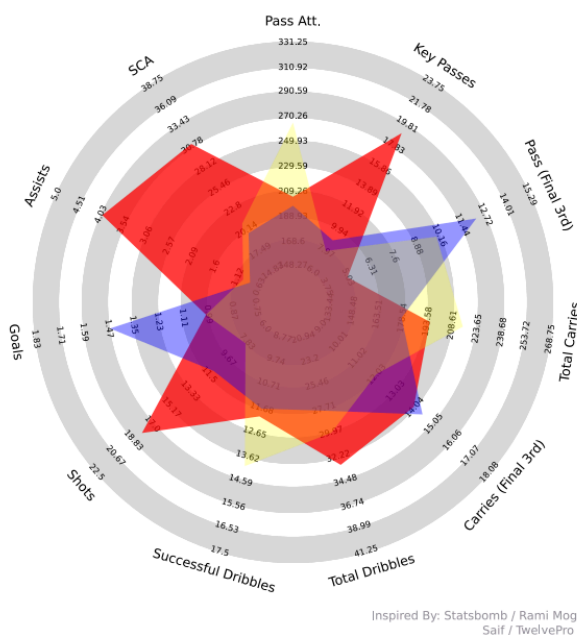
He scored a Goals-xG (1-1.58) of -0.58 indicating that he needs to work on his finishing.

Yamal produced a tournament high of 31 shot creating actions. And in doing so he managed tournament high assists as well. The radar graph below compares Lamine Yamal and Bukayo Saka with Average stats for all right wingers of the tournament

This comparison highlights the fact that Yamal was the most creative right winger of the tournament and outperformed the SCA metric by some margin and this resulted into tournament high assists.

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Spain



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It can be concluded that Lamine Yamal provided a significant upgrade on Spain's right wing by increasing the creativity coming from the wings and he was no slouch in carrying the ball to final third as well

The difference in playing style between two of the Europe's most influential wingers in the form of **Yamal** and **Saka** can be seen from the graph. Yamal is young and his play style will improve with time. While holding on to the ball and shooting himself indicate his confidence in himself or it may indicate the raw product that he is but his key passes clearly indicate that the kid has vision and game intelligence that is unmatched for his age.

Yamal can look at passing the ball into final third a bit more if he is playing with strikers that play on defender's shoulders and this might reduce the amount of shots he is taking and potentially wasting a good chance for the team to score