



Newcastle United F.C.

Pre-Match Analysis

Expected Line-up:

Manager: **Eddie Howe**

Formation: **4-3-3**



Injured and Unavailable Players List¹

Injured Players

#07 Joelinton (Knee)
#20 L. Hall (Ankle)
#06 J. Lascelles (Knee)

Unavailable Players

None

¹ Source: <https://www.premierleague.com/latest-player-injuries>

In-Possession Tactics

All charts and tables in the following section are created using data obtained from [FBRef via Opta](#).

- * Newcastle United use the technical ability of their wingers in-possession, using width to progress the ball and create chances.
- * Their midfielders and full-backs make runs in-behind the opposition defensive line, with their movement creating space for the wingers.
- * In attacking transitions, they progress the ball with high 'verticality', using counter-attacks through the middle to create chances against a disorganized defence.

Phase 1: Build-up

Newcastle United **play out from the back** during build-up, moving the ball out of their defensive third using wide areas of the pitch.

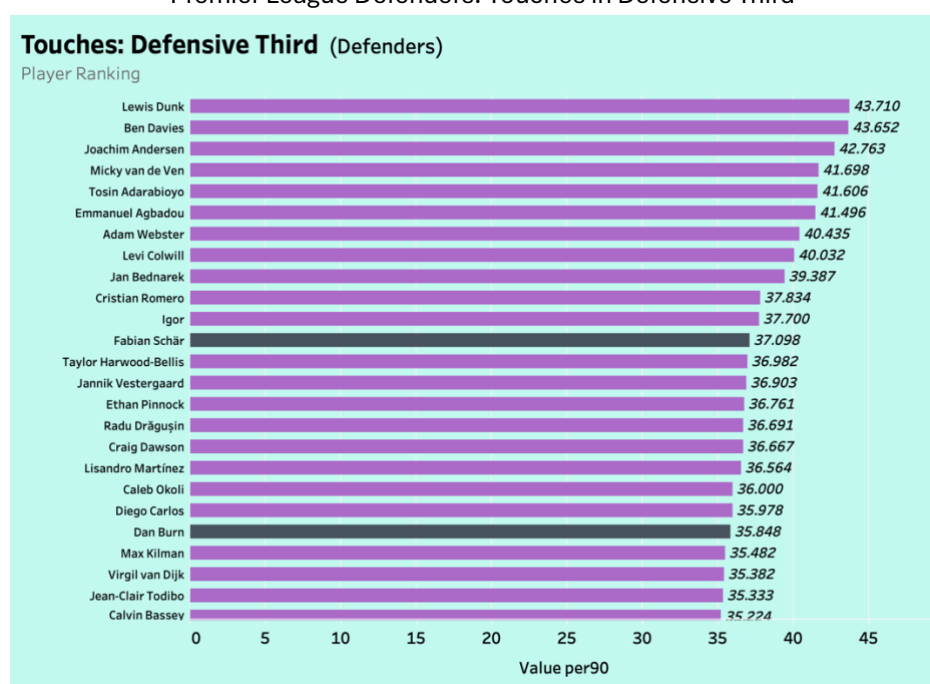
→ In recent fixtures, Newcastle have preferred building-up via the left side.

Which player(s) are involved in this phase?

- Both of Newcastle's centre-backs – **D. Burn** (#33) and **F. Schär** (#5) – operate as 'ball-playing defenders'.
 - In the possible absence of Fabian Schär, Dan Burn will probably be in-possession more often, forcing Newcastle to build via the left.
- Full-backs, **V. Livramento** (#21) and **K. Trippier** (#2), are positioned high and wide.
- **S. Tonalì** (#8) drops deep to provide additional passing options, occasionally supported by **B. Guimarães** (#39).

Figure 1:

Premier League Defenders: Touches in Defensive Third



Fabian Schär (13th) and **Dan Burn** (20th) rank high in terms of the number of touches taken by Premier League defenders in the defensive third.

Phase 2: Progression

In-possession, Newcastle's centre-backs primarily use **three options** to move the ball forward.

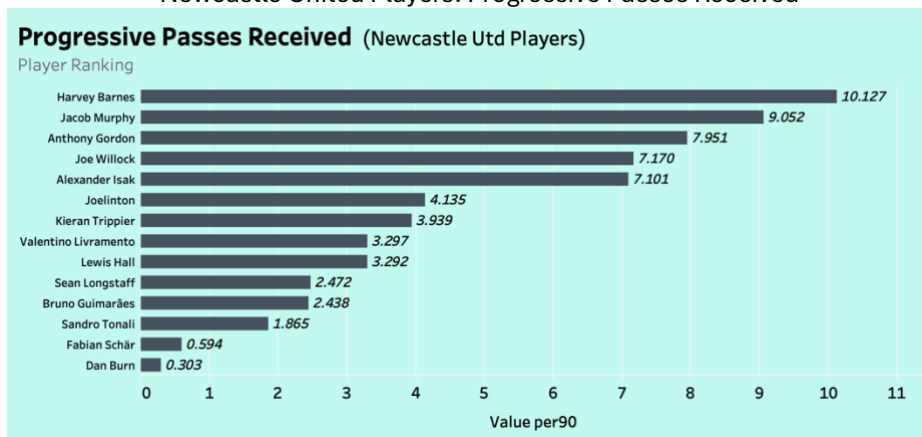
- Full-backs positioned high and wide.
- Winger dropping deep on the flank while full-back moves into pocket to create space.
- If available, long passes to either the winger or full-back on the flanks in the attacking third.

Newcastle United's **wingers drop short** to help progress the ball in wider areas, **looking to cut inside and combine with the midfielders**.

Which player(s) are involved in this phase?

Figure 2:

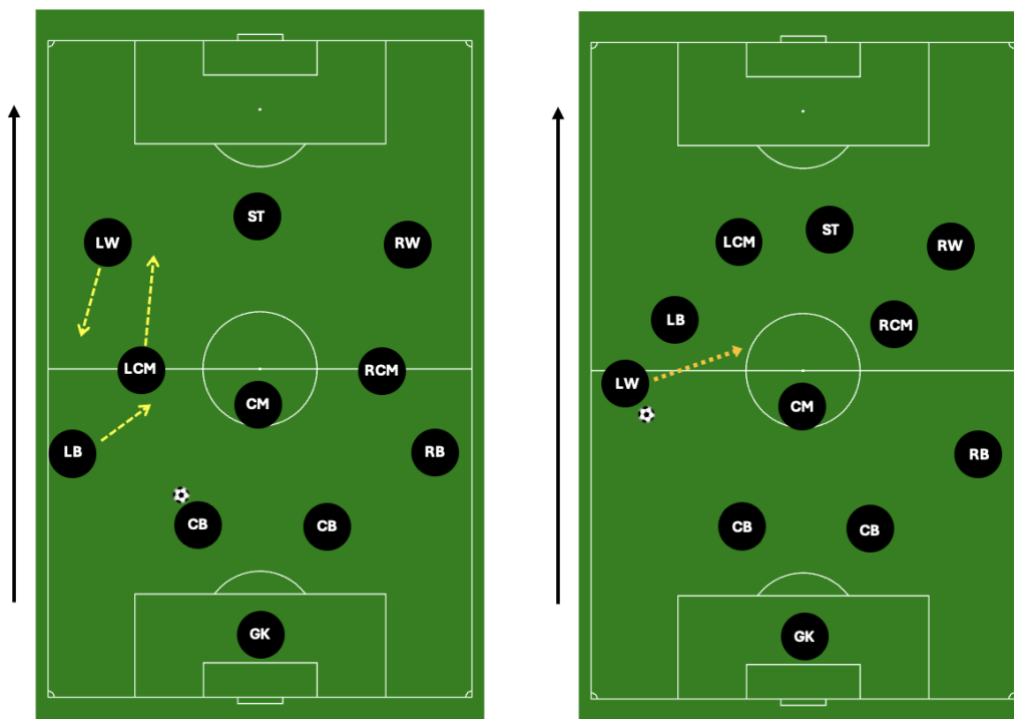
Newcastle United Players: Progressive Passes Received



Newcastle's wingers, (H. Barnes, J. Murphy, and A. Gordon) having the highest progressive passes received per 90 this season is indicative of their preference to progress the ball through their wingers.

Figure 3:

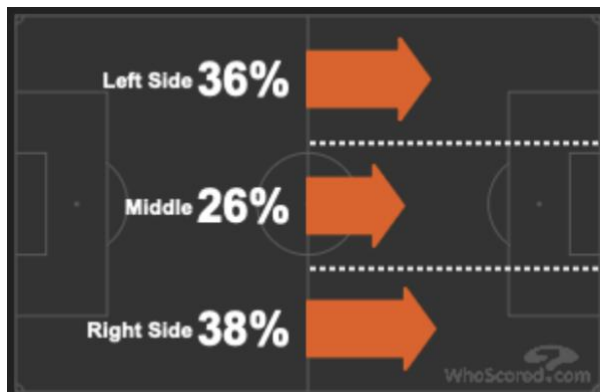
Newcastle United player movements on left flank to create space for winger



The movements of the left central midfielder and full-back are designed to attract opposition players, thereby creating space in midfield and allowing the winger to cut inside.

Phase 3: Penetration

Figure 4:
Newcastle United: Attack Sides

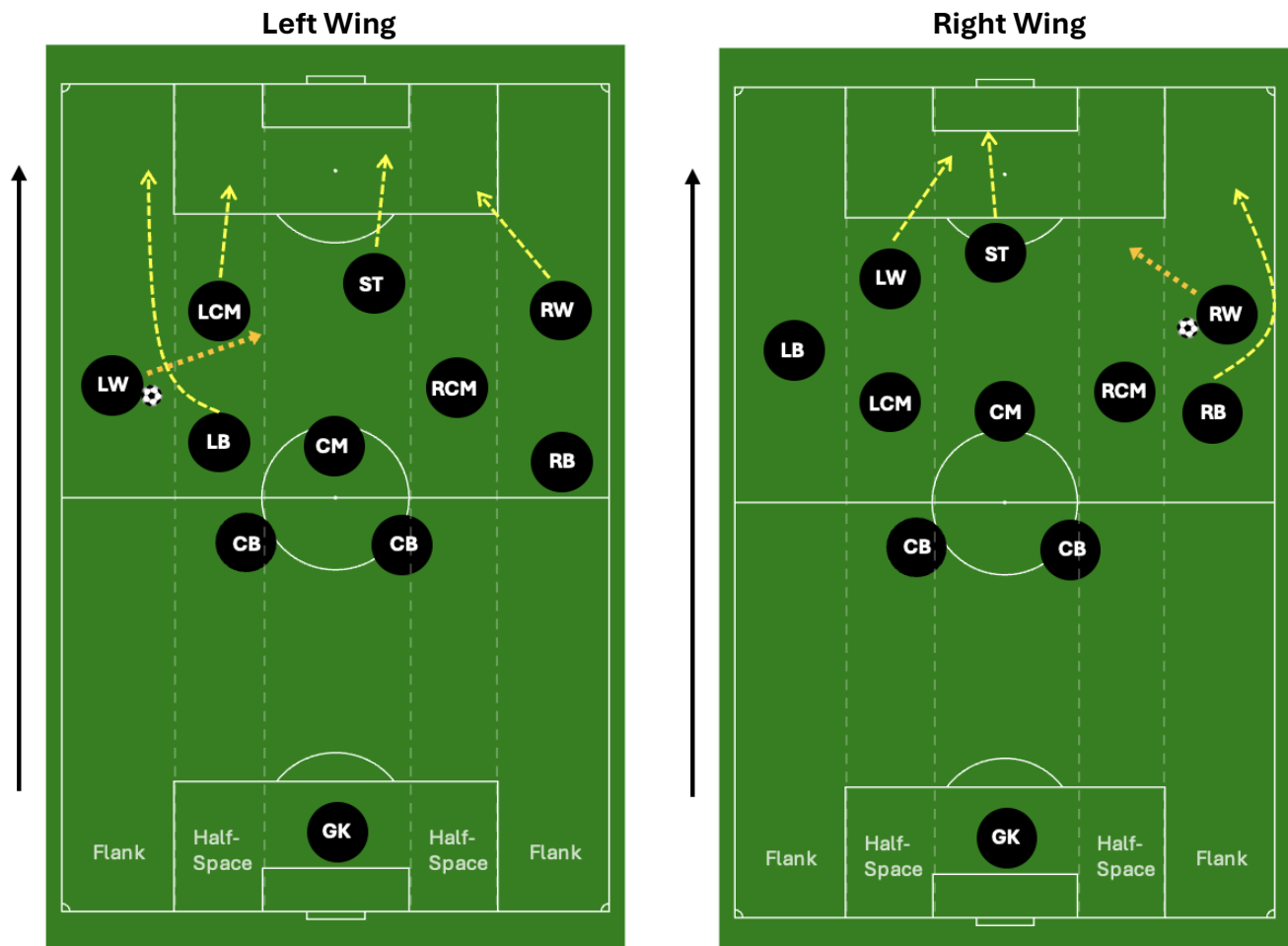


[Data Source: [WhoScored](https://www.whoscored.com)]

Newcastle United aim to break the opposition defensive line **using width** and **players making runs in-behind**

- **Wingers** and **Full-backs** are primarily involved in creating chances, with additional support provided by the three **midfielders**.

Player Movements In The Attacking Third



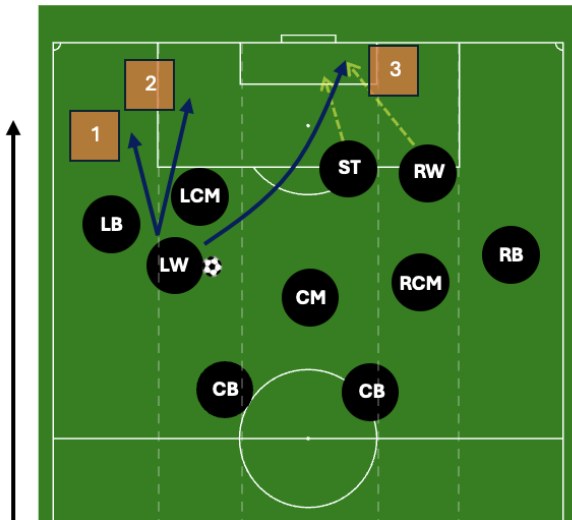
- **Left Winger (LW)** looks to cut inside from the **flank**
- **Left Back (LB)** makes overlapping run on the **flank**
- **Left Central Midfielder (LCM)** makes a run in-behind defensive line in the **half-space**.
- **Right Winger (RW)** makes runs into the **half-space**
- **Right Back (RB)** makes overlapping run on the **flank**
- **Right Central Midfielder (RCM)** provides support, combining with the RW or RB to play through balls or occasionally making a run in the **half-space**.

Chance Creation

Newcastle commonly use the following ways to create chances from wide areas.

Figure 6:

Newcastle penetration through left wing



1. Pass to the full-back on the flank, who can then cross the ball into the box.
2. Pass to the player making a run in the half-space, who can either put in a floated cross to the far post or play a cut-back.
3. The winger who cuts inside can play an early, whipped cross to the far post.
4. Since the left winger cuts onto his stronger right foot, he can carry the ball and take a shot from the edge of the penalty area.

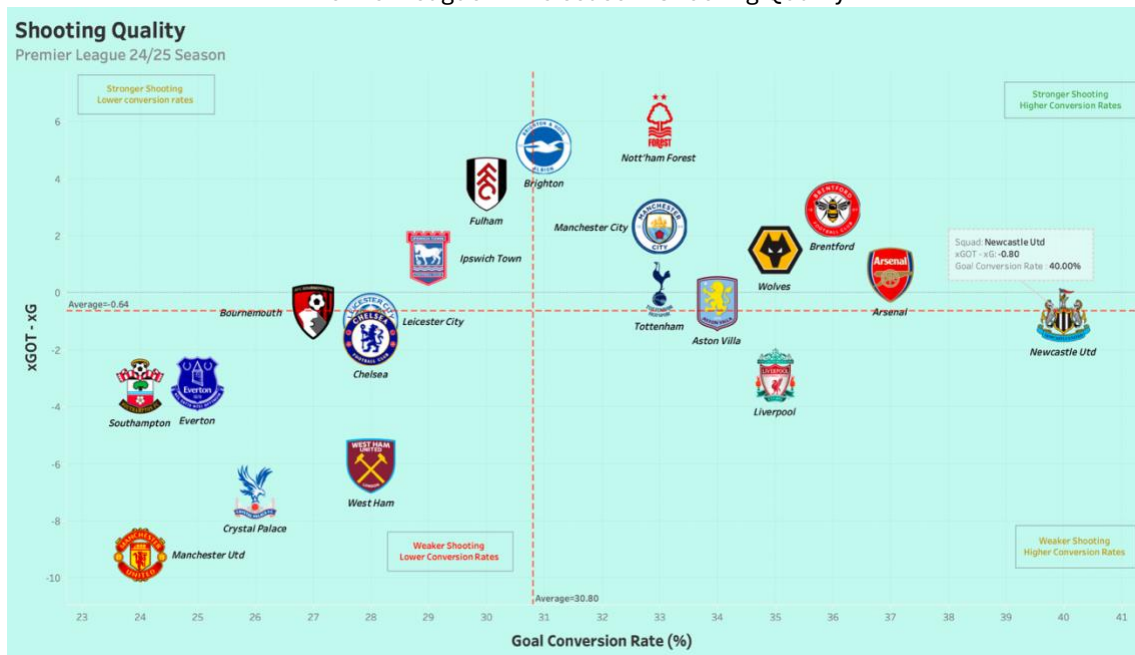
Jacob Murphy (#23) has 11 assists this season (2nd highest in the league), often creating chances down the right wing for Newcastle. He plays dangerous crosses from deep crossing positions, and often creates chances from the half-space inside the box.

Phase 4: Finishing the Attack

Newcastle United have one of the highest conversion rates in the league this season, with their striker **Alexander Isak** (#14) leading the line, having scored 23 goals in the Premier League this season.

Figure 5:

Premier League 24/25 season: Shooting Quality



Newcastle United have one of the lowest shots on target % in the leagues at 30.9% (19th). However, they take shots from high quality positions with an non-penalty xG per shot of 0.12 (2nd) and when they get it on target, they often end up scoring a goal with a 40% goal conversion rate (1st).

Out-of-Possession Tactics

All charts and tables in the following section are created using data obtained from [FBRef via Opta](#).

- * Newcastle United use a high-press man-marking system against teams that like to play out from the back during build-up.
- * Once the opposition are able to bypass Newcastle's press and hold comfortable possession in the middle third, Newcastle shift into a 4-5-1 Mid-Block shape, aiming to prevent the opposition from playing through their midfield line.

Pressing Approach: High Press

Newcastle use a **man-marking, high pressing approach** during their opponent's build-up phase, emphasizing on preventing space through the middle of the pitch.

Figure 6:

Newcastle United Expected Pressing Map vs Chelsea



→ If the goalkeeper is in-possession of the ball, we see **either the Left Winger or Striker pressing him**, depending on whose marker played the pass back to the goalkeeper.

→ **S. Tonali (#8)** usually takes up a more of a defensive midfielder role, covering the opposition's primary creative threat.

→ The centre-backs are instructed to push up and stay close to 'unmarked' opposition players, aiming to prevent them from receiving passes in space.

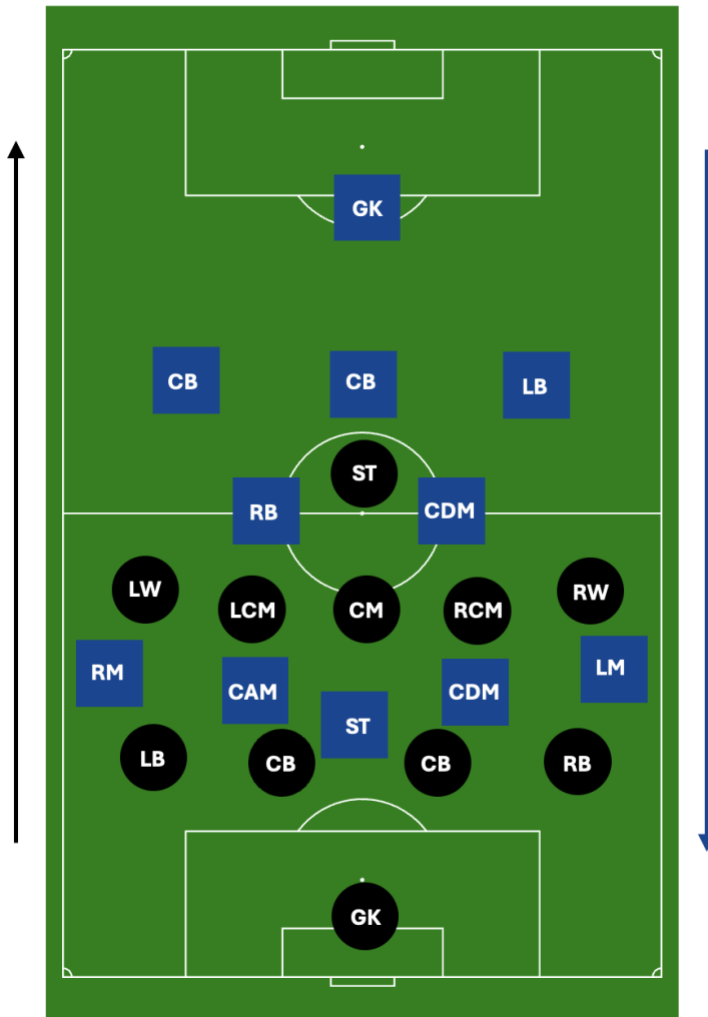
With the possibility of Newcastle's centre-backs being pulled into midfield or wide by opposition players, Newcastle United's goalkeeper, **Nick Pope (#22)**, has been **quick to come off-his-line and sweep out long balls**. He has made the **most defensive actions outside the penalty area per 90** in the league this season, averaging 2.24 per game.

Defensive Shape: 4-5-1 Mid-Block

Newcastle shift into a **4-5-1** once the opposition are able to progress the ball into the midfield third, holding a mid-block with the aim of **preventing the opposition from playing between the lines** by restricting space in the central midfield area.

Figure 7:

Newcastle Unite Expected Defensive Shape vs Chelsea



- **J. Murphy (#23)** drops into the defensive line when the opposition attack down the left side of the pitch, changing Newcastle's shape to a 5-4-1.
- A backward pass or a loose pass to the opposition defensive unit is a **pressing trigger** for Newcastle.
 - The central midfielders (RCM/LCM) are eager to jump out of their line to apply pressure and force the opposition back to their goalkeeper.

Transition Tactics

Defence to Attack Transition: Counter-Attack

Newcastle attempt to counter-attack teams once they win possession, especially in situations where they win possession in midfield or are able to find a spare midfielder to carry the ball forward without pressure. They **counter-attack through the middle, playing through balls** to their wingers or the striker who make runs into space behind the opposition defensive line.

Newcastle have made attempted the **3rd highest number of shots in fast-break situations** with 44 shots, second only to Liverpool (62) and Chelsea (50). However, they have only scored 5 goals from these situations, ranking 9th in the league this season [Data Source: [Opta](#)].

Attack to Defence Transition: Counter-Press

Newcastle's attacking shape in the final third allows them to counter-press effectively after losing possession. All outfield players are positioned inside the opposition half, **limiting space for the opposition to play out after winning possession**.

Newcastle United's Strong Home Form

Newcastle's last 5 home games	Newcastle' last 5 away games
W: 3-0 vs Ipswich Town	D: 1-1 vs Brighton
W: 5-0 vs Crystal Palace	L: 4-1 vs Aston Villa
W: 4-1 vs Manchester United	W: 0-3 vs Leicester City
W: 2-1 vs Brentford	W: 0-1 vs West Ham
W: 4-3 vs Nottingham Forest	L: 2-0 vs Liverpool

In their last 5 home games, Newcastle have taken 15/15 points, scoring 18 goals and conceding just 5. In contrast, in their last 5 away games, they have taken 7/15 points, scoring 6 goals and conceding 7.

This is a trend that Newcastle has seen throughout the season, with significantly better performances at St. James' Park than on the road.

[Data Source: [WhoScored.com](#)]

Metric	Home	Away
Shots per 90	<u>15.5</u>	11.9
Goals Scored (per 90)	<u>38 (2.34)</u>	28 (1.55)
Goals Conceded (per 90)	17 (1.00)	<u>18 (1.39)</u>
xG (per 90)	<u>34.2 (2.01)</u>	30.86 (1.71)
xGA (per 90)	23.64 (1.39)	<u>26.25 (1.46)</u>

Not only are Newcastle taking more shots, creating more chances and scoring more goals, but they are better at preventing chances and concede lesser goals in home fixtures.