



Brentford F.C.

Pre-Match Analysis

Expected Line-up:

Manager: **Thomas Frank**

Formation: **4-2-3-1**



Injuries and Suspensions list¹

Injured Players

- #10 Josh Dasilva (Knee)
- #09 Igor Thiago (Knee)
- #39 Gustavo Nunes (Back)
- #02 Aaron Hickey (Fitness)
- #14 Fabio Carvalho (Shoulder)

Suspended 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](#).

Phase 1: Build-up

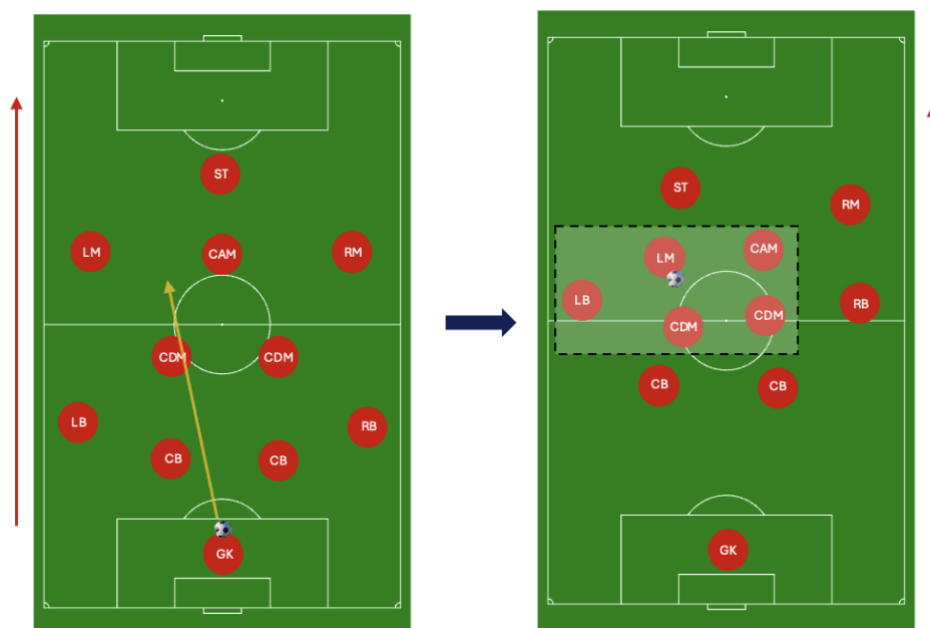
Brentford **adapt their build-up tactics based on the opposition press.**

- When they face teams that press high (like Chelsea), they opt to play long balls – often targeting Kevin Schade or Yoane Wissa in the half-space on the left-side of the pitch.
 - Brentford's goalkeeper has attempted the 4th highest number of launched passes this season, averaging 17.1 launched passes per 90.
- Brentford attempt to create overloads around these half-spaces, aiming to win the second ball in the middle third of the pitch.

If Brentford try and play out from the back, they usually aim to get the two pivots on the ball, or use Mikkell Daamsgard and Bryan Mbuemo who drop to receive passes.

Brentford player positions after long balls

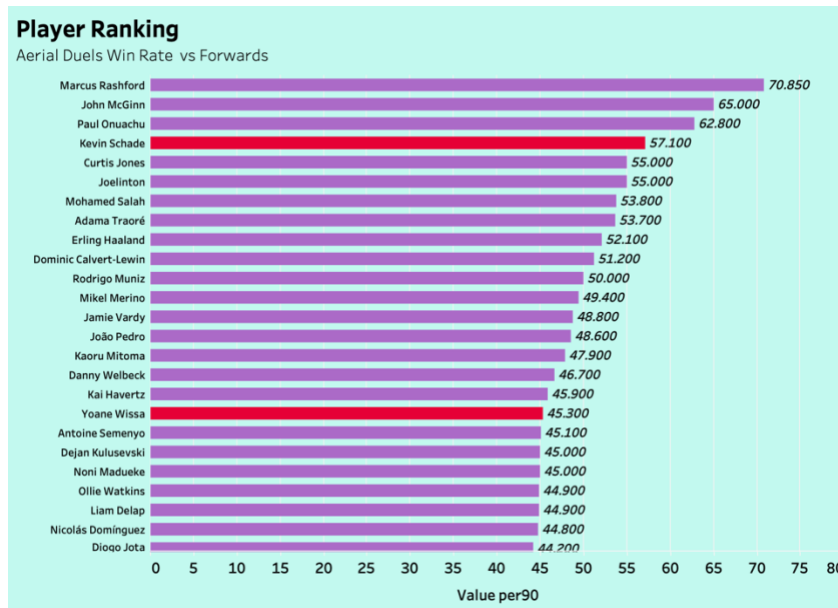
Figure 1:
Brentford shape during long-ball build-up



- Either Yoane Wissa (ST) or Kevin Schade (LM) make an attempt to win the aerial duel after the long ball, while the other is positioned behind him to win the flick-on, usually on the shoulder of an opposition defender.
- The holding midfielders (CDM), left-back (LB) and the attacking midfielder (CAM), surround the area around the intended target to recover possession.

Brentford have recorded above average recoveries in the Premier League this season. They make 42 recoveries per game on average, ranking 8th highest in the league.

Figure 2:
Aerial Duel Win Rate vs Forwards (>720 minutes)



Kevin Schade and Yoane Wissa have some of the highest aerial duel win rates among forwards in the Premier League this season.

Kevin Schade averages around 6.8 aerial duels per 90, ranking 6th highest among forwards who have played at least 720 minutes this season.

Phase 2: Progression into Final Third

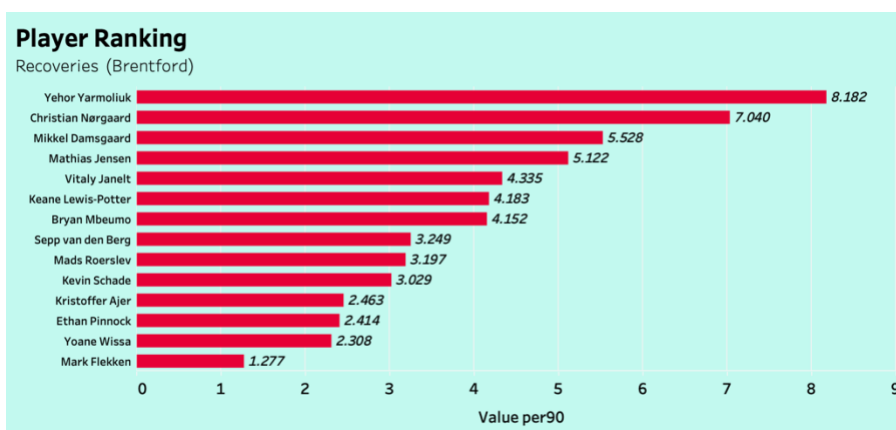
Once Brentford are able to retain possession in the middle third, they attempt to make progressive passes through the lines to find their attacking players.

- Short, intricate passes to progress the ball forward. Players like Mikkel Daamsgaard and Bryan Mbuemo are important here, since they drop to receive passes.
- They also look to switch the ball to players on the right flank, especially in situations where there is an overload of players on the left-side after playing long balls from the back.

What player(s) are frequently involved in this phase?

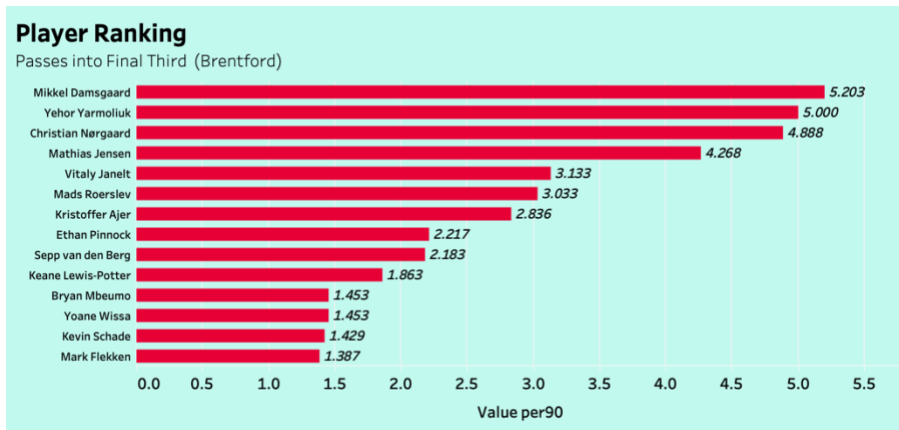
The two holding midfielders and the attacking midfielder play important roles in this phase.

Figure 3:
Brentford players (>720 minutes): Recoveries per 90



The centrally positioned midfielders rank at the top of the charts for recoveries made by Brentford players this season.

Figure 4:
Brentford players (>720 minutes): Passes into Final Third per 90

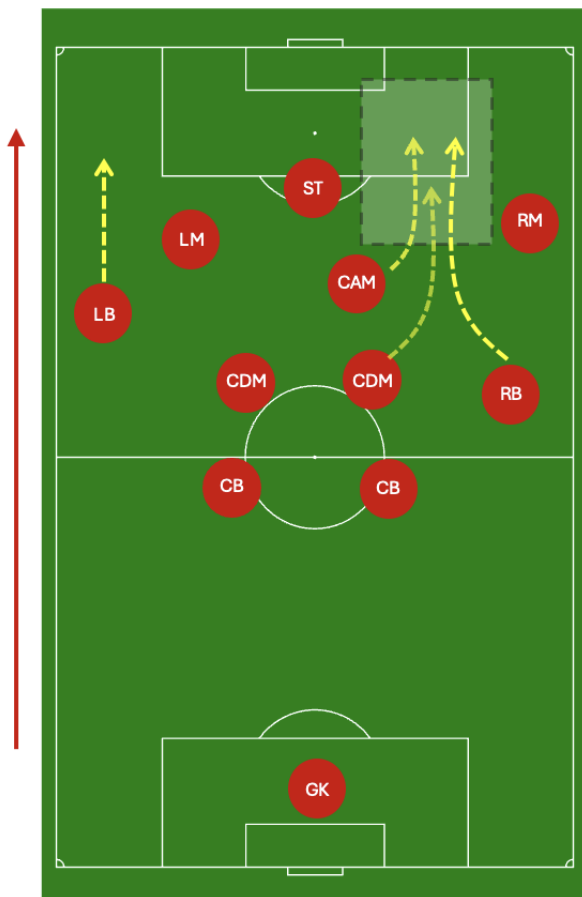


The same players rank high when we assess the players involved in moving the ball into the Brentford's attacking third as well.

Phase 3: Final Third

Player movements in the Final Third

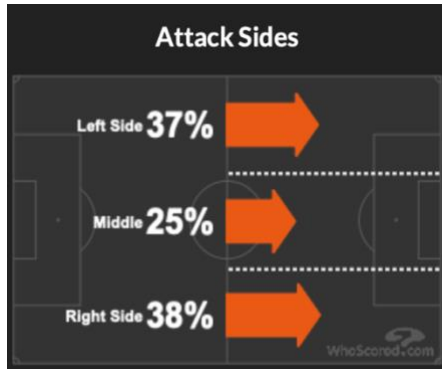
Figure 5:
Brentford player movements in the final third



- K. Lewis-Potter (LB) is more attack-minded than S. van den Berg (RB), often occupying the wide role on the left-flank while Kevin Schade (LM) moves into the left pocket.
- On the opposite flank, B. Mbeumo (RM) stays closer to the touchline, **receiving switches that create 1v1 situations against the opposition full-back.**
- Brentford's positioning often creates a gap in the right half-space (see figure). The RB often makes an underlying run into this space, essentially making it a 2v1 situation on the right flank.
 - o This movement allows **B. Mbeumo** to **cut inside and cross the ball** with his strong foot.
 - o M. Daamsgard (CAM) and/or C. Nørgaard (CDM) also make these runs at times.

Attacking Characteristics

Figure 6:
Brentford Attack Sides



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

Brentford attack have used the wide areas to attack this season, without any significant preference for the right or left flank.

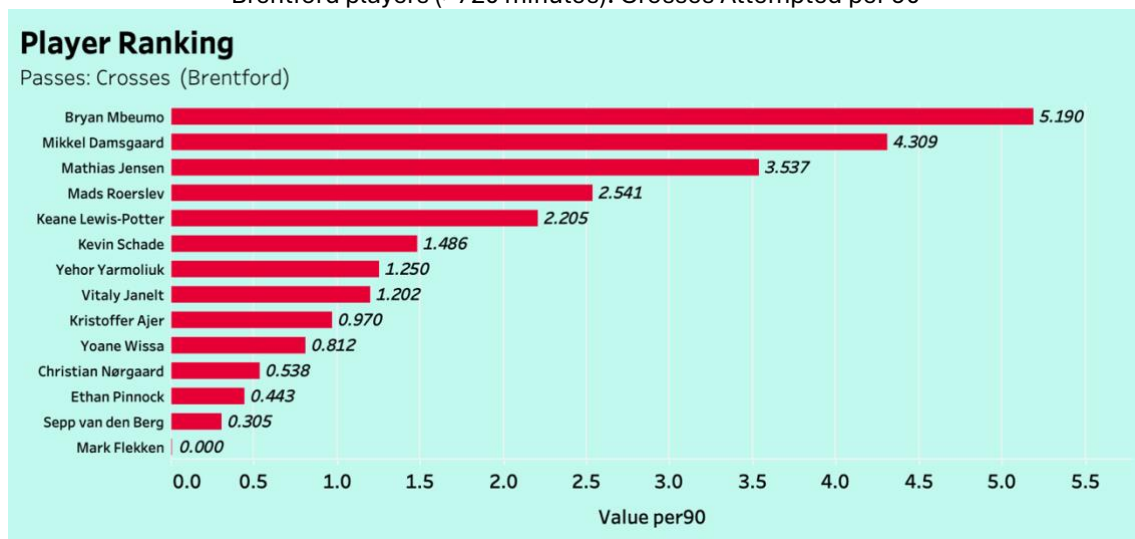
Attacking from wide areas has led to Brentford **frequently using crosses this season**.

Table 1:
Brentford: Crossing Metrics

[Data Source: [FBRef](https://fbref.com)]

Metric	Value	EPL Ranking (high → low)
Crosses attempted per 90	17.43	6 th
Successful Crosses per 90	2.33	3 rd
Touches in attacking third per cross	7.8	7 th

Figure 7:
Brentford players (>720 minutes): Crosses Attempted per 90



Shooting Characteristics

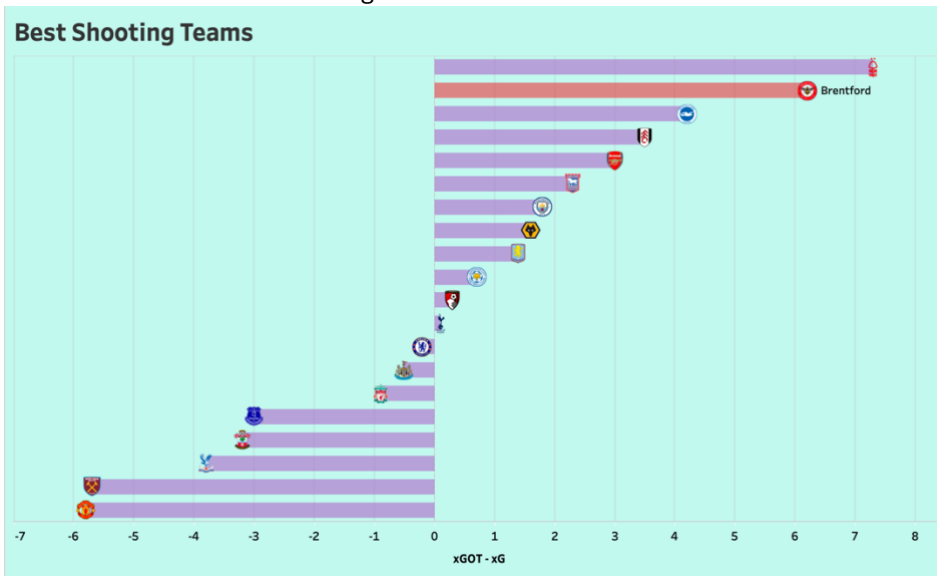
Brentford are not the most prolific shooters, but they shoot accurately and from high-quality positions.

Table 2:
Brentford: Shooting Metrics

Metric	Value	EPL Ranking (high → low)
Shots per 90	11.13	15 th
Shots on Target %	40.1%	1 st
Non-Penalty xG per shot	0.13	1 st
Conversion Rate	34%	5 th

Figure 8:






Premier League 24/25 season: xGOT - xG



Brentford have the second highest difference between their xGOT and xG at 6.20, indicating that the quality of their shots have led to an additional 6.2 expected goals scored over the course of this season.

The above chart assesses the shooting quality of teams in the Premier League this season, by comparing the differences between their post-shot xG and xG values. Higher values indicate an increased probability of scoring from a shot based on the placement of the shot on goal.

What player(s) are frequently involved in this phase?

PLAYER					
90s	25	29.9	24.4	18.5	27.3
Goals (Total)	0.08 (2)	0.54 (16)	0.57 (14)	0.38 (7)	0.04 (1)
xG	0.1	0.33	0.57	0.32	0.09
Assists (Total)	0.4 (10)	0.17 (5)	0.08 (2)	0.11 (2)	0.07 (2)
xAG	0.29	0.22	0.07	0.17	0.07
Shots	1.12	2.01	2.7	2.27	0.95
SCA	4.04	3.78	2.21	2.27	2.16
Key Passes	2.16	1.77	0.82	0.92	0.73
Passes into Penalty Area	2.28	1.67	0.33	0.38	1.36
Crosses into Penalty Area	0.6	0.47	0.04	0.11	0.44
Carries into Penalty Area	0.32	1.94	0.98	1.62	1.21

Attack

Chance Creation

- **Daams** is the primary creative outlet in the team, often involved in metrics that involve chance creation.
- **Mbuemo** and **Wissa** have been heavily involved in the conversion of these chances into goals.

Out-of-Possession Tactics

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

Pressing Approach: Man Marking during Opponent Build-up phase.

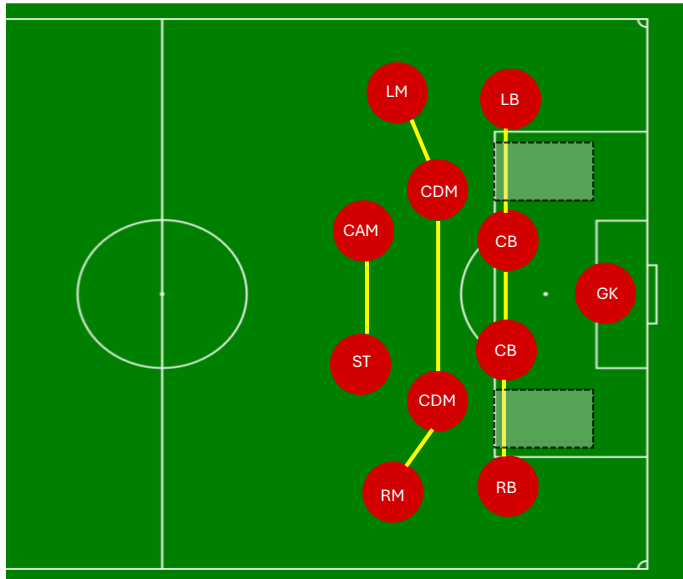
- Brentford use a **man-to-man pressing approach** when their opponent attempts to play out from the back.
 - They aim to prevent the opposition midfielders from receiving and progressing the ball forwards.
 - They also trigger a high press when the ball is played wide, blocking passing lanes for the player in-possession.

Defensive Shape: 4-4-2 Low-Block

- However, once the opposition team is able to break through their press or hold comfortable possession in their attacking half, **Brentford players retreat into a 4-4-2 low-block structure**.
 - By staying compact and reducing space between units, they try to prevent the opposition from playing through them, limiting space for the creative players around the box.

Figure 9:

Brentford 4-4-2 Low-Block



- Central defenders (CBs) stay close to opposition striker, while full-backs stay close to wingers
- This opens a gap in the half-space that can be exploited by teams to break through Brentford's low-block.
 - Brentford use the CDM's to cover this space when possession is being held on their side.

Metrics that indicate Brentford's tendency to sit in a low-block

- Brentford's tendency to sit in a low block is evident by the number of touches their opposition get in the attacking third. On average, teams get 187.13 touches in the attacking third against Brentford, higher than against any other club in the Premier League.
- Moreover, teams get a lot of opportunities to shoot against Brentford.
 - o Brentford concede 16.8 shots per game, with 5.47 of them on target. Only Southampton average more shots conceded per game.
 - o However, these shots are usually from low-quality chances, with an non-penalty xG of 0.09 per shot (5th lowest in the league) and an average shot distance of 17.3 yards (4th highest in the league).
 - o Brentford have also blocked the most shots this season with 149, around 5 per game.

Transition Tactics

Defence to Attack Transition: Counter-Attacks

- The wide midfielders, striker, and attacking midfielder try to break quickly and attack the opposition defensive unit, who gradually push up due to Brentford's low-block.
 - o Brentford try to move the ball out of their defensive half to reduce pressure on the defensive unit.
 - o Their attacking unit is tasked with chasing down clearances and apply pressure on the opponent to move backwards so that Brentford can step out of their low block.

Attack to Defence Transition: Retreat into Defensive Shape

- Players closest to the ball, especially when Brentford lose possession in the middle of the pitch are responsible for applying pressure and preventing the opposition from attacking against them.
- The rest of the team are instructed to fall back as quickly as possible and retain their defensive structure.

SWOT Analysis

Brentford Strengths:

- High quality shooting and high conversion rates
- Threatening from set-pieces.
 - o Long throw-ins (thrown by Kevin Schade) in the attacking third.
 - o Play short from right-sided corners to change angle of delivery.

Brentford Weaknesses:

- Poor Chance Prevention
 - o Can struggle to shift back into low block structure in time if opponent attacks quickly after breaking initial press.

Potential Opportunities for Chelsea:

- Exploitable player instructions during low-block
 - o Brentford move one of the two holding midfielders into the defensive line to protect the gap when the full-back pushes out to defend against the winger.
 - o This can leave Cole Palmer and Enzo Fernandez with time and space in the pocket at the edge of the box – a position where both can create dangerous chances.
- By overloading one side during the low-block, Chelsea can switch the ball quickly to attack down the opposite flank before Brentford's units adjust.
 - o This can create good 1v1 opportunities for Chelsea's wingers to take-on the full-back and deliver balls into the box.