

Future champions: 270 names to watch closely

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1. Introduction

This report highlights the players born in 2003 or later who have accumulated the most playing experience over the last year (until 11 December 2023) in nine positions: goalkeepers, centre backs, left backs, right backs, holding midfielders, attacking midfielders, left wingers, right wingers and centre forwards. Footballers who played in more positions were ranked in that in which they played the most during the current season, or the last completed one for the leagues already ended.

Expressed on the basis of 100, the 'experience score' was calculated from the number of last year official game minutes played at club (league, national cups, international cups) or national team (senior, U23 and U21) level (limited to 2,250 minutes), the sporting level of the 25 most competitive matches in which the footballers took part (method available in this [note](#)), as well as the percentage of minutes played as first choice players.

In total, the report highlights no fewer than 270 players active in clubs in 49 leagues around the world: the top 30 for the nine positions listed above. With 17 footballers, the Spanish Liga is the most represented league, followed by the Belgian Pro League, the Dutch Eredivisie and the MLS (16 players in the three cases).

2. Rankings by position

Goalkeepers

The very precocious Guillaume Restes (Toulouse FC) has the highest experience score among goalkeepers: 77.6 out of 100, an extremely high value for a goalkeeper born in 2005. The French U21 international is ahead of the Ukrainian Pavlo Isenko (FK Vorskla) and the American Chris Brady (Chicago Fire). The latter is the highest-ranked goalkeeper among those born in 2004. The relatively low scores measured for goalkeepers compared to outfield players reflect the greater difficulty they have in obtaining playing time at senior level from an early age.

Figure 1: Goalkeepers

Year	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1 2005	Guillaume Restes Toulouse FC (FRA)	77.6	2'653	100%
2 2003	Pavlo Isenko FK Vorskla (UKR)	75.8	3'240	100%
3 2004	Chris Brady Chicago Fire (USA)	74.4	2'953	100%
4 2003	Pascal Loretz FC Luzern (SUI)	71.1	3'060	100%
5 2003	Veljko Ilić TSC Bačka Topola (SRB)	69.8	3'690	100%
6 2003	Jonas Urbig Greuther Fürth (GER/2)	66.4	3'150	100%
7 2004	Plamen Andreev Levski Sofia (BUL)	64.7	4'050	100%
8 2003	Oleksandr Saputin Zorya Luhansk (UKR)	63.5	1'890	100%
9 2005	Carl Sidklev IF Brommapojkarna (SWE)	62.3	2'340	100%
10 2004	Mio Backhaus FC Volendam (NED)	58.3	2'250	100%
11 2003	Eetu Huuhtanen Inter Turku (FIN)	55.5	2'430	100%
12 2003	Elmo Henriksson IFK Mariehamn (FIN)	55.5	2'541	100%
13 2004	Alexander Bobek LKS Łódź (POL)	53.5	2'790	100%
14 2004	Charlie Setford Jong Ajax (NED/2)	53.0	2'070	100%
15 2003	Xavier Dziekoński Korona Kielce (POL)	52.6	2'790	100%
16 2004	Gabriel Slonina KAS Eupen (BEL)	51.4	1'530	100%
17 2003	Tjark Ernst Hertha BSC (GER/2)	51.2	1'800	100%
18 2003	Neneca Hélio Londrina EC (BRA/2)	51.1	1'890	100%
19 2003	Jonas Krumrey RB Salzburg (AUT)	48.8	2'115	100%
20 2004	James Beadle Oxford United (ENG/3)	47.2	2'790	100%
21 2004	Laurenz Orgler Rapid Wien (AUT)	46.9	2'422	100%
22 2005	Mike Penders KRC Genk (BEL)	46.6	1'890	100%
23 2003	Marcell Kovács Kisvárdai FC (HUN)	46.4	2'070	100%
24 2004	Rome-Jayden Owusu-Oduro Jong AZ (NED/2)	45.8	1'800	100%
25 2004	Andrey Khodanovich FK Orenburg (RUS)	45.2	2'160	100%
26 2003	Dmytro Ledviy Rukh Lviv (UKR)	45.0	1'350	100%
27 2003	Jakub Madrzyk Miedź Legnica (POL/2)	44.5	3'150	100%
28 2003	Kewin Komar Puszcza Niepolomice (POL)	43.4	1'980	100%
29 2003	Ovie Ejeheri Arsenal FC (ENG)	43.4	2'223	100%
30 2003	Antonín Kinský FK Pardubice (CZE)	43.0	1'734	100%

Centre backs

When it comes to players who have primarily played as centre backs in the current or last completed season, the Italian international Giorgio Scalvini (Atalanta BC) has the highest experience score (92.7), ahead of the Brazilian Lucas Beraldo (São Paulo FC) and the Portuguese international António Silva (SL Benfica). Eighth-placed Argentinian Felipe Sánchez (Gimnasia La Plata) is the top-ranked centre back born in 2004, while Frenchman Leny Yoro (LOSC Lille) tops the list among those born in 2005 (ninth overall).

Figure 2: Centre backs

Year	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1 2003	Giorgio Scalvini Atalanta BC (ITA)	92.7	3'727	99%
2 2003	Lucas Beraldo São Paulo FC (BRA)	85.7	4'172	100%
3 2003	António Silva SL Benfica (POR)	84.7	4'500	100%
4 2003	Isaak Touré FC Lorient (FRA)	83.1	2'376	98%
5 2003	Nicolás Romero CA Tucumán (ARG)	83.1	3'155	100%
6 2003	Ousmane Diomandé Sporting CP (POR)	82.9	3'327	97%
7 2003	Valentín Gómez Vélez Sarsfield (ARG)	82.8	2'333	99%
8 2004	Felipe Sánchez Gimnasia La Plata (ARG)	81.4	2'820	100%
9 2005	Leny Yoro LOSC Lille (FRA)	81.2	2'719	94%
10 2003	Zeno Debast RSC Anderlecht (BEL)	78.9	3'996	100%
11 2003	Viktor Melekhin FK Rostov (RUS)	78.1	2'835	93%
12 2004	Tomás Avilés Inter Miami (USA)	78.0	2'192	98%
13 2006	Jorrel Hato AFC Ajax (NED)	77.4	3'859	96%
14 2005	Jorne Spileers Club Brugge (BEL)	75.5	3'663	97%
15 2004	Bohdan Slyubyk Rukh Lviv (UKR)	75.2	2'677	97%
16 2004	Matte Smets Sint-Truidense VV (BEL)	75.1	2'782	99%
17 2006	Yasin Özcan Kasimpaşa SK (TUR)	73.2	2'521	94%
18 2003	Konstantinos Koulierakis PAOK FC (GRE)	72.9	3'018	93%
19 2003	Andreas Ndoj Olympiacos FC (GRE)	72.4	2'415	96%
20 2003	Leopold Querfeld Rapid Wien (AUT)	72.2	3'345	99%
21 2003	Soumaïla Coulibaly Royal Antwerp (BEL)	72.1	2'512	95%
22 2003	Floris Smand SC Cambuur (NED/2)	71.8	2'740	94%
23 2003	Aurèle Amenda Young Boys (SUI)	71.7	2'797	95%
24 2003	Albian Hajdari FC Lugano (SUI)	71.6	3'097	99%
25 2003	Martin Vitík Sparta Praha (CZE)	71.4	3'663	95%
26 2003	Julius Dirksen FC Emmen (NED/2)	70.8	2'542	92%
27 2003	Štěpán Chaloupek FK Teplice (CZE)	70.4	3'437	97%
28 2003	Bashir Humphreys Swansea City (ENG/2)	70.2	2'616	100%
29 2003	Maksym Dyachuk Dynamo Kyiv (UKR)	70.1	2'085	100%
30 2003	Casper Widell SBV Excelsior (NED)	69.8	3'066	100%

Left full/wing backs

The top four ranked left full or wing backs play for teams in Europe's big-5: Alejandro Balde (FC Barcelona), who has the third highest experience score overall (95.4), Levi Colwill (Chelsea FC), who also plays as a centre back, Milos Kerkez (Bournemouth AFC) and Luca Netz (Borussia M'gladbach). The Brazilian Rikelme (Cuiabá EC) is the top-ranked player outside the five major European leagues, as is the American full international Caleb Wiley (Atlanta United) among left or wing backs born in 2004 (ninth overall).

Figure 3: Left full/wing backs

	Year	Player	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1	2003	Alejandro Balde	FC Barcelona (ESP)	95.4	3'400	93%
2	2003	Levi Colwill	Chelsea FC (ENG)	94.5	3'354	93%
3	2003	Milos Kerkez	Bournemouth AFC (ENG)	89.3	4'259	98%
4	2003	Luca Netz	Borussia M'gladbach (GER)	85.9	2'174	94%
5	2003	Rikelme Hernandes	Cuiabá EC (BRA)	82.1	2'367	94%
6	2003	Vitaliy Roman	Rukh Lviv (UKR)	76.1	3'140	99%
7	2003	Bjorn Meijer	Club Brugge (BEL)	74.7	2'765	96%
8	2003	Álvaro Fernández	Granada CF (ESP)	74.5	2'545	90%
9	2004	Caleb Wiley	Atlanta United (USA)	74.1	2'930	98%
10	2003	Artem Smolyakov	FK Polissya (UKR)	73.4	3'297	94%
11	2003	Callum Doyle	Leicester City (ENG/2)	71.9	3'544	99%
12	2003	Noah Persson	Young Boys (SUI)	70.1	2'251	96%
13	2003	Youri Regeer	FC Twente (NED)	69.3	2'229	88%
14	2003	Mario Mitaj	Lokomotiv Moskva (RUS)	68.4	2'022	89%
15	2003	Roy Revivo	Maccabi Tel Aviv (ISR)	67.6	3'099	95%
16	2004	Vetle Walle Egeli	Sandefjord Fotball (NOR)	67.0	2'530	99%
17	2003	Mathias Lövik	Molde FK (NOR)	66.9	2'556	90%
18	2003	Fotis Kitsos	Volos FC (GRE)	66.7	2'545	91%
19	2005	Andrei Borza	Rapid București (ROM)	66.6	3'335	95%
20	2003	Anselmo McNulty	PEC Zwolle (NED)	64.6	3'240	97%
21	2003	Nathaniel Brown	FC Nürnberg (GER/2)	64.3	2'279	93%
22	2003	Rodrigo Silva	Vila Nova FC (BRA/2)	61.3	4'259	96%
23	2003	Samuel Dahl	Djurgardens IF (SWE)	61.2	2'836	100%
24	2004	Andriy Buleza	FK Minaj (UKR)	60.7	1'896	91%
25	2003	Marcus Baggesen	IFK Norrköping (SWE)	60.6	2'081	91%
26	2003	Miguel Rodriguez	CF Pachuca (MEX)	60.3	1'675	100%
27	2003	Ionuț Amzar	Dinamo București (ROM)	60.3	2'969	98%
28	2004	Tom Rothe	Holstein Kiel (GER/2)	60.1	2'453	99%
29	2004	Noah Allen	Inter Miami (USA)	60.0	1'914	89%
30	2003	Finn Stam	Jong AZ (NED/2)	57.6	2'626	99%

Right full/wing backs

Two players stand out for right full or wing backs, one born in 2003, Spain's Arnau Martínez (Girona FC), and the other in 2004, England's Rico Lewis (Manchester City). Third-placed Argentinian Agustín Gaiy (CA San Lorenzo) is the highest ranked player outside the European big-5, while Frenchman Saël Kumbedi (Olympique Lyonnais) tops the list for right full or wing backs born in 2005 (sixth overall). No other footballer born in 2005 is ranked in the top thirty, while there are eight born in 2004.

Figure 4: Right full/wing backs

Rank	Year	Name	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1	2003	Arnau Martínez	Girona FC (ESP)	95.4	3'128	99%
2	2004	Rico Lewis	Manchester City (ENG)	94.0	2'315	96%
3	2004	Agustín Gaiy	CA San Lorenzo (ARG)	83.5	3'019	100%
4	2003	Juanlu Sánchez	Sevilla FC (ESP)	83.0	2'733	95%
5	2003	Wesley Lima	CR Flamengo (BRA)	83.0	3'943	93%
6	2005	Saël Kumbedi	Olympique Lyonnais (FRA)	80.3	2'427	90%
7	2003	Devyne Rensch	AFC Ajax (NED)	77.2	3'292	94%
8	2003	Édier Ocampo	Atlético Nacional (COL)	73.5	2'391	95%
9	2003	Elias Jelert	FC København (DEN)	72.8	4'221	99%
10	2003	Kobe Franklin	Toronto FC (USA)	70.6	2'276	94%
11	2003	John Lerma	Atlético Huila (COL)	69.9	2'650	95%
12	2003	Dexter Lembikisa	Rotherham United (ENG/2)	69.7	2'618	88%
13	2003	Nikolas Veratschnig	Wolfsberger AC (AUT)	69.0	2'716	93%
14	2003	Severin Ottiger	FC Luzern (SUI)	67.5	2'316	89%
15	2003	Matías Vásquez	Deportes Magallanes (CHI)	67.5	2'317	96%
16	2003	Alexandru Pantea	FCSB (ROM)	67.3	2'637	95%
17	2004	Brooke Norton-Cuffy	Millwall FC (ENG/2)	67.3	3'004	89%
18	2004	Srdjan Kuzmić	Viborg FF (DEN)	65.7	2'270	98%
19	2003	Marc Pubill	UD Almería (ESP)	65.1	1'966	96%
20	2003	Max Johnston	Sturm Graz (AUT)	64.9	2'444	89%
21	2004	Magnus Riisnaes	Vålerenga Fotball (NOR)	64.5	2'630	93%
22	2003	Uroš Lazić	FK Novi Pazar (SRB)	64.1	2'992	94%
23	2003	Andrey Langovich	FK Rostov (RUS)	64.0	1'933	85%
24	2004	Olwethu Makhanya	Philadelphia Union (USA)	63.0	2'250	100%
25	2003	Omar El Hilali	RCD Espanyol (ESP/2)	61.9	2'399	92%
26	2003	Keral Ríos	Pérez Zeledón (CRC)	60.5	2'440	97%
27	2004	Ousmane Diao	CD Mafra (POR/2)	59.6	2'350	97%
28	2003	Martin Stoychev	Arda Kardzhali (BUL)	59.3	2'191	100%
29	2003	Filippo Terracciano	Hellas Verona (ITA)	59.2	1'576	85%
30	2004	Markus Karlsson	Hammarby IF (SWE)	57.8	2'095	98%

Holding midfielders

One player born in 2004 has the highest experience score (96.0 out of 100, second highest value overall) among holding midfielders: Pablo Gavi (FC Barcelona). The Spanish full international is ahead of two French footballers: Ismaël Doukouré (RC Strasbourg), who also plays in central defence, and the very talented Warren Zaire-Emery (Paris St-Germain). Born in 2006, Zaire-Emery is the best-placed player born in 2005 or later. He is ahead of three other very promising holding midfielders born in 2004: João Neves (SL Benfica), Roméo Lavia (Chelsea FC) and Hugo Larsson (Eintracht Frankfurt).

Figure 5: Holding midfielders

Rank	Year	Name	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1	2004	Pablo Gavi	FC Barcelona (ESP)	96.0	4'198	95%
2	2003	Ismaël Doukouré	RC Strasbourg (FRA)	84.8	3'184	99%
3	2006	Warren Zaire-Emery	Paris St-Germain (FRA)	83.5	2'604	89%
4	2004	João Neves	SL Benfica (POR)	81.8	2'826	94%
5	2004	Roméo Lavia	Chelsea FC (ENG)	81.1	1'941	95%
6	2004	Hugo Larsson	Eintracht Frankfurt (GER)	79.4	3'109	94%
.	2003	Alexsander Gomes	Fluminense FC (BRA)	79.4	2'398	87%
8	2003	Federico Redondo	Argentinos Juniors (ARG)	79.3	3'166	90%
9	2003	Ignacio Miramón	LOSC Lille (FRA)	79.2	2'291	97%
10	2003	Renato Veiga	FC Basel (SUI)	78.9	2'734	95%
11	2005	Arthur Vermeeren	Royal Antwerp (BEL)	77.6	5'104	100%
12	2004	Jhon Solís	Girona FC (ESP)	77.0	2'302	97%
.	2003	Fidel Ambríz	Club León (MEX)	77.0	3'462	89%
14	2003	Calvin Twigt	FC Volendam (NED)	74.6	2'959	99%
.	2003	Diego Gómez	Inter Miami (USA)	74.6	2'898	92%
16	2003	Kuryu Matsuki	FC Tokyo (JPN)	73.9	2'407	98%
17	2003	Daniel Edelman	New York RB (USA)	73.8	2'643	98%
18	2003	Pablo Barrios	Atlético Madrid (ESP)	73.7	2'001	72%
.	2003	Juan Salcedo	CS Trinitense (PAR)	73.7	2'430	97%
20	2004	Kyrylo Sigeev	FK Oleksandriya (UKR)	73.1	2'400	92%
21	2003	Matteo Prati	Cagliari Calcio (ITA)	72.9	2'714	97%
22	2004	Lesley Ugochukwu	Chelsea FC (ENG)	72.6	1'966	85%
23	2003	Lucas Gourna-Douath	RB Salzburg (AUT)	72.2	2'752	92%
24	2005	Noel Buck	New England (USA)	72.1	2'264	94%
25	2005	Benjamin Cremaschi	Inter Miami (USA)	71.8	3'089	90%
26	2004	Dokou Dodo	Smouha SC (EGY)	71.3	2'569	93%
27	2003	Niko Sigur	Hajduk Split (CRO)	70.2	2'817	99%
28	2004	Owen Wolff	Austin FC (USA)	69.7	2'186	93%
.	2003	Cesare Casadei	Leicester City (ENG/2)	69.7	2'399	89%
30	2003	Benjamin Tahirović	AFC Ajax (NED)	69.5	1'916	91%

Attacking midfielders

On the podium for attacking midfielders are three top-class full international players: England's Jude Bellingham (Real Madrid), as well as Germany's Florian Wirtz (Bayer Leverkusen) and Jamal Musiala (Bayern Munich). All three have an experience score above 90, with Bellingham's value being the highest in absolute terms (96.2). Eleventh-placed Moroccan full international Bilal El Khannouss (KRC Genk) is the top-ranked player born in 2004, ahead of Israeli Oscar Gloukh (RB Salzburg, 17th).

Figure 6: Attacking midfielders

Year	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1 2003	Jude Bellingham	96.2	3'609	99%
2 2003	Florian Wirtz	90.9	3'827	92%
3 2003	Jamal Musiala	90.3	2'961	90%
4 2003	Tommaso Baldanzi	89.3	2'254	96%
5 2003	Javier Guerra	88.8	3'012	92%
6 2003	Arne Engels	88.2	2'533	92%
7 2003	Harvey Elliott	87.3	2'680	79%
8 2003	Rayan Cherki	83.1	3'618	95%
9 2003	Arsen Zakharyan	78.8	2'138	88%
10 2003	Andy Diouf	78.3	2'903	91%
11 2003	Kacper Kozłowski	76.7	2'401	98%
2004	Bilal El Khannouss	76.7	4'526	95%
13 2003	Fermín López	75.8	2'583	91%
14 2003	Hákon Arnar Haraldsson	73.8	2'564	90%
15 2003	Alex Scott	73.1	2'248	98%
16 2003	Mateusz Legowski	73.0	2'144	92%
17 2004	Oscar Gloukh	72.4	3'637	88%
18 2003	Yiánnis Konstantelias	72.1	3'853	93%
19 2003	Yaroslav Mikhaylov	70.5	2'158	82%
2003	Martin Baturina	70.5	4'330	98%
21 2004	Mads Enggard	69.3	2'569	99%
22 2004	Kristian Hlynsson	69.1	3'205	97%
23 2003	Jack McGlynn	68.3	3'046	83%
24 2003	Christos Zafeiris	68.2	3'498	85%
25 2004	Mathias Delorge	67.9	2'330	99%
26 2003	Charlie Patino	67.1	2'347	91%
27 2003	Alberto Moleiro	66.8	2'122	87%
28 2004	Adam Wharton	66.7	2'156	95%
29 2003	Pablo Marín	66.1	2'690	94%
30 2003	Marko Sapuga	65.5	1'959	100%

Left wingers

Three Argentinians top the list among left wingers: the full international Alejandro Garnacho (Manchester United), another player born in 2004, Valentín Barco (Boca Juniors), as well as Brian Aguirre (Newell's Old Boys). Fourth-placed Dutchman Myron van Brederode is the best-placed European, just ahead of Frenchman Habib Diarra (RC Strasbourg), who also plays in midfield. Another South American footballer, the Colombian Óscar Perea (Atlético Nacional), is the highest-ranked left winger born in 2005 (thirteenth overall).

Figure 7: Left wingers

Year	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1 2004	Alejandro Garnacho Manchester United (ENG)	82.9	2'147	72%
2 2004	Valentín Barco Boca Juniors (ARG)	82.1	2'315	96%
3 2003	Brian Aguirre Newell's Old Boys (ARG)	80.5	2'580	93%
4 2003	Myron van Brederode AZ Alkmaar (NED)	76.8	2'637	92%
5 2004	Habib Diarra RC Strasbourg (FRA)	74.7	2'104	87%
6 2003	Benjamín Domínguez Gimnasia La Plata (ARG)	74.0	2'200	85%
7 2003	Brian Gutiérrez Chicago Fire (USA)	72.1	2'953	93%
8 2003	Lucas Besozzi Grêmio FBPA (BRA)	71.1	2'085	83%
9 2004	Rubio España Envigado FC (COL)	70.9	2'540	90%
10 2004	Nikita Saltykov Krylia Sovetov (RUS)	70.8	2'532	85%
11 2003	Cade Cowell San Jose Earthquakes (USA)	70.5	2'366	87%
12 2004	Ruben van Bommel AZ Alkmaar (NED)	68.9	2'950	94%
13 2005	Óscar Perea Atlético Nacional (COL)	67.9	2'195	85%
14 2003	Mohamed Hamdi ENPPI Club (EGY)	66.3	2'095	92%
15 2003	Tobias Gulliksen FK Bodø/Glimt (NOR)	63.9	2'184	90%
16 2003	Kazeem Olaigbe Cercle Brugge (BEL)	63.3	2'553	86%
17 2004	Ibrahim Osman FC Nordsjælland (DEN)	63.0	2'101	91%
18 2003	Tiago Morais Boavista FC (POR)	62.1	2'187	79%
19 2004	Josimar Alcócer KVC Westerlo (BEL)	61.5	2'770	92%
20 2004	Anton Kade FC Basel (SUI)	61.4	1'998	93%
21 2003	Bruninho Gonçalves RB Bragantino (BRA)	61.4	1'798	87%
22 2003	Gabriel Martínez CD Mirandés (ESP/2)	60.8	3'284	99%
23 2003	Diego Luna Real Salt Lake (USA)	60.6	1'928	89%
24 2004	Başar Önal De Graafschap (NED/2)	58.4	3'230	99%
25 2003	Nazar Voloshyn Dynamo Kyiv (UKR)	58.4	1'907	82%
26 2004	Sávio Moreira Girona FC (ESP)	57.1	1'500	95%
27 2003	Topi Keskinen HJK Helsinki (FIN)	57.0	3'406	90%
28 2003	Emircan Gürlük FK Orenburg (RUS)	57.0	1'985	79%
29 2003	Dario Grgić Železničar Pančevo (SRB)	56.1	2'410	94%
30 2005	Momodou Souko BK Häcken (SWE)	55.3	2'041	76%

Right wingers

The outstanding Xavi Simons (RB Leipzig, on loan from Paris St-Germain) tops the table for right wingers. The Dutchman is ahead of two other full internationals: Italy's Wilfried Gnonto (Leeds United) and Belgium's Johan Bakayoko (PSV Eindhoven). Sixth-placed Mexican Rodrigo Huescas (Cruz Azul) is the top-ranked player outside Europe, while Ângelo Gabriel (RC Strasbourg, on loan from Chelsea FC) and Malick Fofana (KAA Gent) head the list among players born in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

Figure 8: Right wingers

Year	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1 2003	Xavi Simons RB Leipzig (GER)	90.6	4'646	99%
2 2003	Wilfried Gnonto Leeds United (ENG/2)	87.9	2'593	84%
3 2003	Johan Bakayoko PSV Eindhoven (NED)	80.6	3'798	92%
4 2004	Ângelo Gabriel RC Strasbourg (FRA)	80.5	2'198	74%
5 2004	Juan Gauto FC Basel (SUI)	80.1	2'909	94%
6 2003	Rodrigo Huescas Cruz Azul (MEX)	76.9	2'378	89%
7 2004	Sergey Pinyaev Lokomotiv Moskva (RUS)	74.9	2'337	85%
8 2003	Ernest Nuamah Olympique Lyonnais (FRA)	73.8	3'104	90%
9 2005	Malick Fofana KAA Gent (BEL)	70.9	3'048	85%
10 2003	Luciano Rodríguez Liverpool FC (URU)	67.6	2'350	90%
11 2003	Victor Lind IFK Norrköping (SWE)	67.2	2'565	95%
12 2003	Joao Grimaldo Sporting Cristal (PER)	66.7	3'202	88%
13 2005	Assane Diao Real Betis (ESP)	65.8	2'646	91%
14 2004	Domagoj Bukvić NK Osijek (CRO)	65.6	2'383	91%
15 2004	Dennis Gjengaar Odds BK (NOR)	65.1	2'203	96%
16 2004	Issahaku Fatawu Leicester City (ENG/2)	64.2	2'070	86%
17 2005	Adrian Mazilu FCV Farul (ROM)	64.1	2'790	87%
18 2003	Loizos Loizou AC Omonia (CYP)	63.2	2'598	82%
19 2003	Matías Soulé Frosinone Calcio (ITA)	63.2	1'734	89%
20 2005	Rareş Pop UTA Arad (ROM)	63.1	2'752	87%
21 2004	Christopher Bonsu Baah KRC Genk (BEL)	62.5	2'114	77%
22 2004	Luis Díaz Envigado FC (COL)	62.1	2'069	83%
23 2003	Nemanja Motika Olimpija Ljubljana (SVN)	62.0	2'219	82%
24 2005	Roony Bardghji FC København (DEN)	61.4	2'151	77%
25 2004	Alexandru Musi Petrolul Ploieşti (ROM)	61.3	2'439	96%
26 2004	Nicolás Vallejo CA Talleres (ARG)	61.1	1'812	84%
27 2004	Samuel Akere Botev Plovdiv (BUL)	60.0	2'624	93%
28 2003	Artur Serobyán Casa Pia AC (POR)	60.0	2'229	92%
29 2005	Enso González Wolverhampton FC (ENG)	59.8	1'849	91%
30 2004	Jaydon Banel AFC Ajax (NED)	59.0	2'751	94%

Centre forwards

Two English Premier League players top the list for centre forwards: the 2003-born Dane Rasmus Højlund (Manchester United) and the 2004-born Irishman Evan Ferguson (Brighton & Hove). Two very talented Brazilians born in 2005 and 2006 respectively feature in the top 10: future FC Barcelona's Vitor Roque (Athletico Paranaense), fourth overall, and future Real Madrid's Endrick Felipe (SE Palmeiras), seventh. Two other South American forwards born in 2005 are in the top 15: Argentina's Jerónimo Domina (CA Unión), eleventh, and Chile's Damián Pizarro (Colo Colo), thirteenth.

Figure 9: Centre forwards

	Year	Player	Club	Score	Minutes	% minutes starting 11
1	2003	Rasmus Højlund	Manchester United (ENG)	88.9	3'298	87%
2	2004	Evan Ferguson	Brighton & Hove (ENG)	88.4	2'831	82%
3	2003	Marcos Leonardo	Santos FC (BRA)	85.5	4'131	100%
4	2005	Vitor Roque	Athletico Paranaense (BRA)	80.9	3'172	91%
5	2003	Elye Wahi	RC Lens (FRA)	80.1	2'631	85%
6	2003	Benjamin Šeško	RB Leipzig (GER)	79.5	2'452	84%
7	2006	Endrick Felipe	SE Palmeiras (BRA)	77.8	2'766	81%
8	2003	Alejo Véliz	Tottenham Hotspur (ENG)	74.3	2'014	96%
9	2003	Emanuel Emegha	RC Strasbourg (FRA)	73.8	2'455	92%
10	2003	Ricardo Pepi	PSV Eindhoven (NED)	73.4	2'521	81%
11	2005	Jerónimo Domina	CA Unión (ARG)	73.3	2'095	90%
12	2003	Matija Frigan	KVC Westerlo (BEL)	72.1	2'760	96%
13	2005	Damián Pizarro	Colo Colo (CHI)	70.9	3'147	92%
14	2004	Karim Konaté	RB Salzburg (AUT)	69.3	2'214	89%
15	2003	Petar Ratkov	RB Salzburg (AUT)	67.6	2'458	85%
16	2004	Filip Bundgaard	Randers FC (DEN)	67.5	2'259	94%
17	2003	Liam Delap	Hull City AFC (ENG/2)	66.8	2'679	86%
18	2003	Szymon Włodarczyk	Sturm Graz (AUT)	66.3	2'496	81%
19	2004	Samu Omorodion	Deportivo Alavés (ESP)	66.1	2'264	85%
20	2003	Srdjan Hrstić	BK Häcken (SWE)	65.9	2'413	91%
21	2004	Georgios Koutsias	Chicago Fire (USA)	65.6	2'177	83%
22	2003	Ante Crnac	Raków Częstochowa (POL)	65.5	2'756	88%
23	2003	Marco Nasti	SSC Bari (ITA/2)	65.2	2'664	95%
24	2004	Lucas Stassin	KVC Westerlo (BEL)	64.8	2'166	88%
25	2003	Franjo Ivanović	HNK Rijeka (CRO)	63.9	2'666	95%
26	2004	Orrri Óskarsson	FC København (DEN)	63.7	2'440	73%
27	2003	Christian Rasmussen	FC Nordsjælland (DEN)	63.6	2'304	87%
28	2004	Idan Gorno	Maccabi Petah Tikva (ISR)	60.8	3'006	92%
29	2003	Mexx Meerdink	AZ Alkmaar (NED)	60.3	2'135	91%
.	2003	Lars Villiger	FC Luzern (SUI)	60.3	2'074	84%

3. Conclusion

While early experience of top-level adult football is no guarantee of a great career, it is at least a stepping stone towards one. The 270 players listed in this report are in an excellent position to one day play for the world's top clubs and leagues, as it is already the case for those with the highest experience scores: Jude Bellingham, Pablo Gavi, Alejandro Balde, Arnau Martínez, Levi Colwill and Rico Lewis, to name just the top six.

Written in February 2015 using a more rudimentary but similar method, the CIES Football Observatory's second [Monthly Report](#) highlighted players who have thereafter enjoyed very good careers, such as, among those who had not yet turned 20 and were playing for modest clubs, the Croatian goalkeeper Dominik Livaković, the Slovakian centre back Milan Škriniar and the Polish winger Przemysław Frankowski.

Other names mentioned have failed to live up to their promises for a variety of reasons, such as injury, a drop in form or motivation, indiscipline, mistaken career choices, etc. From this point of view, no scouting method, no matter how solidly constructed, provides a total guarantee of success. Nevertheless, with the proliferation of available data, now more than ever, science can be an undeniable asset in the recruitment process.