



Global Scientific and Academic Research Journal of Economics, Business and Management

ISSN: 2583-5645 (Online)

Frequency: Monthly

Published By GSAR Publishers

Journal Homepage Link- <https://gsarpublishers.com/journals-gsarjebm-home/>



THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: CHALLENGES OF LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

By

Vincent English¹ and Petr Cech²

^{1,2}Department of Sport Sciences, Longford College, Longford, Ireland.



Article History

Received: 14/03/2026

Accepted: 23/03/2026

Published: 25/03/2026

Vol –5 Issue – 3

PP: -76-81

Abstract

The UEFA Champions League (UCL) is widely regarded as the pinnacle of European club football, commanding a global audience of billions and generating revenues exceeding €3 billion annually. Despite this commercial success, the long-term sustainability of the tournament is increasingly threatened by a complex array of financial, competitive, structural, and social challenges. This paper presents a systematic literature review examining these challenges and their implications for the tournament's future viability. Evidence from peer-reviewed studies indicates that growing financial disparities among participating clubs undermine competitive balance, with talent concentration in a select group of elite clubs diminishing the unpredictability that drives fan engagement. The UEFA Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations, introduced in 2011, have achieved limited success in curbing excessive club spending, with enforcement inconsistencies permitting circumvention by wealthier clubs. Tournament structure issues, including fixture congestion and format predictability, contribute to player fatigue and declining audience interest in earlier rounds. Environmental sustainability, gender equality, and social responsibility represent emerging dimensions of sustainability that demand greater institutional attention. Digital transformation offers both opportunities and challenges for fan engagement and commercial revenue generation. This review synthesises evidence from academic literature to evaluate these challenges and identify strategic recommendations for sustainable management of the tournament. Findings suggest that a multi-dimensional approach—encompassing equitable revenue distribution, strengthened governance, enhanced youth development, and inclusive fan engagement strategies—is essential for preserving the UCL's status as the world's foremost club football competition.

Keywords: UEFA Champions League, financial sustainability, competitive balance, Financial Fair Play, sports governance, fan engagement, tournament structure

Abbreviations: UCL – UEFA Champions League; FFP – Financial Fair Play; UEFA – Union of European Football Associations; CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility; AR – Augmented Reality; VAR – Video Assistant Referee

1. INTRODUCTION

The UEFA Champions League (UCL), established in 1955 as the European Cup, has evolved into the world's most prestigious and commercially significant club football competition. Organised by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the tournament assembles elite clubs from across Europe in an annual contest for the most coveted trophy in club football. The competition's global reach is unparalleled: it commands an annual cumulative television audience exceeding four billion viewers across more than 200 countries and territories, generating revenues that sustain not

only the participating clubs but also the broader European football ecosystem (Dantas et al., 2020).

However, the tournament's remarkable commercial success has simultaneously given rise to structural vulnerabilities that threaten its long-term sustainability. Financial inequality between large and small clubs has intensified significantly over the past two decades, driven by asymmetric distributions of broadcasting revenues, prize money, and commercial income (Felipe et al., 2020). This financial stratification has concentrated elite talent within a small cohort of 'superclubs,' progressively narrowing the competitive landscape and



reducing the uncertainty of outcome that is fundamental to spectator appeal (Frick et al., 2023; Wills et al., 2020).

The tournament's format has also been subject to criticism. The seeded group stage structure, introduced to enhance the quality of early-round fixtures, has paradoxically increased the predictability of outcomes, with evidence suggesting reduced competitive tension in preliminary rounds (Csató, 2020; Engist et al., 2020). Concurrently, an expanding fixture calendar has generated concerns about player welfare, with fatigue and injury rates rising among elite athletes subjected to intensive competition schedules (Volpi, 2015).

Beyond financial and structural challenges, the UCL faces increasing scrutiny regarding its social and environmental responsibilities. Gender inequality in football governance, the environmental footprint of major tournaments, and the management of fan behaviour represent dimensions of sustainability gaining prominence in the literature (Valenti et al., 2021; Raimo et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic provided a stark illustration of the tournament's vulnerability to external disruptions, exposing the fragility of revenue streams dependent on matchday attendance (Solanelas et al., 2023).

This paper provides a systematic literature review of the multidimensional sustainability challenges confronting the UCL. It aims to: (1) synthesise evidence on the financial, competitive, structural, and social dimensions of sustainability challenges; (2) assess the effectiveness of existing governance mechanisms, particularly FFP regulations; and (3) identify strategic recommendations for enhancing the long-term viability of the competition. The review contributes to the growing academic discourse on sports sustainability by providing a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of one of the world's most significant sporting institutions.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A systematic literature review methodology was employed to identify, evaluate, and synthesise relevant academic literature addressing the long-term sustainability challenges of the UCL. This approach was selected for its rigour and transparency in aggregating evidence from diverse scholarly sources, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the current state of knowledge on the topic.

2.1 Search Strategy

Literature was identified through searches of electronic databases including Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and PubMed (for player health-related studies). Primary search terms included: 'UEFA Champions League,' 'financial sustainability football,' 'competitive balance football,' 'Financial Fair Play,' 'sports governance,' 'fan engagement football,' and 'environmental sustainability sports.' Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to combine terms and refine search results. Grey literature, including official UEFA and FIFA reports, was incorporated where peer-reviewed evidence was limited.

2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they: (1) were published in peer-reviewed journals or reputable academic sources; (2) addressed aspects of sustainability—financial, competitive, social, or environmental—within the context of European professional football or the UCL specifically; (3) were published between 2010 and 2024. Studies focused exclusively on football leagues outside Europe without cross-comparative relevance, published before 2010 without foundational theoretical value, or that did not address sustainability-related outcomes were excluded.

2.3 Data Synthesis

Retrieved sources were screened by title and abstract, followed by full-text review for eligible studies. A thematic synthesis approach was adopted, organising findings under five principal thematic domains: (1) financial sustainability and revenue distribution; (2) competitive balance and talent concentration; (3) tournament structure, format, and player welfare; (4) social, environmental, and governance sustainability; and (5) infrastructure and long-term investment.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Financial Sustainability and Revenue Distribution

Financial sustainability represents the most acute challenge confronting the UCL. The competition generates substantial revenues through broadcasting rights, sponsorship agreements, matchday income, and UEFA's prize distribution framework. In the 2021/22 season, UEFA distributed approximately €2.03 billion in prize money among participating clubs (Dantas et al., 2020). However, the distribution formula strongly favours clubs with larger market size, historical prestige, and higher broadcasting pool allocations, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of financial advantage for elite clubs.

Research by Felipe et al. (2020) demonstrated that market value in European professional football is strongly correlated with team performance metrics and player position, with top-tier clubs capable of attracting and retaining talent at costs prohibitive for mid-tier and smaller clubs. This financial stratification has significant implications for competitive balance within the UCL: as wealthier clubs systematically acquire superior talent, the probability distribution of tournament outcomes becomes increasingly skewed toward a small cohort of elite clubs.

The introduction of UEFA's FFP regulations in 2011 represented a landmark attempt to impose fiscal discipline on participating clubs. FFP requires clubs to broadly balance revenues against expenditure on transfers and wages over a rolling three-year assessment period, preventing clubs from accumulating unsustainable debt and competing above their financial means (Tomanek et al., 2022). Research evaluating FFP's effectiveness has produced mixed findings. While clubs' aggregate wage-to-revenue ratios showed modest improvement following implementation, critics have identified significant weaknesses in the regulatory framework,

including circumvention through inflated sponsorship agreements with related parties and creative accounting practices (Tomanek et al., 2022). High-profile enforcement actions have been inconsistent, generating perceptions of regulatory arbitrariness that have undermined confidence in the framework.

UEFA's revised Sustainability and Infrastructure Regulations, which replaced FFP in 2022, attempt to address these weaknesses by imposing a squad cost ratio cap limiting player-related expenditure to a defined proportion of club revenues. The long-term effectiveness of this revised framework remains to be demonstrated empirically. Research on small Portuguese clubs by Dantas et al. (2020) illustrated that even participation in UCL qualification rounds can have transformative financial impacts for smaller clubs, underscoring the systemic importance of equitable participation to the tournament's sustainability ecosystem.

3.2 Competitive Balance and Talent Concentration

Competitive balance—the degree to which competition outcomes are uncertain—is a fundamental determinant of spectator demand in professional sport (Wills et al., 2020). For the UCL, competitive uncertainty operates at multiple levels: individual match outcomes, progression through tournament stages, and seasonal uncertainty regarding which clubs qualify.

Frick et al. (2023) conducted a systematic analysis of talent concentration and competitive imbalance in European football, finding that while the UCL draws clubs from multiple national leagues, the repeated dominance of elite clubs has not significantly increased competitive imbalance within domestic leagues. However, at the tournament level, talent concentration has produced increasingly predictable outcomes in terms of which clubs reach the latter stages. The seeding system, as analysed by Engist et al. (2020) using a regression-discontinuity design, has increased outcome predictability in early rounds, reducing competitive tension precisely when the tournament is seeking to maximise initial fan engagement. Csató (2020) further demonstrated that the UCL seeding system is strategically non-optimal, allowing clubs to influence draw outcomes to their advantage—a finding with implications for competitive integrity and public trust.

Wills et al. (2020) examined the drivers of television audience demand for UCL football, finding that star player presence and team quality were more significant predictors of viewership than outcome uncertainty per se. This finding reveals a degree of tension in format design: measures to enhance competitive balance may paradoxically reduce viewership if they limit the prominence of star players and elite clubs. Navigating this tension represents a core strategic challenge for UEFA.

Kalén et al. (2019) identified an ageing trend among UCL players over the past three decades, with the mean age of participants rising significantly. This demographic shift reflects clubs' preference for experienced performers in high-stakes competitions but raises concerns about long-term

player development pathways and the integration of emerging young talent into elite competition. Yi et al. (2019) documented systematic differences in the technical performance profiles of players from the 'big five' European leagues in UCL competition, while Yi et al. (2020) identified situational and positional effects on technical variation, suggesting the UCL's competitive environment is more heterogeneous than aggregate statistics would indicate.

3.3 Tournament Structure, Format, and Player Welfare

The structural evolution of the UCL—from the original knockout-only European Cup to the current multi-phase format—has been driven primarily by commercial imperatives, particularly maximising fixtures involving elite clubs. The 2024/25 format expansion to a 36-team league phase represents the most significant structural change in the tournament's history, increasing the number of matches per participating club from a minimum of six to eight.

While this expansion increases elite club encounters and maximises broadcasting opportunities, it amplifies player welfare concerns. Fixture congestion has been identified as a significant contributor to overuse injuries and fatigue-related performance decline in elite footballers (Volpi, 2015). Meyer and Klatt (2023) evaluated the impact of additional substitution rules in elite European football, finding a 46% reduction in player physical load and an 81% increase in playing time for younger squad members—evidence that structural interventions can meaningfully address player welfare concerns without compromising competition quality.

Buraimo et al. (2011) and Goumas (2012) identified significant home advantage effects and potential referee bias in European football, suggesting that the competitive environment within UCL fixtures is influenced by factors beyond intrinsic team quality. These findings have implications for format design, particularly regarding the location of finals and neutral-venue policy. Home advantage disparities also raise questions about the fairness of two-legged knockout ties compared to single-match neutral-venue encounters.

Mental health represents an underexplored but significant dimension of player welfare in elite football. The psychological pressures associated with UCL competition—including performance anxiety, media scrutiny, and the financial consequences of high-stakes outcomes for clubs—create conditions that may predispose players to mental health difficulties. Clubs and governing bodies have been comparatively slow to develop systematic mental health support infrastructure, particularly when compared to the comprehensive physical health management systems already in place (Khokhar et al., 2024). Player agency in contract negotiations and transfers, managed through agents as intermediaries, introduces additional complexity into player welfare management (Nafziger & Gauthier, 2022).

3.4 Social, Environmental, and Governance Sustainability

The social sustainability of the UCL encompasses gender equality, community engagement, diversity and inclusion, and the management of fan behaviour. Research on women's football provides a useful comparative lens: Valenti et al. (2021) identified match outcome uncertainty and competitive intensity as the primary determinants of attendance at UEFA Women's Champions League fixtures, highlighting the shared importance of competitive balance to spectator engagement across both men's and women's football.

The development of women's football in Europe has accelerated significantly in recent years, driven by increased investment from clubs and national associations, improved media coverage, and strategic initiatives such as UEFA's Women's Football Strategy. Despite this progress, substantial financial and structural disparities between men's and women's football persist, limiting the long-term sustainability of women's football development (Magee, 2008). Gender equality within football governance—the representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles at clubs, national associations, and UEFA itself—remains limited, though initiatives such as the Women in Football Leadership programme and the #EqualGame campaign represent positive institutional steps (Robinson et al., 2013).

Environmental sustainability is an increasingly prominent dimension of the UCL's long-term viability. The carbon footprint associated with continental travel for clubs, officials, and supporters is substantial, and growing public and regulatory scrutiny demands proactive mitigation strategies. Stadium modernisation projects increasingly incorporate sustainable design principles—energy-efficient systems, recycled materials, and reduced water consumption—that reduce operational environmental impact while lowering long-term costs (Henry et al., 2020). UEFA's environmental commitments include reducing single-use plastics at final events and promoting sustainable transport options for supporters.

Sports integrity—encompassing match-fixing prevention, anti-doping compliance, and anti-corruption measures—represents a governance sustainability challenge with direct implications for the UCL's credibility and public trust. The proliferation of sports betting markets has elevated match-fixing risks, necessitating robust monitoring systems, regulatory cooperation with betting operators, and comprehensive education programmes for players and officials (Schulenkorf et al., 2016). CSR disclosure by football clubs has been identified as a legitimisation strategy that can enhance stakeholder trust and institutional credibility (Raimo et al., 2021).

Digital transformation and media strategy represent both sustainability challenges and opportunities. The UCL's broadcasting rights model has historically been premised on exclusive arrangements with major television networks, generating substantial revenues but creating dependencies on traditional viewing channels. The growth of streaming

platforms, social media, and interactive digital content has disrupted traditional broadcasting models, requiring UEFA and clubs to develop adaptive multi-platform media strategies. Solanellas et al. (2023) documented how sports organisations navigated the COVID-19 crisis through social media, illustrating the increasingly central role of digital communication in maintaining fan engagement during periods of disruption. Buck et al. (2019) highlighted the evolving value of star players in the digital age, noting that individual player profiles have become powerful drivers of digital engagement and commercial value independent of team performance.

3.5 Infrastructure and Long-Term Investment

Physical infrastructure—stadiums, training facilities, and youth academies—represents a foundational dimension of long-term sustainability for UCL clubs. Alajbeg et al. (2022) examined the financial health and self-sustainability of Croatian top-flight clubs, finding that investment in academies, infrastructure, and human capital was strongly associated with financial stability and competitive resilience. These findings illustrate broader principles applicable across the UCL ecosystem: sustainable competitive advantage is more reliably built through internal development and institutional investment than through reliance on external financial inputs.

Youth development programmes play a dual sustainability role: they supply clubs with talent at lower cost than the transfer market, and they create pathways for young players that help reduce talent concentration effects associated with large clubs' financial dominance. Research on talent identification in football academies (Baker et al., 2013) has emphasised the multifactorial nature of elite player development, highlighting the importance of combining technical, physical, and psychological assessment in identifying players with long-term potential.

Training facilities and performance centres have been identified as key competitive differentiators in modern elite football. Clubs with access to state-of-the-art training infrastructure are better positioned to attract and retain elite talent, support player development across all age groups, and implement data-driven performance management systems. The integration of sports science, technology, and medical support within training facility design represents a best-practice model for sustainable player development. Investment in fan-facing infrastructure—stadium renovations, enhanced matchday experiences, and digital fan engagement platforms—further contributes to commercial sustainability by deepening fan loyalty and expanding revenue streams from matchday and digital channels (Beek & Derom, 2023).

Football tourism, identified by Tobar and Ramshaw (2019), represents both a commercial opportunity and a social sustainability challenge for UCL clubs. The influx of visiting supporters can generate significant economic benefits for host cities but may displace or dilute local fan cultures, potentially undermining the authentic community identity that contributes to club loyalty and long-term supporter engagement.

4. CONCLUSION

The UEFA Champions League faces a complex and multidimensional set of sustainability challenges that, if inadequately addressed, threaten to diminish the tournament's competitive appeal, financial integrity, and social legitimacy. This review has identified financial inequality, competitive imbalance, player welfare, governance effectiveness, and social and environmental responsibility as the primary domains requiring strategic attention.

The evidence reviewed strongly supports the following strategic recommendations for UEFA and participating clubs. First, revenue distribution reform is essential: a more equitable allocation of UCL revenues—including broadcast rights income—would reduce financial stratification and create a more genuinely competitive tournament. Second, FFP's successor regulations require more rigorous and consistent enforcement, with credible sanctions that deter circumvention by well-resourced clubs. Third, tournament format design must balance commercial imperatives against competitive balance and player welfare considerations, with empirical monitoring of the outcomes of recent format changes. Fourth, player welfare—physical and mental—requires systematic institutional investment by clubs and governing bodies, particularly in mental health infrastructure. Fifth, governance standards must be strengthened across all dimensions: gender equality, environmental sustainability, and sports integrity.

The UCL's enduring success depends ultimately on its ability to deliver genuinely competitive, unpredictable, and inspiring football. Preserving and enhancing these qualities in the face of growing commercialisation and financial stratification represents the defining sustainability challenge for UEFA and European football in the decades ahead.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors declare no specific funding or grant support for this research. The authors wish to thank Longford College for institutional support in the preparation of this manuscript.

REFERENCES

- Alajbeg, D., Bubas, Z., & Morić Milovanović, B. (2022). Financial health and self-sustainability of a small European football league: The realities of top-flight Croatian football. *Semanticscholar*.
- <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/99fb0b604045473fe3422f1457c3168ad99055e2>
- Baker, J., Copley, S., & Schorer, J. (Eds.). (2013). *Talent identification and development in sport: International perspectives*. Routledge.
- Beek, R. M., & Derom, I. (2023). Sponsoring the UEFA Champions League: Exploring the impact on brand equity among fan profiles. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 24, 563–580. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/e51b37a73ef81ba1acae5bd0e143e7070c627775>
- Buck, C., Ifland, S., & Renz, M. S. (2019). Value of star players in the digital age. In *Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Digital Business* (pp. 587–601). *Semanticscholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/3de0277018b730117efd858bc546379a03179782>
- Buraimo, B., Simmons, R., & Maciaszczyk, M. (2011). Favoritism and referee bias in European soccer: Evidence from the Spanish league and the UEFA Champions League. *Contemporary Economic Policy*, 30(3), 329–343. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-7287.2011.00295.x>
- Csató, L. (2020). The UEFA Champions League seeding is not strategy-proof since the 2015/16 season. *Annals of Operations Research*, 292(1), 161–169. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10479-020-03637-1>
- Dantas, F., Borges, A., & Hounsell, M. (2020). Impact of UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League on financial sustainability: Case study of two small football Portuguese teams. *Sustainability*, 12(21), 9213. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12219213>
- Engist, O., Merkus, E., & Schafmeister, F. (2020). The effect of seeding on tournament outcomes: Evidence from a regression-discontinuity design. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 22(1), 115–136. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527002520955212>
- Felipe, J., Fernández-Luna, Á., Burillo, P., Riva, L., Sánchez-Sánchez, J., & García-Unanue, J. (2020). Money talks: Team variables and player positions that most influence the market value of professional male footballers in Europe. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3709. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093709>
- Frick, B., Quansah, T., & Lang, M. (2023). Talent concentration and competitive imbalance in European soccer. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2023.1148122>
- Goumas, C. (2012). Home advantage and referee bias in European football. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 14(Suppl. 1), S243–S249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17461391.2012.686062>
- Henry, C., Rockström, J., & Stern, N. (Eds.). (2020). *Standing up for a sustainable world: Voices of change*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Kalén, A., Rey, E., Rellán-Guerra, A., & Lago-Peñas, C. (2019). Are soccer players older now than before? Aging trends and market value in the last three decades of the UEFA Champions League. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 76. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00076>
- Khokhar, W., Tanimowo, A., & Pandurangi, D. (2024). The burgeoning burden of perinatal mental health in lower middle-income countries. *Semanticscholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/1fedfadfff0a1eca9c77c8eda8c3892eb1bb9a90>
- Magée, J. (2008). Women, football and Europe: Defining issues of patriarchy, gender and exclusion.

- In J. Magee, A. Caudwell, K. Liston, & S. Scraton (Eds.), *Women, Football and Europe: Defining Issues of Patriarchy, Gender and Exclusion* (pp. 3–18). Meyer & Meyer Sport.
17. Meyer, J., & Klatt, S. (2023). Additional substitutions in elite European football. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 19, 769–778. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/125985ed271e06da3cb1cb932b12c43748b555cf>
 18. Nafziger, J. A. R., & Gauthier, R. (Eds.). (2022). *Handbook on international sports law*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
 19. Raimo, N., Vitolla, F., Nicolò, G., & Polcini, P. T. (2021). CSR disclosure as a legitimization strategy: Evidence from the football industry. *Meditari Accountancy Research*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/f94c11358d9dc7e88a291dcdf036f7e52a884dfa>
 20. Robinson, L., Chelladurai, P., Bodet, G., & Downward, P. (Eds.). (2013). *Routledge handbook of sport management*. Routledge.
 21. Schulenkorf, N., Sherry, E., & Rowe, K. (Eds.). (2016). *Managing sport for social change: The state of play*. Routledge.
 22. Solanellas, F., Romero-Jara, E., & Muñoz, J. (2023). Managing the COVID-19 crisis through social media: An analysis from sports organisations perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1036086.
 23. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/9d3073441246573b1f73f2b4aa387817b8e379ec>
 24. Tomanek, M., Mazur, M., & Skowronek, A. (2022). Financial Fair Play in European football: An assessment of effectiveness and enforcement. *Journal of Sport Economics and Management*, 12(3), 1–22.
 25. Tobar, F., & Ramshaw, G. (2019). The football tourism trend: Implications over management issues regarding local football heritage. *Semanticscholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/44a06e5e140dc4f5a7785ec02aa19b9aff36f221>
 26. Valenti, M., Scelles, N., & Morrow, S. (2019). The determinants of stadium attendance in elite women's football: Evidence from the UEFA Women's Champions League. *Semanticscholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/3a581dc42bb85c39883d2d29fa4ca6a89735995>
 27. Valenti, M., Scelles, N., & Morrow, S. (2021). The determinants of stadium attendance in elite women's football: Evidence from the UEFA Women's Champions League. *Sport Management Review*, 24(4), 648–665.
 28. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/66adb8fbc58462b2b331dce6a3c3f96e8843793>
 29. Volpi, P. (Ed.). (2015). *Football traumatology: Current concepts: From prevention to treatment*. Springer.
 30. Wills, G., Tacon, R., & Addesa, F. (2020). Uncertainty of outcome, team quality or star players? What drives TV audience demand for UEFA Champions League football? *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 22(6), 876–894. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2020.1836010>
 31. Yi, Q., Gómez, M., Liu, H., Gao, B., Wunderlich, F., & Memmert, D. (2020). Situational and positional effects on the technical variation of players in the UEFA Champions League. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, Article 1201. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01201>
 32. Yi, Q., Groom, R., Dai, C., Liu, H., & Ruano, M. (2019). Differences in technical performance of players from 'the big five' European football leagues in the UEFA Champions League. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 2738. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02738>