

Issue 2

THE SPORTS NOTION

A Magazine with Varied Topics



2026

WHO IS YOUR LEGEND?

2027

WHO WILL TAKE POLYBOTS?

WHICH TEAM WILL WIN
THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE?

WHO IS PROVIDING THE GOALS?

TOMMY'S

FIDDEL'S

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SAMUEL LEGENDS OF THE GAME

SAMUEL ETO'O 9



Some Champions League legends are remembered for records; Samuel Eto'o is remembered for moments.

The Cameroonian striker won the competition three times, twice with Barcelona and once with Inter Milan, but the detail that defines his European legacy is even more impressive: he scored in both the 2006 and 2009 Champions League finals.

2006, against Arsenal in Paris, Eto'o equalised with 14 minutes remaining and dragged Barcelona back into the match. Three years later, he opened the scoring against Manchester United in Rome as Pep Guardiola's side completed a historic treble and then came Inter Milan.

Eto'o left Barcelona in 2009 as part of the deal involving Zlatan Ibrahimović and immediately helped José Mourinho's Inter win the Champions League in 2010.

Incredibly, that meant consecutive trebles with two different clubs; his role in Milan showed another side of his greatness. Eto'o was no longer simply the striker waiting to finish attacks; Mourinho demanded sacrifice.

He defended wider, tracked runners and accepted tactical responsibilities that many forwards of his status would have resisted. Inter eliminated Barcelona on the way to the final before defeating Bayern Munich in Madrid; that willingness to adapt is why Eto'o belongs among the competition's great forwards.

He finished his Champions League career with 30 goals in 78 appearances, placing him among the highest-scoring African players in the tournament's history; numbers still only explain part of it.

Eto'o carried African football onto Europe's biggest stage at a time when very few African strikers were being treated as the defining figures of elite European teams. He was fast and unnervingly calm when matches became important.

There have been more prolific Champions League scorers; there have been players with more medals, but very few forwards repeatedly arrived in finals and changed them; Samuel Eto'o did.

Barcelona needed a goal in 2006. He scored

it. Barcelona needed a statement in 2009. He made it. Inter needed sacrifice in 2010. He gave it.

That is what a Champions League legend looks like.

WAYNE ROONEY 10

Wayne Rooney doesn't get the praise that he deserves. When it comes to the Champions League, nobody remembers the magic he brought under the lights at Old Trafford.

Rooney was overshadowed by the flair and dribbling of Messi and Ronaldo, and Rooney didn't get his flowers as both of these players did, which overshadowed his abilities.

But there is no doubt that Rooney is a legend of the game, especially in the Champions League.

On his debut against Galatasaray, there was buzz, and people knew Rooney would be the star. He lit up the competition with a brace and changed the way the game was played.

Although he possessed technical ability, Rooney played the game with aggression and passion. Rooney is a legend in this competition because he got Manchester United to the quarter-finals numerous times and won the Champions League in 2009.

Not calling Rooney a legend in the Champions League is an understatement, and saying he isn't one of the greats in this competition is pure bias. Yes, there will be a great emphasis on the mention of Messi and Ronaldo, but Wayne is a true legend in this competition.

The nights he gave to Manchester United fans and some of the goals that he scored just demonstrate some of the legendary football that he played.

Being the top goalscorer for Manchester United all the time epitomises what Wayne achieved on the pitch. Not all his goals came in the Premier League, but a third of his were in the Champions League.

There is no doubt Rooney is a legend in this competition, and he'll be in the history books.



KYLIAN'S WHEN MR. BAPTISTE TOP GOAL SCORERS GOALSTE

Kylilian Mbappé enters the 2026/27 Champions League as the obvious favourite to finish as the competition's leading goalscorer, and for good reason.

The French forward scored 15 Champions League goals last season, finishing as the tournament's top scorer and breaking Cristiano Ronaldo's previous record for goals during the opening phase of the competition.

The biggest difference now is that Mbappé no longer looks like a player adapting to Real Madrid, he looks like the centre of it.

Madrid increasingly builds their attacking football around his movement, speed, ability and football IQ to decide matches in moments. Wearing the number 10 has only strengthened the sense that this is now Mbappé's era at the Bernabéu.

His Champions League record already places him among the competition's elite scorers. At 27, he has reached a stage where breaking individual records is no longer unrealistic.

The greatest threat will undoubtedly come from Erling Haaland, and Harry Kane will also remain dangerous if Bayern Munich progress deep into the tournament.

More knockout matches create more scoring opportunities, and Madrid's relationship with this competition has repeatedly given their biggest players the stage to produce defining moments, but there is also motivation.

Mbappé has won domestic titles, individual awards and a World Cup, but the Champions League remains the major club trophy that eludes him in his career.

A player this talented does not want simply to score goals in the Champions League; he wants to dominate it. Another 15-goal campaign is completely realistic, and surpassing that total would not be surprising.

The competition may already be entering a new goalscoring era, and Kylian Mbappé looks ready to own it

KYLIAN
MBAPPE **10**



HARRY KANE 10



Harry Kane has proved that he is the best striker at the moment. With over 100 goals scored in the calendar year, this shows that Harry Kane is the best striker England has ever produced.

He is definitely a national export, and he is not just doing well in the Premier League and the national team, but he is now doing well in the Champions League and the Bundesliga.

Kane has changed the Bundesliga and broken many records in the short time he has been in the Bundesliga. The Bayern fans love him, and the English fans cannot live without him.

Kane is a genius on the pitch and continues to show other strikers in this generation why he deserves the accolades he earns.

Last season, Kane came very close to winning the Champions League golden boot, just one goal shy of the winner, Kylian Mbappe.

Kane scored 14 goals in the Champions League, and this season he has already opened his goal account with three goals in two matches. It will be a good battle between Mbappe and Kane this season, but many feel Kane will come out on top.

What makes Kane a prolific goalscorer is that he scores different types of goals, whereas Mbappe only scores goals that are similar to the other goals that he scores.

Kane has shown he is an elite finisher, as he can score with either foot and with his head. Kane's gameplay shows he is a better player, as he can play as a midfielder and pass from deeper positions.

Kane will definitely challenge Mbappe for the golden boot, and it is evident that Kane has more in his locker to win the golden boot this season in this competition.

JUD BRADLEY THE GOAL ASSISTANTS

5 JUDE BELLINGHAM



When Bellingham signed for Real Madrid in 2023 on a six-year deal for £115 million, many people thought it was a lot of money, and that Madrid had been conned into paying the English tax.

But one thing is that Real Madrid doesn't pay over £100 million for a player if they don't see a Galactico mentality. Bellingham has shown he has this mindset time after time.

Bellingham was formidable during the 2026 World Cup and helped England finish third in the World Cup due to his attacking midfield presence and drive through the middle of the pitch.

Bellingham has improved his game and continues to show how important he is in this Madrid team. The partnership between Mbappe and Bellingham seems to be clicking this season, as both have combined to score many goals in La Liga. Bellingham has the skill set every team needs, and he plays with passion and desire.

Bellingham will provide a lot of goals this season in this competition as he has taken his form from the World Cup into this season. He plays like he is playing with his friends at the park. His positional and heat map, with the kilometres he covers, are remarkable, and he plays like a playmaker, with the intent to create and score goals.

Bellingham is certainly on track to become the scorer's assistant this season in the competition, and if he does, then he must have a mediocre season; Jude will find a way to be in the conversation.

MICHAEL OLISE 17

Michael Olise does not need introducing as a Champions League creator anymore; he needs stopping.

The Bayern Munich winger finished joint-top of the Champions League assist rankings last season with eight, alongside Vinícius Júnior.

It was another indication that Olise has moved beyond being an exciting winger and into the conversation surrounding Europe's most productive attacking players.

Everything about Bayern's attack gives him the opportunity to lead the competition again.

Olise naturally drifts inside from the right onto his left foot, forcing defenders into an uncomfortable decision. Close the shooting angle, and he can release Harry Kane. Stay deeper, and Olise has space to attack himself.

Olise was also the Bundesliga's leading assist provider last season and was voted 2025/26 Bundesliga Player of the Season.

Bayern described him as one of the most productive attacking players in Europe; his performances for France strengthened that argument. He finished the 2026 World Cup with seven assists, the most at the tournament.

Champions League assist tables can sometimes be dictated by one extraordinary evening against weaker opposition. Olise is different because creation has become fundamental to the way he plays.

Olise should have plenty of opportunities to add to his numbers. Eight assists won the award last season; double figures should now be the target.

Michael Olise has already established himself as one of European football's finest providers. The frightening part is, at 24, he still looks nowhere near finished developing.



BRADLEY BARCOLA 29



Bradley Barcola may be one of the more unpredictable choices to lead the Champions League assist charts.

Liverpool completed the signing of the French winger from Paris Saint-Germain, bringing one of Europe's most explosive wide attackers to Anfield.

Barcola left Paris having recorded 39 goals and 35 assists in 152 appearances, while collecting consecutive Champions League winners' medals.

He arrives at Liverpool with something even more valuable than statistics. Experience. Barcola has already played in Champions League finals, contributed an assist in PSG's 2025 final victory and understands how quickly knockout football can change.

At only 24, he is entering a stage where that experience should begin combining with his physical peak. Liverpool could be an ideal environment for him.

Barcola's greatest weapon is not simply speed. It is what happens after he has created separation. He attacks defenders directly, reaches dangerous areas quickly and increasingly recognises when the better option is finding somebody arriving centrally rather than forcing the shot.

Andoni Iraola's Liverpool are also expected to play aggressively and vertically, which should give Barcola considerably more space than he regularly encountered against deep Ligue 1 defences.

He is now entering a new league, a different tactical system and a Liverpool side still adjusting; immediate chemistry cannot be guaranteed. Barcola has already conquered Europe twice with PSG.

At Liverpool, he has the opportunity to become one of the players defining matches rather than simply contributing to them.

PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT

7 KHVICHA KVARATSKHELIA

He was the best player in this tournament last season without a doubt. He has made football easy, and the way he beats other players doesn't seem fair.

He has changed the way a winger plays, where he does not just add assists to his game, but he adds goals to his game.

Last season, PSG made the game look easy, as they have translated the modern game to their version of the baller league. PSG has become unplayable, and the contribution of Kvaratskhelia has made PSG a dominant force.

Kvaratskhelia has always been the main player since he signed from Inter Milan, and he was the player who PSG needed to shift the balance from the galactico mindset to a football side.

Kvaratskhelia was the best player last season, and he scored important goals against Bayern Munich to get PSG through to the finals of the Champions League.

Kvaratskhelia has made significant contributions to PSG and has scored goals in this competition that could make him the player of this tournament.

Kvaratskhelia is a strong footballer; his dribbling and creativity have been outstanding, and as a winger, he has created space for himself. His exceptional dribbling skills and quick feet have made him a very difficult player to bring against, and he is very explosive when he is running towards the goal.

Defenders fear Kvaratskhelia because he slows the game down, and they don't want to go near him.

Kvaratskhelia is going to be the player of the season and has proved that he is PSG's talisman. Although Dembele is PSG's main player and has won the Ballon d'Or, Kvaratskhelia is on the verge of winning the Ballon d'Or after PSG wins the Champions League for the third consecutive time.



17 ENZO FERNÁNDEZ



The Champions League Player of the Tournament does not always have to be the man scoring the most goals. Enzo Fernández could be that player in the 2026/27 Champions League.

His £125 million deadline-day move from Chelsea to Manchester City has placed the Argentine at the centre of another European heavyweight. Fernández arrives with arguably the best club form of his career.

On his City debut against Coventry, Fernández immediately demonstrated why such an enormous fee was sanctioned, playing a crucial role in the move for Erling Haaland's winner and looking remarkably comfortable within a midfield undergoing major change; the Champions League could suit him even more.

Fernández possesses that rare ability to influence a match without constantly occupying the highlights. He can accelerate possession with one pass, recognise space before it develops and arrives around the penalty area far more effectively than earlier in his career suggested.

His final Chelsea season proved that evolution. He became the club's second-highest scorer in all competitions and contributed three Champions League goals alongside two assists. Now imagine that influence alongside City's attacking quality.

Erling Haaland provides an obvious target ahead of him, while creative players around Fernández should allow him greater freedom to dictate matches rather than carrying the entire responsibility for progression; that is precisely why the Player of the Tournament prediction feels possible. Enzo Fernández now has the stage to do exactly that.

SURPRISING
THE ODDS
SURPRISE
TEAMS
UNBELIEVABLE
JOBS SURP

COMO 1907 S.R.L

One thing about Italian football is that it comes around, and although Serie A has not hit the heights since the late 1990s, there are always Italian football teams that play good football.

The likes of Napoli and Roma are teams that have played good football, and global football fans have embraced these Italian football teams. Como 1907 is another team that shows Italian football teams can play well.

Como 1907 is showing signs that it can play a formidable game, and under Cesc Fabregas, it is the team to watch in the Champions League.

Como 1907 has come from nowhere, and it has made significant improvements to reach the top of Italian football. Como 1907 finished fourth in Serie A last season, and now they are playing well in the Champions League.

Como has changed its approach and created top-level board strategies that make the on-field work click.

Como has brought in people who understand football, and the likes of Raphael Varane are a good example.

As a Como board director, Varane has been around football long enough to understand how it works and how to turn a small club like Como into a team that can challenge giants like Inter Milan and Napoli, who have dominated Italian football for over a decade.

Under Cesc Fabregas, Como plays brave football; his players play with intensity and are technically strong. Fabregas has a clear plan when he sets up his team, and it's clear he wants to control the game.

Fabregas has used his midfield intelligence to control possession, with key players like Nico Paz bossing the midfield with attacking brilliance.

Como will definitely be the team that would surprise a lot of football fans this season in the Champions League.

The Champions League does provide surprise teams, and Como will be the team this season; they will miss out on the top 8 in the league phase, but they will qualify for the round of 32 in the Champions League and maybe reach the quarter-finals.



ASSOCIAZIONE SPORTIVA ROMA S.P.A.

Every Champions League season produces one club that goes further than expected; for the 2026/27 season, AS Roma have all the ingredients to become that team.

Roma are back in the Champions League for the first time since 2018/19, returning after Gian Piero Gasperini guided them to third place in Serie A last season.

That alone changes the atmosphere around the club. This is no longer a side simply trying to return to Europe's elite. Gasperini knows how to make supposedly inferior teams uncomfortable; the squad is also more dangerous than it initially appears.

Donyell Malen scored 14 Serie A goals in 18 matches after arriving midway through last season and has developed into one of Roma's major attacking threats.

Matías Soulé brings unpredictability, Paulo Dybala still possesses the ability to decide a match with one moment, while Manu Koné gives the midfield the aggression and ball-carrying ability required against Europe's strongest sides.

Roma have strengthened intelligently too. Nahuel Molina brings World Cup-winning experience, Konstantinos Koulierakis adds youth to the defence and Santiago Castro gives Gasperini another option through the middle; the challenge is enormous, but their league phase schedule includes Real Madrid at the Olimpico, Manchester United at Old Trafford and Paris Saint-Germain away. There are very few comfortable evenings waiting for them, but it might actually suit Roma.

They will not enter those matches carrying the same expectation as Madrid, PSG or the Premier League giants. They can counter and allow the pressure to sit elsewhere.

Their early domestic form is encouraging too, with a dramatic 2–1 victory over Atalanta pushing them to the top of Serie A in the opening weeks. Nobody should be predicting Roma to lift the trophy. The real possibility is that they reach the knockout stages, eliminate somebody significantly more fancied, and suddenly become the team nobody wants to face.



THE LEAGUE PHASE, TOP 8

TOMMY'S TOP 8



FIDDEL'S TOP 8

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



THE CHAMPIONS



Every Champions League season begins with the same familiar contenders.

Real Madrid will always carry history, Manchester City possess quality, Barcelona remain capable of producing devastating attacking football and Paris Saint-Germain have already shown they belong among Europe's strongest.

Bayern Munich may be the side best equipped to win the 2026/27 Champions League.

Vincent Kompany has restored authority in Munich and created a team that looks increasingly comfortable playing aggressive, front foot football.

Bayern reached the semi-finals last season and enter this campaign with both experience and unfinished business, the attack is where the real danger lies.

Harry Kane remains one of Europe's most reliable goal scorers and still has one major club achievement missing from his career, lifting the Champions League.

Bayern possess pace, creativity and unpredictability. Michael Olise has developed into one of Europe's most dangerous wide players and Luis Díaz brings relentless energy from the opposite side, this is not a squad dependent on one superstar. Bayern can hurt teams in several different ways.

There are still questions defensively. Manuel Neuer is approaching the end of an extraordinary career and Kompany's attacking system can occasionally leave space behind, against the very best sides in Europe, those moments can become costly.

This is a club that expects to compete for the biggest trophy every season. The pressure does not frighten them. It defines them. Bayern Munich look ready. A seventh European Cup may be closer than many expect

Last season, Barcelona had the potential to win the Champions League, but they fell short. It wasn't about the players or the system; it was the lack of squad depth that kept them from reaching the final last year.

This season, Barcelona has started really well and remains unbeaten. Barcelona has shown that they can go all the way in this tournament.

This Barcelona team is starting to have the hallmarks of Messi's Barcelona, where they were outplaying teams and perfected the tiki-taka football. The 2009 Barcelona team dominated European football for a decade and proved no team in Europe could have had the run they did.

This year's Barcelona team has the hallmarks of the 2009 Barcelona side, led by a football genius with a very high IQ for the game.

This season, this Barcelona side has not lost a game yet and continues to dominate La Liga with maximum points. They have scored many goals so far this season.

The graduate, Lamine Yamal graduated from the La Masia with a first-class honor and is now showing that this team should be centered on him, as he has the Messi IQ to help this team become like the tiki-taka Barcelona in the late 2000s.

The seasoned veteran, Raphinha, knows the game now with his experience in the Premier League with Leeds United. Raphinha has shown that he has the quality and the technical flair to play for Barcelona.

The graduate and the seasoned veteran have combined to create a togetherness that shows Barcelona is finally becoming the team other teams in Europe are starting to fear. With the addition of Gordon and Rodri, this team is complete, and it is very likely they will win Europe's prestigious club trophy.





IDEAS FOR SPORTS THAT FEEL DIFFERENT



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