



Premier League Predictor

2020-2021 Season Introduction
August 20, 2020

2020-2021 PLP Season Introduction

We are back! Welcome to the 2020-21 season of the Premier League Predictor! We are just a few weeks from the start of the upcoming Premier League season. Today, the Premier League released the full 2020-21 schedule and, of course, it's looking to be an exciting season. After just finishing the longest Premier League season in history, this year we are squeezing the 38 matchweeks into a MUCH shorter period of time. This means that we are going to have less breaks and a fast-paced season, which sounds better to me. Officially, the 2020-21 Premier League season kicks off on **Saturday, September 12, 2020** and ends on Sunday, May 23, 2021.

This will be the third season of Premier League Predictor. This "Season Introduction" is to share the rules, regulations and (most importantly) updates to the PLP game for next season. For past participants, some of this information will be redundant, but I wanted to make sure all new players understand the game.

I am always trying to make the game better and more enjoyable for the participants, for two reasons: I want the game to continue to grow and be enjoyable for everyone. And, second, I want the game to be entertaining enough for everyone that we keep interest over a long 38-week season and we don't end up with participants who stop making picks part way through the season. You will see that I have incorporated some of the suggestions from last year's End of Season Survey into the 2020-21 PLP Season – and I hope they make the game better!

Thanks for your interest in the 2020-21 PLP season! Even with the short break, I am really excited for the upcoming season to get started! Here is some more info about the upcoming season...

PLP Rules Summary

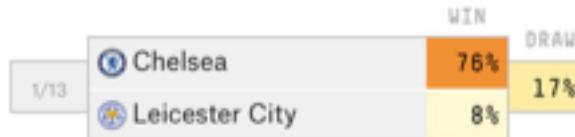
This rules recap will be important for new participants, but may be redundant for experienced players. This is a Premier League predictor game. Participants attempt to predict the outcome of every Premier League match over the course of the season.

The goal is to predict the correct outcome of as many matches as possible, while at the same time trying to accumulate the most points by predicting matches with high point results.

The Premier League consists of 38 matchweeks, with each matchweek (usually) consisting of 10 matches. Each participant will attempt to predict the outcome of all 380 PL matches over the course of the season. The entire PLP game exists on the PLP website: plpredictor.sport.blog. I will send emails to everyone throughout the course of the season, but all information for the game can be found on the website.

Each week, participants are presented with the picks for the upcoming week on the “Make Your Picks” page of the website. The “Make Your Picks” page will be updated prior to each week so that the upcoming matches are available to be picked. Each match, participants have the choice to predict one of five potential outcomes:

- (1) Home Win
- (2) Home Win or Draw
- (3) Draw
- (4) Away Win or Draw
- (5) Away Win



Participants choose one outcome for each match, with each potential outcome worth a different value. The value of each pick is based off the official “Points Formula”.

The formula for determining points is based on the theory that each of the five different outcomes of each match has a different likelihood of occurring in real life. Each potential outcome, therefore, has a different point value based on the likelihood of its occurrence in real life. Outcomes that are more likely to occur will have a lower point value and outcomes that are less likely to occur will have a higher point value. The formula is based on a computer model called the Soccer Power Index from FiveThirtyEight.com that predicts the outcomes of each Premier League match. The official Points Formula for a correct pick is: ***100 minus the percentage chance the outcome will occur, as determined by the Soccer Power Index.***

In the above example in a match between Chelsea and Leicester City, the five PLP outcomes as determined by the Points Formula are:

Chelsea Win:	$100 - 76\% \text{ chance to win} = \mathbf{24 \text{ points}}$
Chelsea Win or Draw:	$100 - 76\% \text{ chance to win} - 17\% \text{ draw} = \mathbf{7 \text{ points}}$
Draw:	$100 - 17\% \text{ chance to draw} = \mathbf{83 \text{ points}}$
Leicester Win or Draw:	$100 - 8\% \text{ chance to win} - 17\% \text{ draw} = \mathbf{75 \text{ points}}$
Leicester Win:	$100 - 8\% \text{ chance to win} = \mathbf{92 \text{ points}}$

PLP Competitions

The 2020-21 PLP season will consist of four different competitions. Along with the PLP 38-week regular season, three tournaments will be spread out over the course of the season. Each competition will have different prizes for the winners.

Regular Season: The PLP regular season is the same as it has always been. 38 weeks, 380 matches: try to predict as many as possible to earn the most points over the course of the season. The participant who scores the most points over the entire season wins the PLP Regular Season championship.

Prize: TBD; 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers typically earn a prize

Holiday Tournament: The Holiday Tournament is a fast-paced single-elimination tournament that spans from Thanksgiving to New Years' over the Premier League holiday slate of matches. I don't anticipate any changes to the format this year. Each match will span two weeks with the winner advancing to the next round.

Prize: TBD; the winner and runner-up typically earn prizes

End-of-Season Playoffs: The PLP Playoffs take place over the last 8 weeks of the season and consist of two rounds. The first round is a Group Stage format, with each participant facing off against all other group members. The top finishers in each group advance to the Knockout Stage to determine the Playoff champion. The Playoff finals take place on the last week of the Premier League to determine the champion.

Prize: TBD; the champion and runner-up typically earn prizes

PLP Cup (*new*): Based on feedback from last season, I am introducing a new tournament to the slate this season. I haven't finalized the format yet, but it is likely going to be head-to-head with random draws to determine matchups, with the structure imitating something like the FA cup. This tournament may take place randomly over the course of the season (like the FA Cup and Carabao Cup), or I might try to fit the entire tournament in during the mid-winter months.

Prize: TBD

Survey Results and Player Input

In order to continue to improve the game, I asked last year's participants to fill out an End of Season Survey so I could hear some of their thoughts and ideas about the game. I received 8 responses, and here are some of the interesting survey results and comments.

1. Game Format

A resounding 100% of responses wanted to maintain the current format of the game. There will be no changes to the scoring format. The regular season champion will be determined by the player scoring the most total points over the course of the 38-week season.

2. Season Length

Again, 100% of responses said that they want to keep the PLP season length at the full 38-week season. No reason to change that, the 2020-21 season will span the full length of the Premier League season.

3. Entry Fee

The responses to the question about desired entry fee varied more than some questions, but the responses still gave me an idea of what a majority of the participants want for this season. Here are the responses:

50% - \$40 or \$50 **38%** - \$20 or \$30 **12%** - anywhere between \$20 and \$50

Based in part on these responses, I am designating the 2020-21 PLP entry fee at **\$40**. I think this is a good compromise – I want to have enough in the pot to make the prizes worthwhile for the winners after a long 38-week season, but I also don't want to raise the entry fee to a level that prohibits people from wanting to enter.

4. Game and Website Improvements

"The interspersed tournaments were fun and engaging...you could add more of those."

I am keeping the Holiday Tournament and End of Season Playoffs, but I am also planning to add another tournament called the “PLP Cup”. I am still finalizing the details, but I am thinking that this tournament will be an FA Cup-style competition.

"Sometimes it was hard to know if I already made my picks for the week..."

I have updated the “Make York Picks” page so that it automatically sends you an email confirming that you have made your picks for the week and listing your responses.

“It would be nice to log in and see your historical picks rather than having to check the emails.”

You can always go on the website and check your picks for each week on the “Weekly Results” page – you actually never need to read one of my emails, all information from my emails is posted on the website. However, I’m kind of limited to posting the weekly results. It would be kind of time consuming for me to create a page for each individual person to see all of their results over the course of the season. However, I’m always thinking of ways to make information easier for participants to access, so I will see if there is something I can do. Right now, besides getting everything set up at the beginning of the season, I can usually update the game each week and send out the emails in under an hour, so I’d like to keep it like that.

“I would love to see the website turn into an app eventually...”

So would I... I always intended that this game would be an app that would be easy for everyone to access on their phones. I even created a template for the app if it ever was created. I am always trying to improve the game and the “technology” of the game. Right now, my limitations to creating an app are (1) cost, and (2) a severe lack of technological skill. I think there are programs that automatically turn WordPress websites into apps, but they are expensive.

There is still is a way to get the PLP website to appear as an icon on your iPhone. I found this pretty nice to be able to just click on the icon on my phone to jump right to the website on Safari on my iPhone. The instructions have been listed on the “How to Play” page on the website, but here they are again:

1. On Safari on your phone’s web browser, visit the PLP home page at plpredictor.sport.blog
2. On the bottom of the screen, click on your phone’s “share” button which is the icon represented by an upward pointing arrow with a square box.
3. Click on the option “Add to Home Screen”.
4. The PLP logo will now appear on your iPhone home screen as an icon.
5. If you click on the icon, it will send you directly to the PLP website on the Safari app.

Conclusion

This wraps up the Premier League Predictor 2020-21 Season Introduction! Again, even though we had a short break between seasons, I am really looking forward to getting started with the new season. If you have any questions or comments about the proposed new season, make sure to contact me before we get up and running!

To contact me, fill out the form on the “Contact Us” page of the website or email me at ts.plpredictor@gmail.com.

-Tyler

