



Premier League Predictor

2020-2021 3rd Quarter Review

April 1, 2021

2020-2021 PLP 3rd Quarter Review

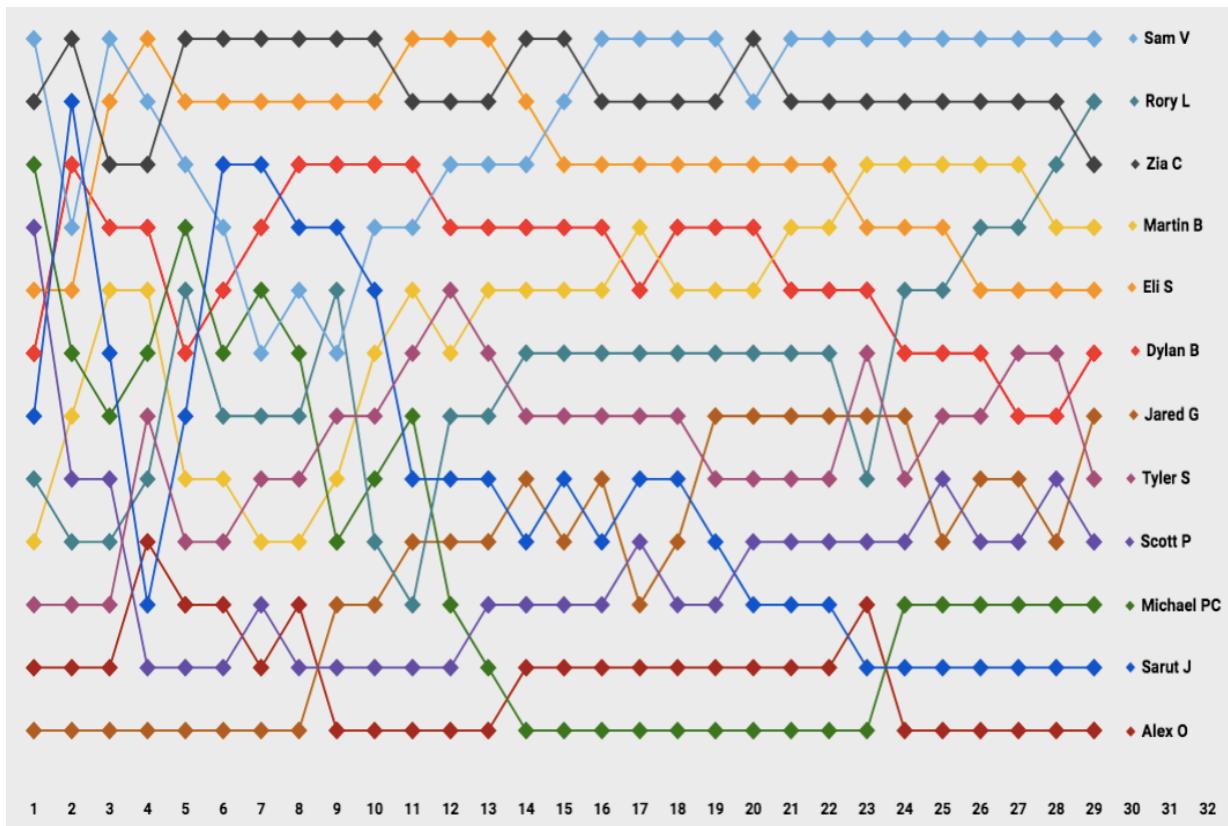
We are back for the final push toward the end of the season! We are now roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the 2020-2021 Premier League. Since our last PLP Review, we have seen Manchester City reclaim its dominance and run away with the top spot in the Premier League. But, there is actually a lot of football left to be played, and I think that we are going to have the most exciting finish in the history of the PLP game this year. The 3rd Quarter of the season brought a lot of excitement. Sam established a firm lead in the standings for the past nine weeks, but we have seen a tightening in the standings lately. Rory and Zia are close on Sam's tail, and we also have a peloton forming behind the front three. I actually think that there is still time for any of the mid-pack to make a strong push for the title. Also in the 3rd Quarter we saw Rory take home the PLP Cup championship with a strong performance, and we saw Scott put together a really nice run to the championship match before coming just short. The next nine weeks are going to fly by – good luck! Here are the PLP Standings after Week 29 of the Premier League season:

Participant Name	Season		Matchweek 29		+/-
	Total Points	Correct Picks	Total Points	Correct Picks	
1. Sam V.	6,837	123	226	4	-
2. Rory L.	6,765	152	368	8	+1
3. Zia C.	6,714	140	222	4	-1
4. Martín B.	6,583	133	299	5	-
5. Eli S.	6,539	143	273	6	-
6. Dylan B.	6,275	126	292	5	+1
7. Jared G.	6,175	126	373	7	+2
8. Tyler S.	6,141	149	154	3	-2
9. Scott P.	6,117	152	296	7	-1
10. Michael PC.	5,914	133	255	5	-
11. Sarut J.	5,564	131	259	6	-
12. Alex O.	5,564	110	437	7	-

Sam still leads the pack as we head into the home stretch of the season. And, he continues to put up good numbers. Sam is averaging roughly 236 points per week over the course of the season. Last year after Week 19, our leader had 6,720 points on 146 correct picks. Sam continues to top last season's pace with 6,837 points after Week 29.

What I like about this season is the competitiveness throughout the entire standings. For the first time in the history of the PLP game, I think that at least nine players have a chance of winning the league, or at least making it into the top three, this late in the season. The difference from 1st place to 9th place is only 720 points – which may seem like a lot, but we have seen some amazing runs already this season. It can be done!

Here is the PLP Week-by-Week Standings Graph after 29 weeks of the season:

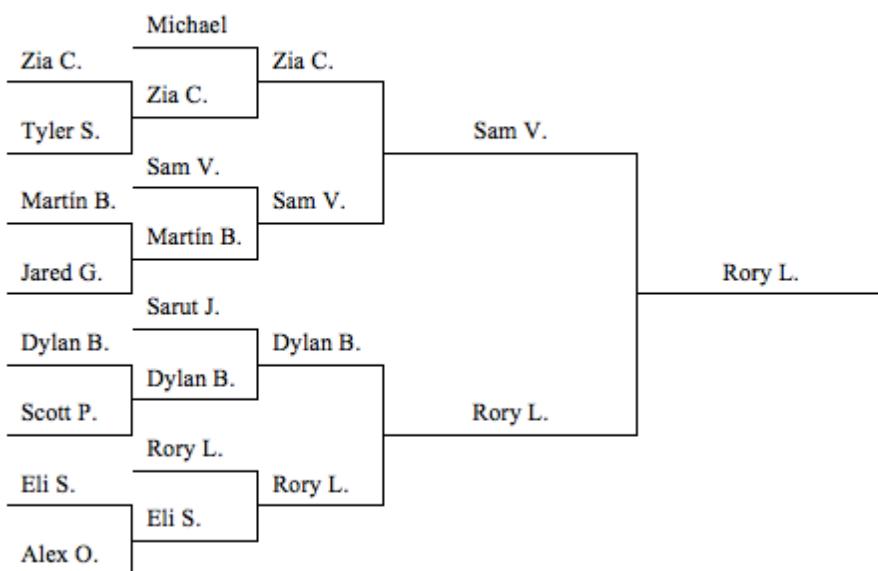


PLP Cup

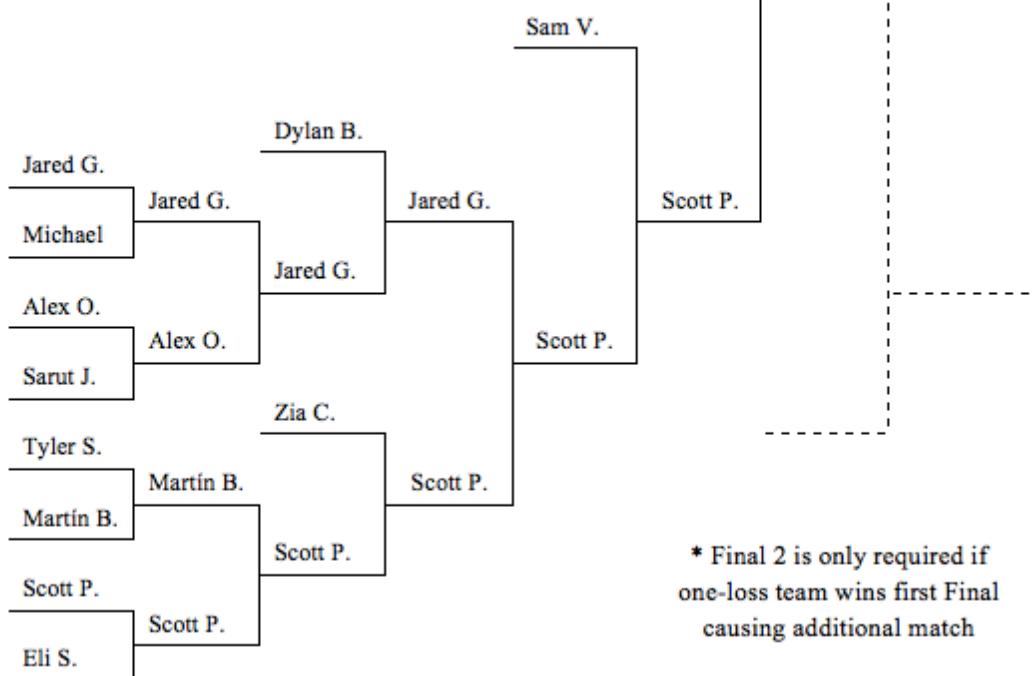
We awarded the second set of prizes for the 2020-21 Premier League Predictor season in Week 27 after Rory L. defeated Scott P. for the PLP Cup championship. Rory put together a steady run through the Champions' Bracket to take home the title. Scott lost his first match in the PLP Cup but put together an impressive streak of wins to advance from Round 1 of the Elimination Bracket all the way to the championship match.

Congrats both to Rory and Scott! Rory took home \$60 for the PLP Cup championship, and Scott took home \$20 as runner up. Here is the final 2020-21 PLP Cup bracket:

Champions Bracket					
Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3	Rnd 4	Final	Final 2*
Week 5	Week 8	Week 21	Week 25	Week 27	Week 28



Elimination Bracket				
Rnd 1	Rnd 2	Rnd 3	Rnd 4	Rnd 5
Week 19	Week 21	Week 23	Week 25	Week 26



Premier League Table

After the first 29 weeks of the Premier League Season and 290 total matches played, here is the current Premier League Table:

Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5
1  Man City	30	22	5	3	64	21	43	71	✓✓✗✓✓✓
2  Man United	29	16	9	4	56	32	24	57	✓✓✗✗✓✓
3  Leicester City	29	17	5	7	53	32	21	56	✓✓✗✗✓✓
4  Chelsea	29	14	9	6	44	25	19	51	✗✓✓✓✗✗
5  West Ham	29	14	7	8	45	35	10	49	✗✗✓✗✗✓
6  Tottenham	29	14	6	9	49	30	19	48	✓✗✓✓✓✓
7  Liverpool	29	13	7	9	48	36	12	46	✓✗✗✓✓✗
8  Everton	28	14	4	10	40	37	3	46	✗✗✓✓✓✓
9  Arsenal	29	12	6	11	40	32	8	42	✗✓✗✓✓✗
10  Aston Villa	28	12	5	11	39	30	9	41	✗✗✗✗✓✓
11  Leeds United	29	12	3	14	45	47	-2	39	✓✗✗✗✓✓
12  Crystal Palace	29	10	7	12	31	47	-16	37	✓✗✗✗✓✓
13  Wolves	29	9	8	12	28	38	-10	35	✗✗✗✗✓✓
14  Southampton	29	9	6	14	36	51	-15	33	✗✗✓✗✗✗
15  Burnley	29	8	9	12	22	37	-15	33	✓✗✗✗✗✗
16  Brighton	29	7	11	11	32	36	-4	32	✓✓✗✗✗✗
17  Newcastle	29	7	7	15	28	48	-20	28	✗✗✗✗✗✗
18  Fulham	30	5	11	14	23	38	-15	26	✗✗✓✗✗✗
19  West Brom	29	3	9	17	20	57	-37	18	✗✗✗✓✗✗
20  Sheffield United	29	4	2	23	16	50	-34	14	✗✗✓✗✗✗

Manchester City has taken control of the Premier League and currently leads 2nd place Manchester United by 14 points. They have been playing amazing football and it has been pretty incredible to watch some of their performances over the last couple of months. Here is the Premier League “form table” over the past eight matchweeks:

#	club	H	W	D	L	Goals	+/-	Pts
1	Man City	10	9	0	1	25:5	20	27
2 ↑	Chelsea	10	6	4	0	11:2	9	22
3	Leicester	10	5	3	2	18:11	7	18
4 ↓	Man Utd	10	4	5	1	20:7	13	17
5	West Ham	10	5	2	3	18:13	5	17
6 ↑	Arsenal	10	4	3	3	17:13	4	15
7 ↑	Brighton	10	4	3	3	10:7	3	15
8 ↓	Everton	10	4	2	4	11:13	-2	14
9 ↑	Crystal Palace	10	4	2	4	9:14	-5	14
10 ↑	Leeds	10	4	1	5	12:13	-1	13
11 ↑	Fulham	10	3	4	3	7:9	-2	13
12 ↑	Wolves	10	3	4	3	7:9	-2	13
13 ↑	Burnley	10	3	4	3	11:14	-3	13
14 ↓	Aston Villa	10	3	3	4	8:10	-2	12
15 ↓	Liverpool	10	4	0	6	11:14	-3	12
16 ↓	Spurs	9	3	0	6	13:13	0	9
17	Newcastle	10	2	3	5	10:16	-6	9
18 ↑	Sheff Utd	10	3	0	7	6:18	-12	9
19	West Brom	10	1	4	5	5:14	-9	7
20 ↓	Southampton	9	1	1	7	8:22	-14	4

The top of the Form Table is really no surprise. Some of the top teams are playing the best football lately. Man City and Chelsea have been on fire. Leicester continues to lurk quietly among the top clubs. West Ham has been a huge surprise all season. And Arsenal is finally hitting its stride!

Liverpool and Spurs have had disappointing starts to 2021 and it shows as they both sit in the bottom half of the Form Table. Both clubs will need to put together a streak of positive results in the 4th Quarter of the season to reclaim spots in the Top 4 places.

It's also time to start paying attention to the relegation battle! Brighton and Fulham have both showed some resilience during the 3rd Quarter of the season scoring 15 and 13 points respectively. Those runs of form have made the relegation fight much more interesting. Who can play well enough in the 4th Quarter to avoid the drop?

Here is the difference in expected home wins, away wins, and draws compared to last season:

Home Wins	Draws	Away Wins
108 (37%)	68 (23.5%)	114 (39.5%)

The table shows the current expected counts and percentages for Home Wins, Draws, and Away Wins. Below the table, arrows indicate the percentage change from last season: a red downward arrow for Home Wins (-8%), a red downward arrow for Draws (-0.5%), and a green upward arrow for Away Wins (+8.5%).

Home Wins: 108 (37%) → **-8%**

Draws: 68 (23.5%) → **-0.5%**

Away Wins: 114 (39.5%) → **+8.5%**

After 29 weeks of the season, there is still an uptick in away wins compared to last season's results. We are actually now seeing a leveling off of the percentages of home wins, away wins and draws during the 2020-21 season. With 90 matches remaining this season, we can reasonably expect roughly 33 more home wins, 21 more draws, and 36 more away wins if the percentages hold firm for the remainder of the season.

My (subjective) 3rd Quarter Premier League Awards

Match of the 3rd Quarter: Liverpool: 0, Everton: 2 (Week 25)

Once again, I had trouble picking the best match of the past few weeks. I may have forgotten the most exciting match, and certainly Arsenal's win over Spurs was a huge rivalry win for Arsenal and really important for their season. But I felt that this match was one of the most important matches of the 3rd Quarter, and really for Everton fans it was one of the most important matches in the past decade. Everton had not beaten Liverpool in the Premier League, especially at Anfield, for a long time. This was a huge win for the Blues.

Check out the highlights here: https://youtu.be/cx_NXcBWvYo

Upset of the 3rd Quarter: Manchester United: 1, Sheffield United: 2 (Week 20)

The upset of the 3rd Quarter took place back in January when Sheffield United beat Manchester United at Old Trafford when they only had an 8% chance of winning the match. The loss ended a 13-match unbeaten Premier League run for Manchester United. VAR played a huge role in this result, but Oliver Burke scored the winner in the 74th minute to take the three points.

Check out the highlights here: <https://youtu.be/Km2pKZKIVvU>

Team of the 3rd Quarter: Manchester City

Manchester City has been on quite a run in the last ten weeks of the Premier League season. During a period when some of the top teams were floundering – really struggling during the winter months and the non-stop schedule – Manchester City has won 9 out of their last 10 Premier League matches. They have opened up a 14 point lead over 2nd-place Manchester United.

Surprise Team of the 3rd Quarter: Fulham & Brighton (tie)

The picks for the surprise teams of the 3rd quarter aren't that exciting, but I was surprised when I looked at the form table over the past 10 matchweeks. Fulham and Brighton have produced some good results. Brighton has picked up 15 points and 4 wins since our last review, and Fulham has strung together 13 points and 3 victories in that time span. Those numbers might not sound spectacular, but they are massive improvements for both of these clubs, and they have certainly made the Relegation Battle more interesting as we head into the 4th quarter of the season.

Manager of the 3rd Quarter: Thomas Tuchel (Chelsea)

Thomas Tuchel was appointed Chelsea manager on January 26, 2021. Since his appointment, Chelsea has played 10 Premier League matches. The results of those 10 matches? 6 wins, 4 draws, 0 losses, 8 clean sheets, and 22 points. Most importantly, Chelsea are sitting back in 4th place and in a Champions League qualifying spot for the time being. It has been an impressive start for the new Chelsea boss.

Player of the 3rd Quarter: Ilkay Gundogan (Man City) Matches: 23, Goals: 12, Assists: 2

Since our last PLP Review, Gundogan has really led Manchester City's resurgence. He has scored 9 goals and has 2 assists in his last 11 Premier League matches. And, he scored two goals apiece in back-to-back matches against Liverpool and Spurs back in January. Gundogan dominated those matches during a period when City asserted its supremacy over the other Premier League teams and took firm hold over the top spot in the table.

4th Quarter Outlook

We are less than 2 months away from the end of the Premier League season – we are going to fly through the last quarter of the season! In the 4th Quarter of the PLP season, we introduce the PLP End of Season Playoffs. The Playoffs are set up kind of like a World Cup style tournament, with a Group Stage of matches starting Week 31. There are two groups of 6 players each, and each player will play 5 matches in the group stage. The top 3 in each group will advance to the Knockout Stage of the tournament that kicks off Week 36. The Playoff Championship takes place during the last week of the season, Matchweek 38, when we will crown our Playoff champion.

We will also crown our Regular Season champion in Matchweek 38. This means that we all have 9 weeks remaining to put up big scores to try to make it into the top 3 prize positions in the regular season, while also navigating the End of Season Playoff competition at the same time. There is still prize money out there to be won!

To close out the season, here are some of the matches that I wanted to highlight over the last 9 weeks of the 2020-21 Premier League season:

Week 30: Leicester City v Manchester City
 Arsenal v Liverpool

Week 31: Crystal Palace v Chelsea
 West Ham United v Leicester City
 Tottenham Hotspur v Manchester United

Week 32: Everton v Tottenham Hotspur
 Arsenal v Fulham
 Leeds United v Liverpool

Week 33: Arsenal v Everton
 West Ham United v Chelsea

Week 34: Brighton v Leeds United
 Crystal Palace v Manchester City
 Manchester United v Liverpool

Week 35: Manchester City v Chelsea
 Aston Villa v Manchester United
 West Ham United v Everton

Week 36: Crystal Palace v Aston Villa
 Manchester United v Leicester City
 Tottenham Hotspur v Wolves
 Chelsea v Arsenal

Week 37: Everton v Wolves
 Chelsea v Leicester City
 Crystal Palace v Arsenal

Week 38: Leicester City v Tottenham Hotspur
 Wolves v Manchester United
 Aston Villa v Chelsea
 Manchester City v Everton
 Liverpool v Crystal Palace

Conclusion

This wraps up the PLP 3rd Quarter Review! Hopefully it provides some insight on the season so far and I hope it provides some inspiration to help you make your picks over the last push toward the end of the season. Again, I wanted to say thanks to everyone for the participation so far this year! We continue to have the fewest “missed picks” so far this year, and that has made the competition better than ever before. I am really looking forward to the End of Season Playoffs and the end of the PLP Regular Season so that we can keep distributing prizes to the champions.

I wanted to leave something for all of our Liverpool fans out there – one of my favorite singers, Brittany Howard, singing “You’ll Never Walk Alone”. I thought it was a pretty good version. Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/V4vdYzUMWbo>

As always, let me know if you have any questions or suggestions to make the game better. Thanks for your participation so far this season, and good luck the rest of the season!

-Tyler

