

English Football League Analysis

up to 23/12/25

A comprehensive breakdown of the 2024/25 season across all four divisions



PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester City

City remain the league's control freaks. No side dominates territory quite like them — they consistently rack up more passes in the opposition half than anyone else and sit top for overall game control. Their on-ball pressure is elite, and because they spend so much time with the ball in dangerous areas, their defensive workload stays refreshingly light.

The numbers back up what your eyes tell you: best goal difference, top goals scored, and a chance creation machine that doesn't rely on hopeful crosses. They get into the box through central progression and combination play.

Outlook: Mild regression expected. They're slightly outperforming their expected goal difference and expected points, which tends to cool off over time. But even with that correction, the underlying control profile remains the best in English football. Title-level side.

Arsenal

Arsenal look like the most complete package in the division. They combine elite box access — no team completes more passes into the penalty area — with the best defensive suppression in the league. Fewest goals conceded, fewest shots faced, best expected threat against. Add very high game control and you have a side built to win titles.

Their possession security is remarkable. They rarely give up dangerous high recoveries, and their on-ball pressure share leads the league. This is a team that suffocates opponents while simultaneously carving them open.

Outlook: Improvement coming. They're slightly under their expected points and expected goal difference, which means the results should climb to match the process. By the data, this is the clearest "best team in the league" profile.

Liverpool

Liverpool are an attacking machine with extreme on-ball pressure and elite territory. They sit second for pressing intensity and rank in the top two for opposition half passing and box entries. Their expected threat creation is genuinely excellent.

The catch? The defensive outputs lag behind the other title-level teams. Goals conceded and shots faced sit mid-pack, which is fine for a top-four side but problematic for a genuine title challenge. You can't be that open and expect to win a championship.

Outlook: Results should bounce — they're under expected points and under expected goal difference. But if the concession rate doesn't tighten, they cap out below the top two. Top four, yes. Title? Not with this defensive profile.

Manchester United

United generate chances like a contender and finish like a mid-table side. Their shot volume leads the league, as does their expected threat creation. They press effectively — top three for passes allowed per defensive action — and win the ball high regularly.

The problem is execution. There's a massive gap between their expected goal difference and their actual goal difference, and their points return is miles below where it should be. This screams variance rather than process failure.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. If finishing and goalkeeping normalise, their results should jump without any tactical change. They're a top-four contender who've been running badly — that tends to correct.

Chelsea

Chelsea are built to suffocate teams. They press harder than anyone in the division — best passes allowed per defensive action — and keep opponents pinned in their own half. Their on-ball share is high, and they stay on the front foot throughout matches.

Defensively, they're near the top for goals conceded and shots faced. The question is whether the attack can match the press — they're solid for box entries but not quite elite for chance volume.

Outlook: Slight improvement likely — they're marginally below expected points. Top-four contender, but they need more cutting edge going forward to break into title contention.

Newcastle United

Newcastle look like a properly balanced Champions League profile. They rank third for game control, sit in the top five for expected threat and passes into the box, and complement central play with a strong crossing game.

Defensively solid rather than elite, they're good enough to compete at the top table without being watertight. The wide-and-aggressive approach creates volume, and they back it up with genuine quality.

Outlook: Improvement expected — they're under expected points and slightly under expected goal difference. If they tighten transitions, the process says more points are coming.

Aston Villa

Villa's results look better than the underlying numbers. They're efficient, clinical, and hard enough to break down, but they don't control matches consistently. Game control and on-ball pressure share sit in the middle of the pack.

There's a huge gap between their actual points and expected points, and between their goal difference and expected goal difference. That kind of overperformance almost always comes back.

Outlook: Regression likely. Unless they raise chance volume and control, the current points pace is fragile. Top six at best.

Tottenham Hotspur

Spurs play wide and cross-heavy, ranking in the top three for crosses. The problem is the box access doesn't match the crossing volume — they're low for passes into the penalty area, which suggests a lot of hopeful deliveries from deep.

Game control sits mid-table, and the underlying numbers don't scream top four. Their goal difference is flattering relative to expected, suggesting they've benefited from finishing variance.

Outlook: Regression expected. Without cleaner central progression and better box entry quality, this profile slips.

Nottingham Forest

Forest are a territory team who struggle to turn possession into goals. They cross more than anyone in the league and post decent numbers for opposition half passing and field tilt, but the output in the box isn't ruthless. Goals scored sit near the bottom.

Game control is surprisingly strong for their goal return, which suggests a conversion problem rather than a creation problem.

Outlook: Modest improvement likely — they're under expected points. The ceiling depends on upgrading chance quality or finding sharper finishers.

AFC Bournemouth

Bournemouth are a high-intensity, high-risk side. They press aggressively — second-best for passes allowed per defensive action — and generate strong expected points. High recoveries and on-ball pressure are both impressive, and box entries and crossing volume look healthy.

The flip side is they concede heavily. The defensive outputs are too porous for the amount of control they want, and they've underperformed their expected points significantly.

Outlook: Improvement expected — the points return is well below process. To sustain it, they need fewer cheap transitions and cleaner rest defence.

Brighton & Hove Albion

Brighton win the ball high more than anyone in the league, and their shot volume is strong. But the end product doesn't match the activity — game control sits mid-table, expected threat is only average, and there's slight underperformance on points.

They're an energetic press-and-possession blend without elite match control. The structural issue is converting regains and territory into higher-value box actions.

Outlook: Mild improvement possible, but the ceiling is capped without better central penetration.

Crystal Palace

Palace are a defence-first side with underrated underlying quality. They don't rack up opposition half passing, but they control danger well and create enough threat to be awkward. Strong expected points ranking and solid defensive numbers.

High off-ball pressure and share suggest they're comfortable defending and transitioning rather than controlling possession.

Outlook: Improvement expected — the process is better than the results. They'll stay limited without more sustained on-ball pressure, but solid mid-table is achievable.

Everton

Everton are direct and territorially efficient. They gain more field position relative to possession than anyone in the league, which suggests they win territory through second balls and direct play rather than patient build-up.

They spend a lot of time defending — extremely high off-ball pressure and share — but still show decent game control. Goals conceded is respectable.

Outlook: Modest regression likely. The overperformance is real but not huge. If they keep spending so much time defending, the margin for error against top attacks is thin.

Fulham

Fulham sit in the "nice football, mixed outcomes" bucket. They can get into the box — top ten for passes into the penalty area — and post decent expected threat. But they're not a high-regain or high-control side, and the defence allows too many goals for their ambitions.

Outlook: Roughly in line with expected points, so change will come from performance shifts rather than luck. They need to win the ball higher up or accept being a reactive mid-table side.

Brentford

Brentford look reactive and pragmatic. Low on-ball pressure and modest box access suggests they rely on moments, set pieces, and efficiency rather than sustained control. They spend a lot of time without the ball.

Expected threat and opposition half passing are both low, but defensive expected threat against is decent.

Outlook: Regression likely. The underlying chance creation is light, so holding points above expectation is hard. They're always one cold finishing spell away from trouble.

Leeds United

Leeds are chaotic. They shoot plenty and play with tempo — high activity metrics across shots, recoveries, and off-ball pressure. But they concede far too much, and their actual results heavily underperform their expected numbers.

Goals conceded and expected threat against are both weak, which is a structural problem rather than bad luck.

Outlook: Improvement expected on points, but the bigger issue is defensive structure. Even with regression help, the concession profile is bottom tier.

Sunderland

Sunderland are winning with efficiency and defensive resilience, not dominance. Their on-ball numbers are low, but they keep games uncomfortable and have nicked points above expectation. Strong goals conceded despite limited shot volume generated.

High off-ball pressure and share suggest a reactive, counter-based approach.

Outlook: Classic overperformance profile — regression likely. If they don't raise attacking threat and game control, results will slide when finishing variance turns.

Burnley

Burnley are getting smothered. They spend most matches defending — highest off-ball pressure in the league — and lack the attacking output to compensate. They leak goals and control nothing.

Worst expected points, near-worst goal difference, lowest on-ball pressure and share. Among the worst for goals conceded and expected threat against.

Outlook: Outclassed. This is not bad luck — the process is bottom of the league on both sides of the ball. Survival requires a major tactical shift or squad upgrade.

West Ham United

West Ham are defending a lot and still conceding a lot. They don't create enough threat, don't control territory, and the defensive volume is overwhelming them. Very low passes into the box and low expected threat.

High off-ball pressure and share, but terrible goals conceded and shots faced. Under expected points, but the baseline level is still poor.

Outlook: Outclassed. Even if results improve towards expected, the underlying is still bottom-three quality. They need more ball progression and a defensive scheme that reduces volume, not just blocks it.

Wolverhampton Wanderers

Wolves look broken on output. They're last for goal difference, last for game control, and last for scoring, with a defence that concedes too easily. Worst goals scored and worst goals conceded in the division.

Very large negative gap between actual and expected points, and actual and expected goal difference.

Outlook: Outclassed. The underperformance suggests they should collect more points than they have, but that only shifts them from "awful" to "bad". The underlying expected points level is still bottom two — it's a quality problem first.



CHAMPIONSHIP

Ipswich Town

Ipswich look like a top-tier underlying side. They control games through territory, shot suppression, and a proactive press. Best expected points in the league and best shots faced profile, with elite net threat — their expected threat difference leads the division.

Strong box entry volume backs up the territorial dominance. A significant underperformance versus expected points suggests the results haven't caught up with the process yet.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. The process is already promotion level — if finishing and game-state variance normalise, they should climb fast. Serious automatic-promotion contender.

Coventry City

Coventry are the league's most complete chance-creation machine. They lead the division for goals, shots, field tilt, passes into box, expected threat, game control, and on-ball pressure. That's a remarkable sweep of the attacking metrics.

Their high field tilt and huge passing volume in the opposition half create constant pressure, and the defensive profile is strong for such a front-foot team. Cross volume is high, but it's backed by elite central progression too.

Outlook: This is the clearest "best team by data" profile. Even if results wobble short-term, the underlying dominance is the most repeatable in the league. Serious automatic-promotion contender.

Birmingham City

Birmingham play aggressive, wide, high-tempo football. They win the ball high and attack with relentless crossing and pressure — most crosses in the league, top three for high recoveries, very strong shot suppression.

Strong pressing indicators across the board, but they've been underperforming points heavily despite strong expected points.

Outlook: Improvement expected. The results haven't matched the control and defensive base. If they turn territory and crosses into cleaner expected threat, the table position should improve. Playoff contender with upside.

Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough are possession and territory heavy, with constant ball progression into advanced zones. Clear playoff contender, fringe top-two if they stabilise in transition.

Outlook: A balanced profile that should sustain top-six level.

Watford

Watford have possession without territory — the worst field tilt minus possession in the league. They don't turn the ball into sustained box pressure and concede too many dangerous regains. Worst high recoveries against, bottom-tier game control.

Attack is only mid-table by expected threat and box entries.

Outlook: Points have lagged slightly, but the style profile is fragile. Without a better territorial game and cleaner rest defence, improvement is capped. Not a serious contender.

Southampton

Southampton run one of the most aggressive presses in the league — best passes allowed per defensive action. They create volume, not quality. Strong shot volume and opposition-half passing, but goals conceded and net expected threat are both poor for a "promotion" side.

Outlook: Points understate them, but the underlying warning is defensive. If they clean up transition exposure, they can move into the playoff conversation. Outside contender unless the defence tightens.

Sheffield United

Sheffield United are territorial, physical, and direct-to-danger. They live in the opposition half and get into the box constantly — second for game control, second for passes into box, top three for net expected threat.

Massive points underperformance versus expected points suggests they've been deeply unfortunate.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. The underlying dominance is too strong for their current points return. If they stop bleeding marginal games, they will surge. Serious contender, likely playoff minimum.

Queens Park Rangers

QPR show efficient chance creation with decent territorial output, but the defensive base is shaky. Top four for expected threat and good box entries, but low pressing intensity and a soft goals conceded profile. Net expected threat is slightly negative, so margins are thin.

Outlook: Not far off expected points, but they have attacking tools that can carry short runs. Defensive tightening is the swing factor. Playoff outsider rather than a true promotion side.

Blackburn Rovers

Blackburn are front-foot and disruptive. Strong pressing signals and good box entry rank, but goals scored lag their control indicators. Points underperformance suggests some bounce back is likely.

Outlook: The process is better than the goal return. If conversion normalises even slightly, results improve quickly. Playoff outsider, more likely mid-table without improvement.

Stoke City

Stoke are defence-first and conservative. Best goals conceded in the league, but low shots and modest expected threat. Game control is bottom third. They protect space well and keep games tight, but the attack lacks sustained threat.

Outlook: Regression risk. Tight-game teams often look stable until a few one-goal results flip. Without more attacking threat, they risk sliding when variance turns. Not a serious contender unless they add creation.

Millwall

Millwall use chaos as a weapon. Elite high-regain team with best high recoveries and best high recoveries against — they win the ball high and don't let opponents do the same. Strong box entry output and good net threat. Game control top five.

Outlook: Slight regression likely — they've marginally overperformed points. The style is legit, but it's physically demanding and can spike variance both ways. Real playoff contender.

Bristol City

Bristol City are a shot-volume side that leans on transitions and pressure rather than slow control. Shots are top five, but shots faced is bottom tier. Expected threat is solid but not elite, pressing intensity is average-to-low, and game control is good despite only mid-pack territory.

Outlook: Close to expected output, can climb with small defensive gains. The current shot concession rate is the main drag. Mid-table profile.

Preston North End

Preston show a low-volume, high-efficiency attack with a strong defensive baseline. They look like a grinder that can hang around the top half. Big positive gap between actual and expected points — likely running hot.

Very efficient shooting relative to expected threat, but territory and opposition-half passing are bottom third.

Outlook: The profile screams overperformance: limited control, limited volume. Unless they gain more territory, results should cool. Not a serious contender.

Hull City

Hull are extremely volatile. They score well relative to their control, but give up too much territory and too many shots. Shots faced and goals conceded are bottom tier, low field tilt and low passes into box.

Biggest positive gap between actual and expected points in the league — the biggest regression risk.

Outlook: Classic "wins don't match performance" shape. If they keep conceding that volume, results will slide. Not a serious contender.

Portsmouth

Portsmouth play a wide, cross-heavy approach with decent territory. Third for crosses, and strong protection against high turnovers (second-best high recoveries against). But goals scored are near-bottom despite reasonable net expected threat.

Outlook: The goal output is too low for their chance-building indicators. A normal finishing run could lift them a few places quickly. Lower-mid profile with rebound potential.

Derby County

Derby are a deep-working, defence-and-duels side. They avoid sustained possession and try to win off second balls and pressure away from the ball. Lowest shots in the league, bottom for opposition-half passing, best off-ball pressure.

Net expected threat is strongly negative.

Outlook: Outclassed. Work rate is not the issue — ball progression and chance creation are, and both are promotion-level weak.

Swansea City

Swansea are press-capable with decent territory — top three for passes allowed per defensive action, top ten for field tilt. But they struggle to turn it into box entries and expected threat. Passes into box bottom two, expected threat is bottom, game control is bottom third.

Outlook: Points are a bit behind, but the attack needs genuine invention. Without better box access, improvement is limited. Mid-table profile.

Leicester City

Leicester are possession-heavy but not threatening enough with it. They sit in the messy middle: capable of runs, not a serious contender. Field tilt minus possession is near-worst — sterile control risk. Net expected threat is slightly positive but not dominant.

High recoveries against is poor, so they can be rattled.

Outlook: Regression likely — they've taken more points than the underlying suggests. If they don't turn possession into territory and box pressure, results will drift.

Charlton Athletic

Charlton are a direct territorial team with heavy off-ball work. Best field tilt minus possession in the league — they gain ground without the ball. But shots faced is bottom three and expected threat difference is negative. Off-ball pressure second-best.

Outlook: Outclassed. The style can steal matches, but it doesn't sustainably win the shot and threat battle. Over a season, that usually ends in the bottom cluster. Relegation battle profile.

Norwich City

Norwich's attacking threat is real — second for expected threat and near-best efficiency. But defensive stability is not. Goals conceded bottom two, high recoveries against bottom two. Big points underperformance suggests some bounce.

Outlook: They should pick up more points than they have, purely on attacking threat. But unless the defensive structure improves, the ceiling stays mid-table at best.

Oxford United

Oxford show low control, high work-rate, and too many concessions. Field tilt last, game control bottom three, expected threat difference strongly negative. Off-ball pressure top three, but it's not translating into control.

Outlook: Outclassed. Effort and pressure are not enough when you lose territory and threat most weeks. Without a major possession and box-entry jump, they stay in trouble. Relegation battle.

Wrexham

Wrexham are a pragmatic, low-press side that tries to survive and nick moments. Expected points bottom two, expected threat difference bottom, worst passes allowed per defensive action. They concede volume and create little box threat.

Positive gap between actual and expected points suggests they're already running hot.

Outlook: Outclassed. The process is not keeping them safe. If results normalise, the table position worsens.

Sheffield Wednesday

Wednesday are overwhelmed on both sides of the ball. Expected points last, goals last, goals conceded last, shots faced last, game control last. Net expected threat is bottom two. They concede too many shots, too many goals, and don't create enough to compensate.

Outlook: Outclassed. This is not a "bad luck" profile — it's systemic weakness across volume, threat, and control. Relegation favourite on the data.



LEAGUE ONE

Bolton Wanderers

Bolton look like the best side in League One by underlying performance. They drive huge shot volume while giving up almost nothing — best expected points, elite shot differential, best shots faced. Strong pressing indicators with low passes allowed per defensive action and high on-ball pressure.

The concern is shot quality — a very poor shots-per-expected-threat profile suggests a lot of low-value shooting.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. They're materially under expected points, so results should lift even if nothing changes. If they improve shot selection, the ceiling is even higher.

Huddersfield Town

Huddersfield have top-tier underlying results and strong control metrics. Good pressing with low passes allowed per defensive action and strong on-ball pressure. The main issue is they concede too many goals relative to the defensive process — bottom-tier goals conceded despite good shots faced and expected threat against.

Outlook: Improvement expected. The negative gap suggests they've been punished by variance. The conceded-goals gap looks like opponents taking their chances or poor goalkeeping, not a structural collapse. Top-four quality.

Wycombe Wanderers

Wycombe are a balanced contender with real chance creation and decent chance prevention. Top-three expected points, top-two expected threat, top-three passes into box, strong field tilt. Materially underperforming points.

Outlook: Classic "good team not getting any luck" profile. If they keep generating box entries and expected threat, points should follow.

Port Vale

Port Vale are the biggest "buy" in the league on process. They get into the box a lot — second for passes into the penalty area — and defend well. Top-seven expected points, top-five game control share. But they finish like a relegation side.

Worst gap between actual and expected points in the league, worst goals scored.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. The points gap is extreme, and the goal output is wildly inconsistent with the chance and territory profile. Even average finishing would move them up the table quickly.

Wigan Athletic

Wigan have decent underlying expected points but play with low territorial dominance and limited attacking bite. Top-five expected points but bottom-seven field tilt and low opposition-half passing. More "functional" than threatening.

Outlook: Modest improvement likely. Their results are slightly worse than their baseline, but they're not an elite attack, so the upside is modest rather than explosive.

Stockport County

Stockport look like a high-control, high-pressure contender. Good on both sides of the ball — top-five game control, top-three game control share, strong expected threat and expected threat against.

Shot quality could be better — shots per expected threat is high.

Outlook: Improvement likely. Results are roughly fair to expected points, but the control metrics suggest they can still climb. Cleaner shot selection would convert dominance into more points.

Luton Town

Luton are a strong territorial side with the best chance prevention. Best field tilt, best defensive expected threat against, elite pressing with best passes allowed per defensive action and top-two high recoveries.

Underperforming points.

Outlook: Improvement expected. Their defensive base is promotion quality and typically very stable. If the attack converts territory into slightly better chances, they will climb.

Cardiff City

Cardiff are the best territorial and chance creation team in the division. First for expected threat, goals, passes in opposition half, and passes into box. Strong pressing volume with top on-ball pressure and strong passes allowed per defensive action.

The concern is turnover exposure — worst high recoveries against and worst off-ball pressure share. They're living dangerously in transition moments.

Outlook: Regression likely. They're meaningfully over expected points, and the turnover profile is a red flag that tends to bite in tight games. Still promotion-level, but expect a cooler run unless they stabilise rest defence.

Bradford City

Bradford are the best "control" team by non-shot metrics and press profile. First for game control and game control share, best high recoveries and best high recoveries against. The concern is they allow too much threat relative to results — bottom-five expected threat against and high shots faced.

Outlook: Regression likely. They're over expected points, and the defensive threat numbers suggest some correction is coming. If they tighten chance prevention, they can sustain the top level.

Leyton Orient

Orient score plenty but it looks fragile and volatile. Top-four goals but bottom-two goals conceded. Very low passes into box and very low expected threat. Pressing is decent, but game control is bottom-half.

Outlook: Regression likely. The attack is outperforming the creation profile while the defence bleeds goals and threat. That combo rarely holds for long — they either fix the defence or slide.

Lincoln City

Lincoln show strong expected threat and strong control share — top four in both. Best field tilt minus possession suggests efficient territorial use. But shot numbers and territorial volume are not dominant.

Slight overperformance on points.

Outlook: Mild regression likely. They're a bit ahead of expected points, and the low shots-for and high shots-faced mix is not "safe." Solid playoff side rather than a juggernaut.

AFC Wimbledon

Wimbledon are mid-table on control but weak in direct chance creation and below average at preventing threat. Bottom for passes into box, bottom-five goals conceded, worst passes allowed per defensive action. Passive pressing.

Outlook: Regression likely. The underlying attacking production is too low to carry a leaky defence. They need either more box access or stronger chance prevention. Without that, they drift down.

Stevenage

Stevenage are getting elite defensive outcomes, but the attacking process is the worst in the league. Best goals conceded, but expected threat creation is last. Very low shot volume and low high recoveries. Biggest positive gap between actual and expected points among the top group.

Outlook: Classic overperformance profile — regression likely. It's hard to keep winning with bottom-tier creation. Defensive finishing luck tends to normalise. Unless they add threat, the points pace will cool.

Reading

Reading shoot a lot but create very little meaningful threat. Worst shots per expected threat in the league — extremely low expected threat for the shot count. Mid defensive numbers, low game control.

Slight underperformance on points, but not enough to excuse the process.

Outlook: This is not "unlucky" — it's a shot selection and chance-building problem. Without improving chance quality, they will keep dropping points even if variance helps occasionally.

Barnsley

Barnsley are entertaining and aggressive, but they concede too much. Top-two goals, but bottom-four goals conceded. Strong pressing outputs and high recoveries, but positive gap between actual and expected points suggests an unsustainable edge.

Outlook: Regression likely. You rarely sustain results when both shots faced and defensive expected threat are weak. Unless they tighten chance prevention, the table position will slip.

Burton Albion

Burton can progress and create threat — top-five expected threat, top-four passes into box. But their defensive threat prevention is the worst in the league. Mid control, high volatility profile.

Outlook: Regression likely. Even if the attack is real, conceding that level of threat catches up over time. They need a rest-defence fix or they will leak points.

Northampton Town

Northampton have almost no attack. Worst shots-for, bottom-half expected threat, high shots faced and low control. Surviving on defensive outcomes and suppression of opponent high turnovers.

Positive gap between actual and expected points — likely points inflation.

Outlook: Outclassed. The attack is not League One top-half standard by any process measure. When defensive outcomes normalise, they have no scoring base to compensate.

Exeter City

Exeter's results on goals conceded look good, but the underlying threat conceded and turnover numbers are poor. Bottom-two passes allowed per defensive action, bottom-half game control share, bottom-three expected threat against and very poor high recoveries against.

Low shot volume and mid box entry.

Outlook: Outclassed. The defensive outcomes look inflated relative to the process. If that corrects, they don't have the attacking base to compensate. Relegation-risk profile.

Peterborough United

Peterborough look sterile. Bottom-three game control share, bottom-three field tilt, bottom-two field tilt minus possession — lots of empty possession. Weak high recoveries and very high high recoveries against.

Outlook: Outclassed. This is a structural issue, not just variance. They're losing the territory and turnover battle while not creating enough box pressure.

Blackpool

Blackpool are bottom across almost every control and defensive metric. Worst shots faced, worst game control, worst game control share. Bottom-three expected threat and bottom-three expected threat against. Weak pressing and low pressure volumes.

Outlook: Outclassed. This is the clearest relegation profile in the set. There is no single fix — they need upgrades in both chance creation and chance prevention.

Rotherham United

Rotherham are not creating enough and are not preventing enough. Bottom-two expected points, very poor shot efficiency. Bottom-half expected threat against and poor high recoveries against.

Positive gap between actual and expected points suggests results slightly inflated.

Outlook: Outclassed. The process is relegation-zone level. Even with good effort metrics, they lack a repeatable edge in either box.

Plymouth Argyle

Plymouth's results are ahead of their underlying, and the control numbers are bleak. Bottom expected points, bottom-two game control share, bottom-three field tilt minus possession, weak box entry.

Positive gap between actual and expected points — likely correction coming.

Outlook: Outclassed. Low control and weak defence is a brutal combo over a season. If they don't shift their territorial and defensive baseline, regression is likely and ugly.



LEAGUE TWO

Grimsby Town

Grimsby are a high-tempo, front-foot side. They press more aggressively than anyone in the division — best passes allowed per defensive action — and generate elite threat and territory. Top expected points, top expected threat, high field tilt and passes in the opposition half.

Good shot volume and strong shot suppression. But they have the biggest underperformance versus points in the league — results haven't paid the process yet.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. When you underperform expected points by that much, the default expectation is positive correction if squad health stays stable.

Barnet

Barnet are a territory monster. They dominate field tilt, box entries, on-ball pressure, and game control — first in all four categories. This is a relentless "camp in your half" model with the best expected threat difference in the league.

Second for expected points but significant underperformance — the points lag is the story.

Outlook: Strong improvement expected. They're winning the territorial and chance-progression battle almost every week. Finishing and short-run variance should normalise.

Colchester United

Colchester are a balanced, progressive side that gets into good zones without needing extreme chaos. Strong chance creation with high goals and solid expected threat. Not a pure press monster, more a controlled aggressor.

Third for expected points with underperformance.

Outlook: Improvement expected. They profile like a promotion-level process team whose results haven't caught up. If they maintain the same zone time and chance output, results should trend upward.

Notts County

Notts County are more methodical than their reputation suggests. Good defensive outputs with top-tier goals conceded, but their attacking "threat flow" is weaker than

the raw goals suggest — low expected threat, negative expected threat difference. This looks like efficiency-driven scoring rather than constant pressure.

Fourth for expected points with slight overperformance.

Outlook: Regression risk. They've been efficient in both boxes, but the underlying chance-progression indicators are not top-four level. If conversion cools even slightly, results wobble.

Cambridge United

Cambridge are defence-first control. They suppress shots better than anyone — best shots faced — and keep goals conceded elite while maintaining good game control and field tilt. The attack is functional, not explosive.

Fifth for expected points with mild underperformance.

Outlook: Improvement expected. The defensive base is promotion-quality. If they get even average finishing or a small attacking upgrade, results should improve because they're already controlling games and limiting damage.

Swindon Town

Swindon are a high-event, attack-leaning side. Good expected threat and goals, but less convincing control and some vulnerability to opponent disruption. They look like a team that can score without fully dictating matches.

Sixth for expected points but overperforming.

Outlook: Regression likely. The table has likely benefited from finishing or close-game variance. The control metrics don't match a top-six points pace. Expect a dip unless they stabilise possession security.

Oldham Athletic

Oldham are a defensive anchor with decent territory. Best goals conceded in the league with solid pressing and box access, but low scoring suggests finishing or shot-quality issues. They win games by strangling opponents first.

Seventh for expected points with underperformance.

Outlook: Improvement expected. Their defensive level is elite and usually travels. If they convert a normal share of their territory and box entries into goals, points should climb quickly.

Bromley

Bromley are a direct, territory-efficient team. They generate high field tilt with relatively low possession and are hard to press — best high recoveries against. This is a pragmatic, robust model with real control.

Eighth for expected points but overperforming.

Outlook: Mild regression likely. They're good, but the current points pace is slightly ahead of the underlying. They can hold position with the same direct edge, but expecting constant overperformance is risky.

Milton Keynes Dons

MK Dons are a clinical attacking team with a solid defensive foundation. Best goals scored in the league without extreme volume, which points to finishing and chance quality rather than pure shot spam. More efficient than dominant.

Ninth for expected points with slight overperformance.

Outlook: Regression risk. They're winning with elite finishing and good chance flow. If conversion drops toward average, results soften unless they increase sustained pressure.

Fleetwood Town

Fleetwood are more transitional and open than the top sides. Strong expected threat and box entries, but they allow a lot of shots and territory swings. They can hurt you, but they also invite trouble.

Tenth for expected points with slight underperformance.

Outlook: Mild improvement possible. The attack indicators are good enough to expect some improvement. The ceiling depends on fixing shot suppression.

Walsall

Walsall have out-of-possession intensity with a direct territorial angle. They generate territory without lots of possession, but attacking threat numbers are weak — low expected threat, negative expected threat difference. This looks like a team winning the margins and defending well.

Big points overperformance.

Outlook: Regression likely. Defensive teams can run hot for long stretches, but the attacking indicators don't support sustained top results. One bad finishing run flips outcomes.

Salford City

Salford are a high-press and high-shot volume team. They win the ball high frequently and take a lot of shots, but shot quality creation is inconsistent. Chaos team with punch, but expected threat difference is slightly negative.

Mild points overperformance.

Outlook: Regression likely. Pressing and volume keep them competitive, but the underlying threat edge is not as strong as the points suggest. If the press efficiency dips, they can quickly look ordinary.

Crewe Alexandra

Crewe are a well-rounded pressing side with steady progression into the box. Good balance of volume, territory, and recoveries. Not extreme in any one metric, which usually means sustainable performance.

Near-neutral on points versus expected.

Outlook: Mild improvement possible. They're basically performing at their baseline, but the underlying profile is healthier than their rank implies. Small gains in defensive control or finishing could push them into the top group.

Crawley Town

Crawley are aggressive and messy. They press hard — second-best passes allowed per defensive action — and take a ton of shots, but they get punished in transition and build-up errors. They're creating their own problems.

Worst high recoveries against suggests vulnerability. Big underperformance on points.

Outlook: Improvement expected, but requires structural tightening. Results are worse than the attacking process suggests, but the defensive profile is genuinely bad and not just variance.

Accrington Stanley

Accrington are a high-energy disruptor. They lead the league in high recoveries and keep defensive outputs respectable, but they struggle to turn territory into true box pressure — passes into box near bottom. This is pressure without enough final action.

Mid-table expected points with underperformance.

Outlook: Improvement possible. They've been unlucky on points relative to process. If they add one reliable final-third mechanism, results should rise quickly because the defensive and pressing base is real.

Chesterfield

Chesterfield are possession and territory heavy. They rack up the most passes in the opposition half by miles, pair it with huge field tilt, and press hard on-ball. The issue is efficiency and defensive stability — goals conceded mid-lower.

Big points overperformance.

Outlook: Regression likely. They're getting results above what their expected points baseline supports. The style can keep them competitive, but unless they reduce concession quality, the points pace is fragile.

Bristol Rovers

Bristol Rovers want to play in the opponent's half but lack bite in both boxes. Field tilt is decent and expected threat is respectable, yet they're bottom for goals scored and near-bottom for goals conceded. That's execution failure.

Major underperformance on points.

Outlook: Outclassed. Even if points improve a bit, the current output at both ends is relegation-level. Without a real attacking upgrade plus defensive repairs, they're structurally behind too many teams.

Tranmere Rovers

Tranmere have a transition-leaning attack with decent expected threat generation, but shaky defensive control. They can create threat efficiently — very good shots per expected threat — yet concede too much and struggle to turn threat into consistent expected goals. Feels like a streaky team.

Mild underperformance on points.

Outlook: Improvement possible. They're slightly below their process on points. If they stabilise defensive phases, the attacking "threat engine" is good enough to climb.

Gillingham

Gillingham are direct, territory-efficient with a physical defensive edge. Decent in most areas but don't create a big threat advantage — expected threat difference basically flat. They win by being awkward, not by overwhelming.

Slight overperformance on points.

Outlook: Regression likely. The underlying is lower-mid-table. Without a clearer attacking edge, small negative variance swings results the wrong way.

Shrewsbury Town

Shrewsbury are a reactive, lower-tempo side. They don't press much and their attacking production is weak, but they're not a total defensive disaster. The problem is they don't create enough to offset concessions.

Low goals scored and poor expected goals per expected threat. Underperformance on points.

Outlook: Outclassed. Underperformance explains some points drop, but the ceiling is still low because chance quality is poor. Without a meaningful attacking step up, they remain behind most of the league.

Barrow

Barrow have a deep, passive, absorb-and-clear profile. Very high passes allowed per defensive action and low on-ball pressure suggests they sit off and defend space, but they still allow lots of shots. They're not creating enough to justify that passivity.

Negative expected threat difference and low shot volume.

Outlook: Outclassed. Passive defence only works if shot suppression is elite. Here it isn't. With limited creation, they're consistently fighting uphill.

Harrogate Town

Harrogate show low possession, low control, low output. They generate very little territory and box access and allow a huge shot count, so matches are often played on their goal line. This is survival football without enough punch.

Worst in passes into box and expected threat. Underperformance on points.

Outlook: Outclassed. The underlying numbers are consistently bottom-tier across control, chance creation, and shot suppression. Unless something changes structurally, the trend is negative.

Newport County

Newport are a low-control, low-intensity side that concedes too much. They struggle to sustain attacks and defensively allow the worst goals conceded rate in the league. Worst game control and lowest passes in opposition half.

Heavy underperformance on points.

Outlook: Outclassed. Even with some point correction, the defensive baseline is too weak. If you concede at that rate while also lacking control, you need miracle finishing to survive.

Cheltenham Town

Cheltenham are a low-threat, low-control side. Bottom for expected points, bottom for field tilt, bottom for shots and shots faced, bottom for expected threat difference. They're the worst process team in the division, but somehow their current points picture is flattering.

Best points overperformance in the league.

Outlook: This is the clearest regression risk in the league. When you're last in the core process metrics and still banking points above expectation, it usually snaps back hard.