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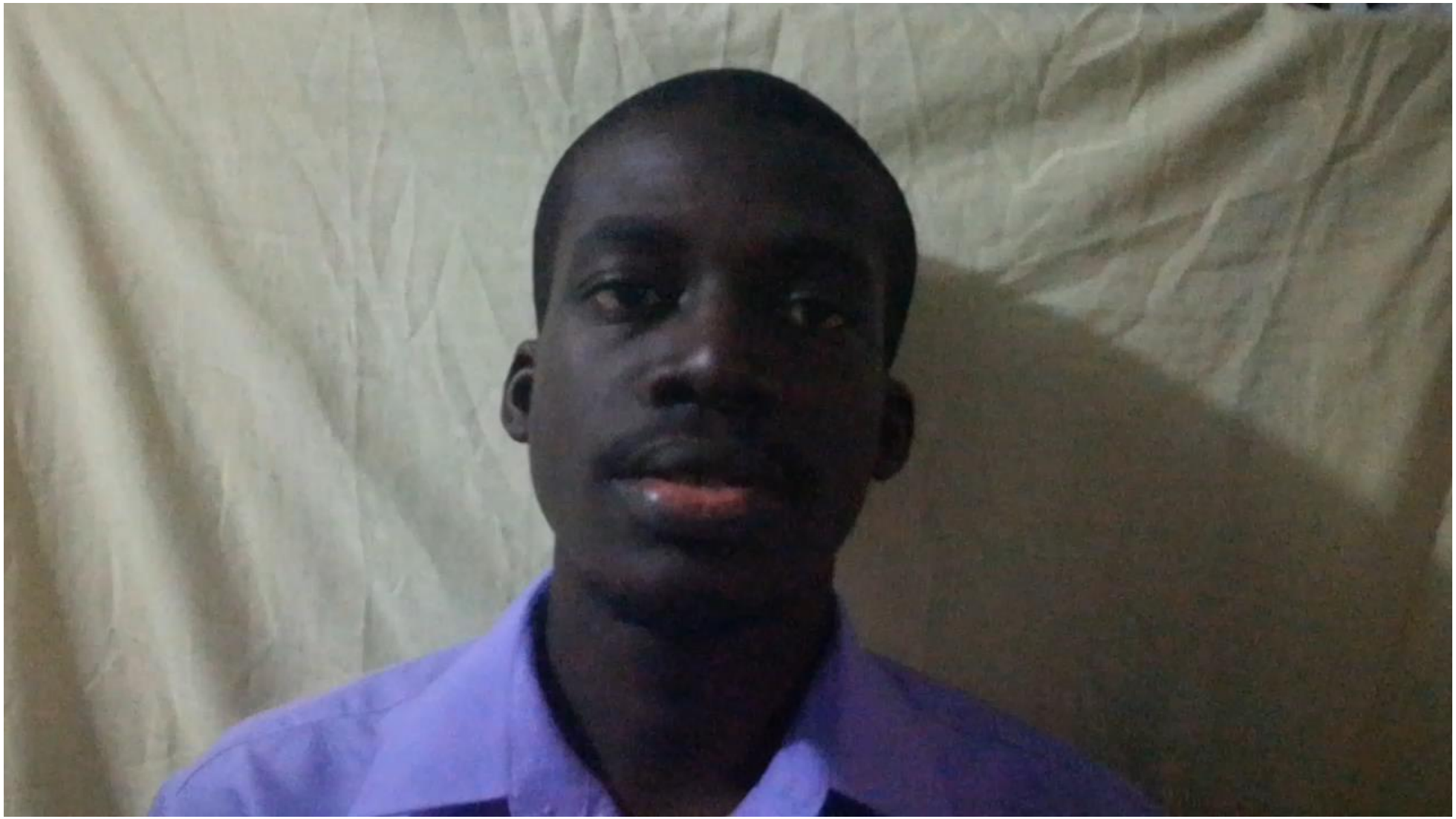
How Do Attacking and Defending Strategies Affect Goalscoring Opportunities From Throw-Ins?

David Quartey | @DaveQuartey | #OptaProForum

A Brief Introduction



Opportunities Throw-Ins present

A throw in is a set play which gives a team an opportunity to restart play with an uncontested pass.

How Many Throw-Ins Do Teams Make?

A team makes about 21 throw ins per game on average

Which Throw-Ins Are We Focusing On?

We will look at passages of play started by a throw-in that:

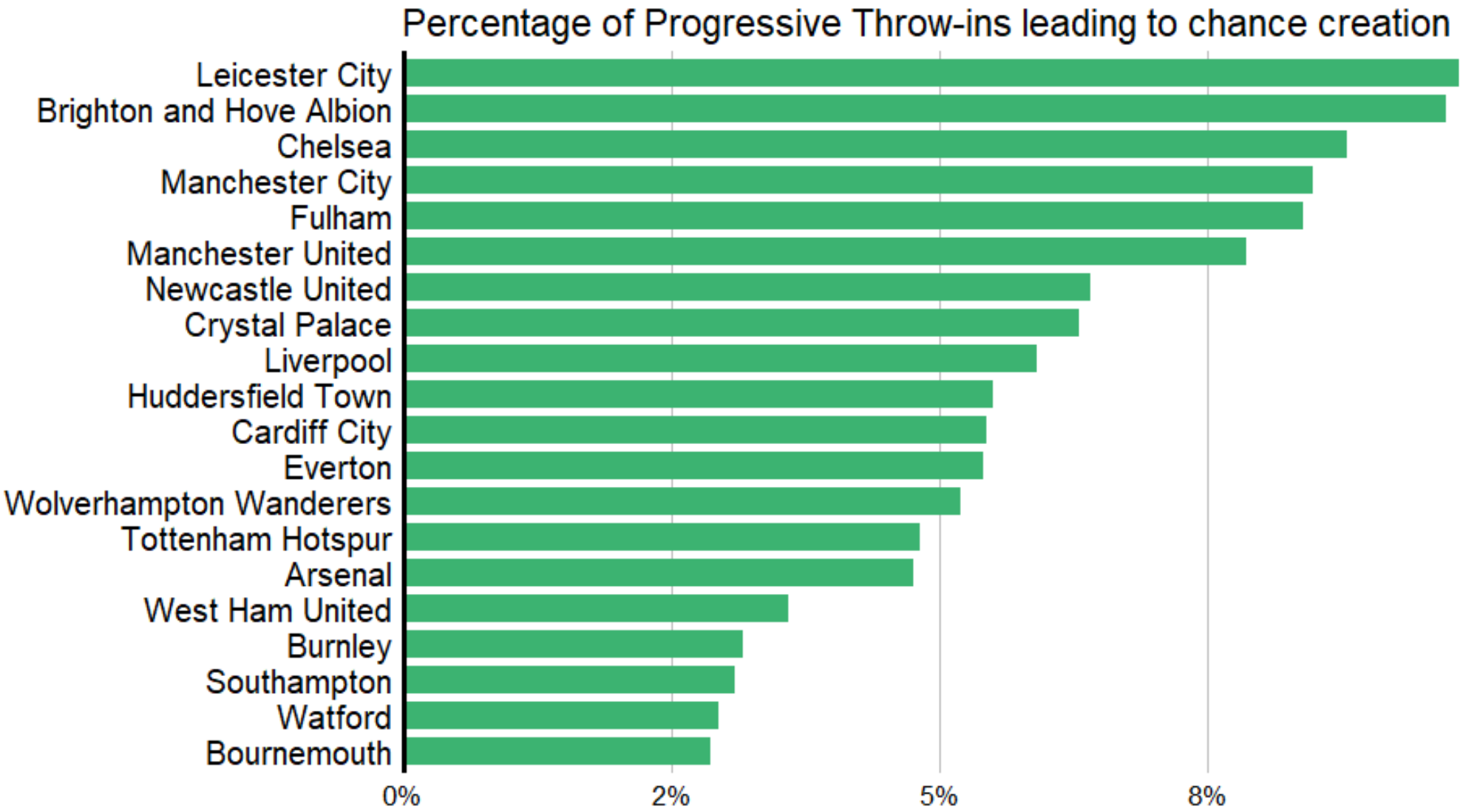
- Are **progressive**
- Start in the **final third**

These passages of play are ended by:

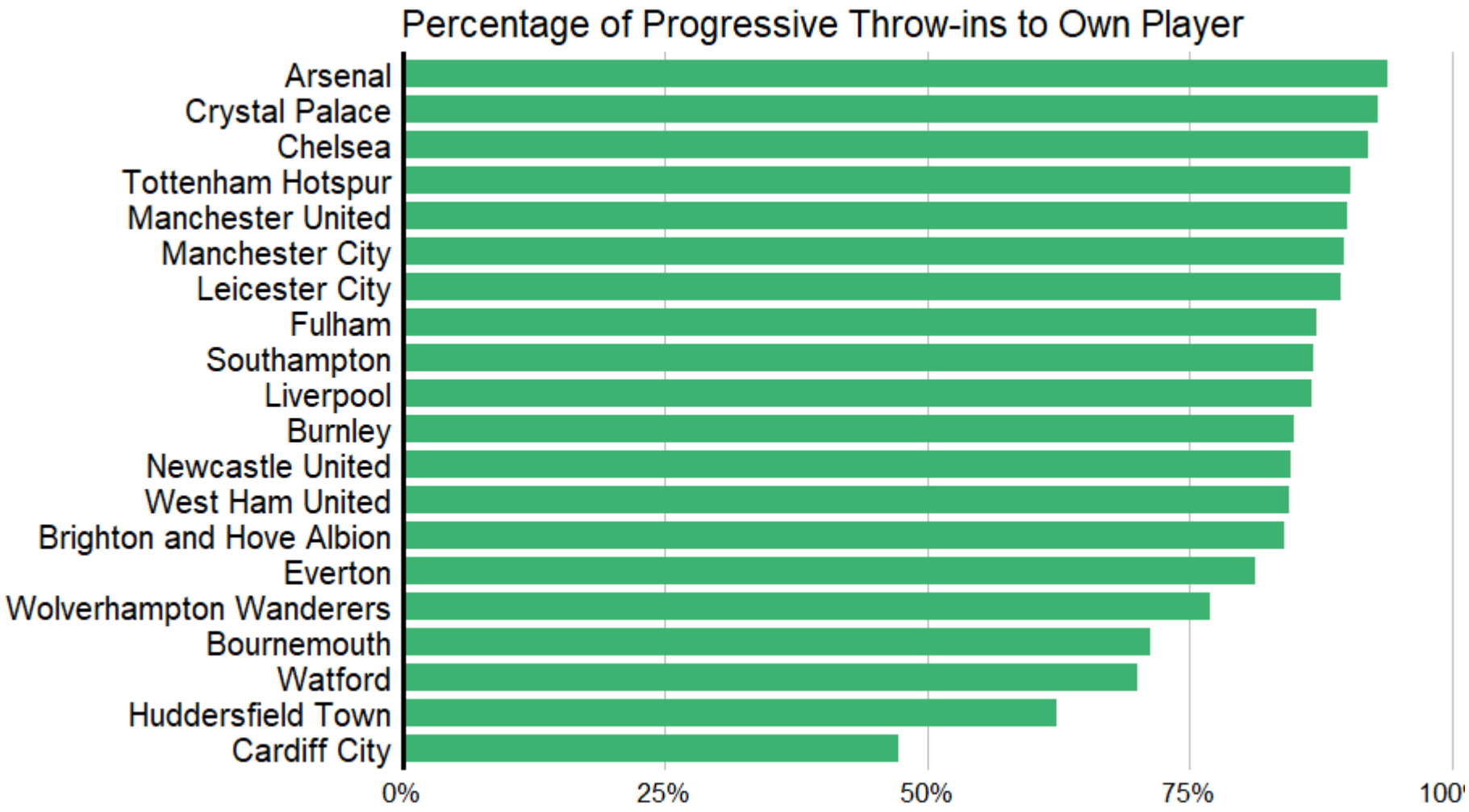
- **Defensive actions** by the opposition team.
- **Stoppages in play** (e.g. the ball going out of play)
- **Chances created** (e.g. goals, penalties, shots & missed chances)

Example: Shot-Ending Throw-In

Throw-Ins Used in Creating Chances



Throw-Ins Are Sometimes Used In Retaining Possession



Why Does This Matter?

Coaches can **optimise** the best throw-in strategy for their teams and **train their players** to get the best results

What Are The Different Throw-In Types and Strategies That Teams Deploy?

Attacking throw-in strategies:

- Mixed
- Consistent

Defensive throw-in strategies:

- Aggressive
- Non-Aggressive

Different throw-in types used:

- Fast & long
- Fast & short
- Slow & long
- Slow & short

Throw-In Types

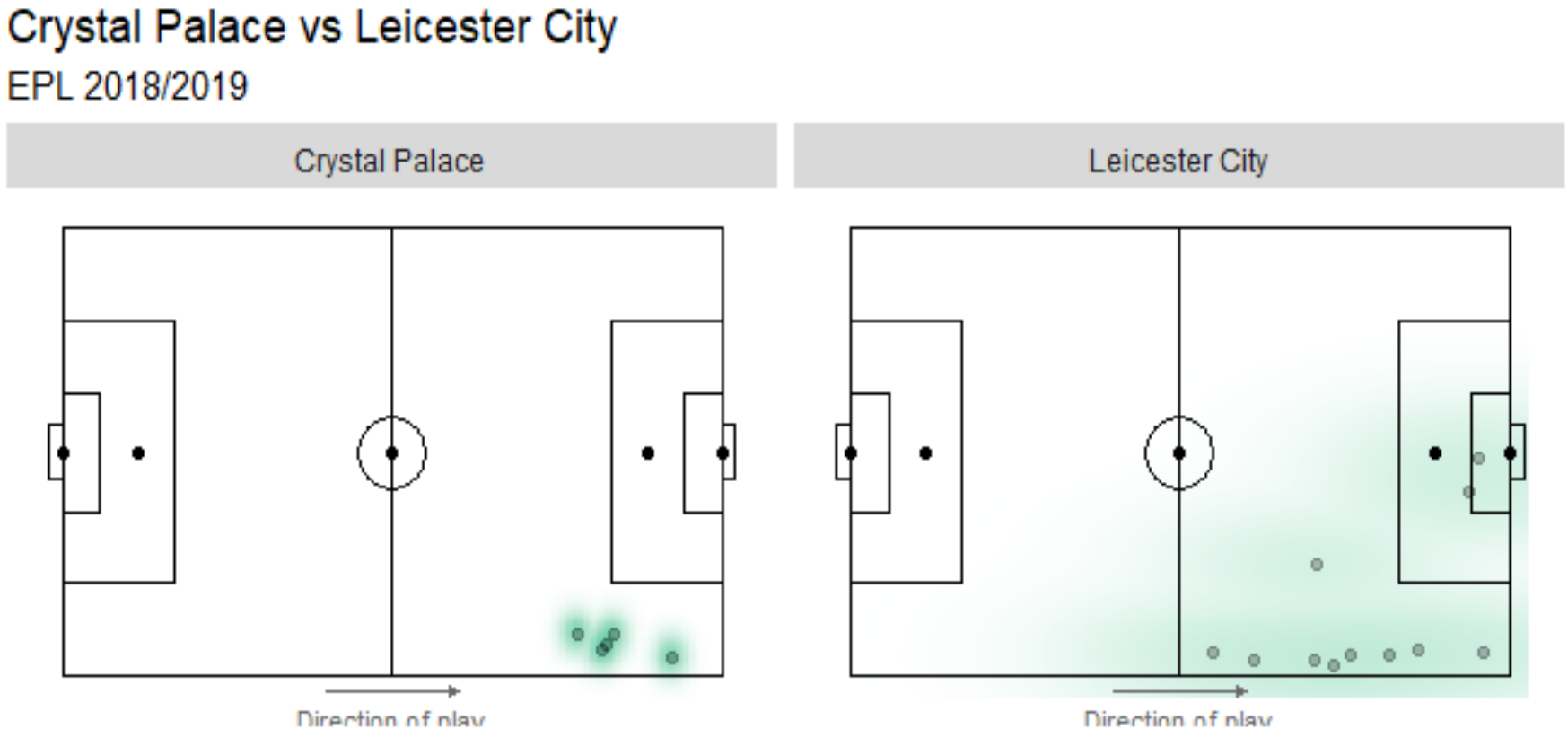
By Length

Throw-In Types
By Speed to take throw-in

> The optimal time to take a throw-in is within 5 seconds of the ball going out of play.
>
> Thomas Gronnemark
> Liverpool Throw-in Coach

Source: thisisanfield.com

Two Different Attack Strategies



Consistent Throw-in Strategy

Mixed Throw-in Strategy

What Does It Mean For a Throw-In to be Aggressively Defended?

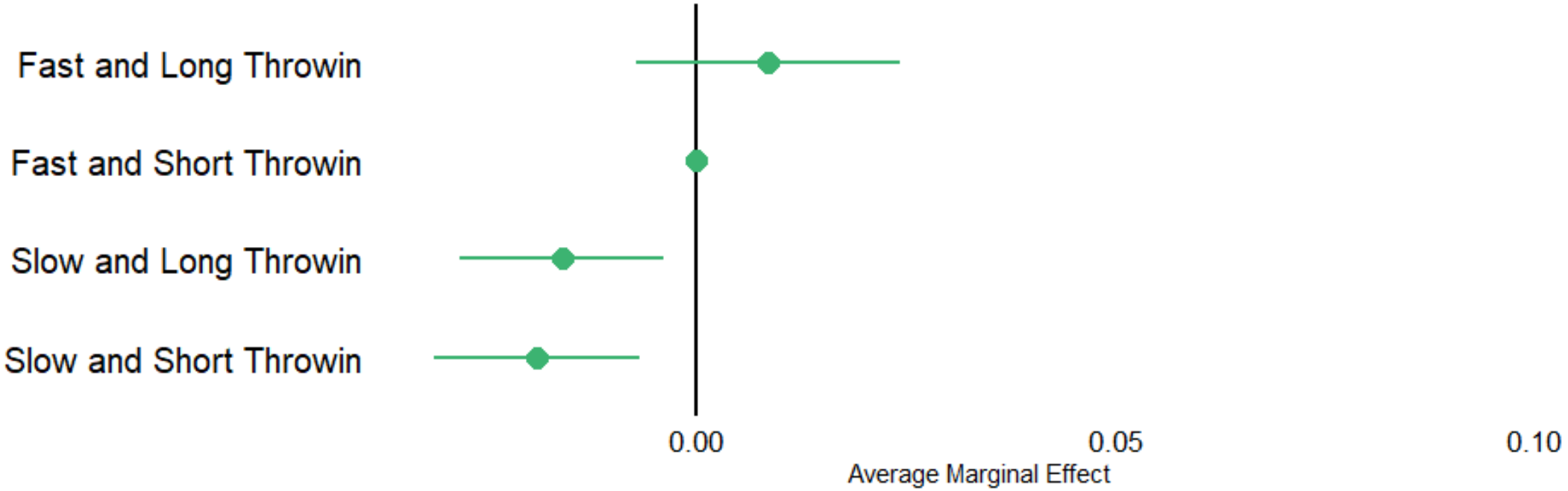
Throw-In Analysis

1. Does the type of throw-in teams use in attack influence chance creation?

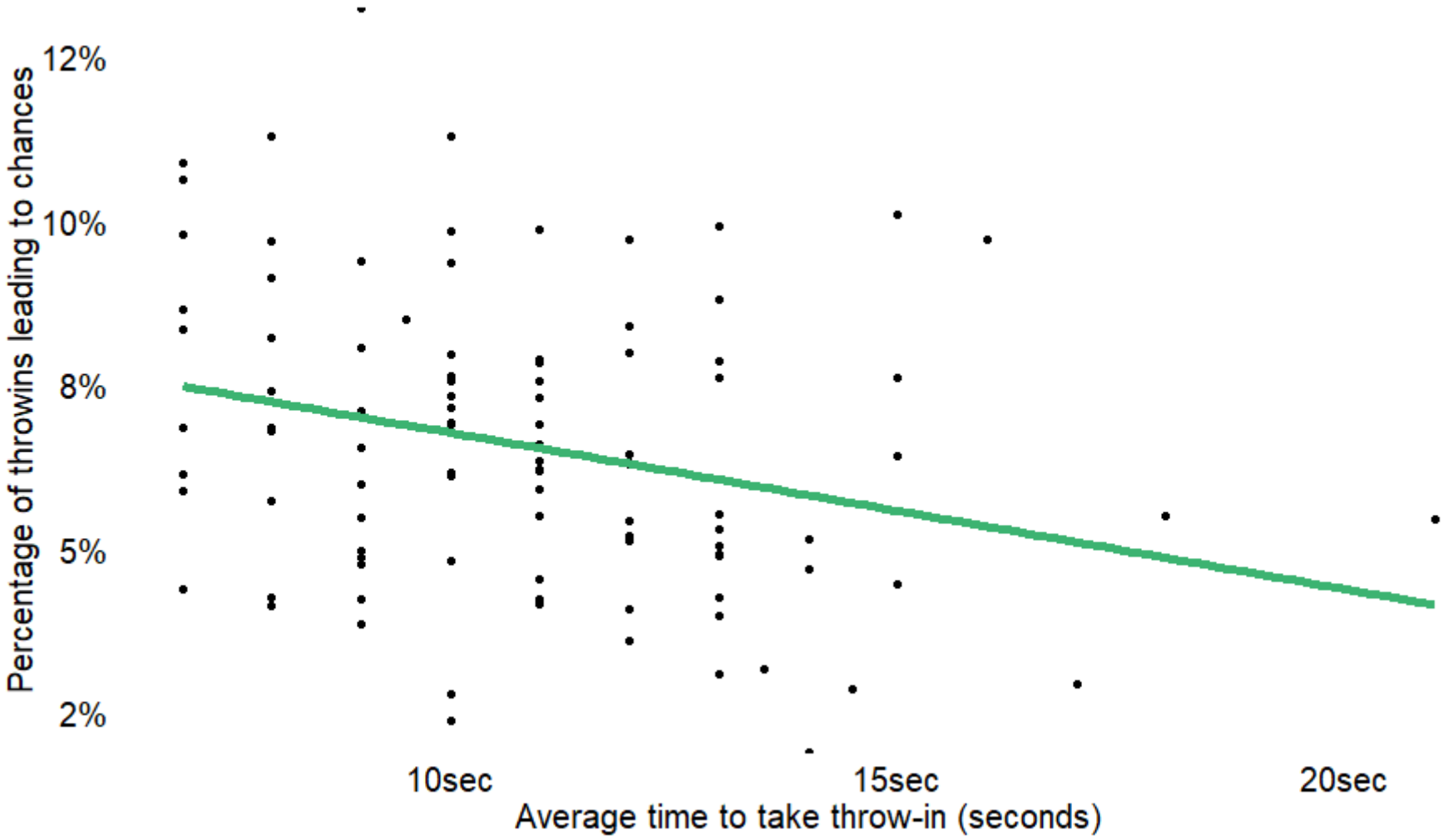
Using a logistic regression model consisting of:

- Types of throw-in
- Whether it resulted in a chance or not
- Adjusted for team quality

1. Does The Type Of Throw-In Teams Use In Attack Influence Chance Creation?



Teams Taking Throw-Ins Slowly Create Less Chances From Them



Throw-In Analysis

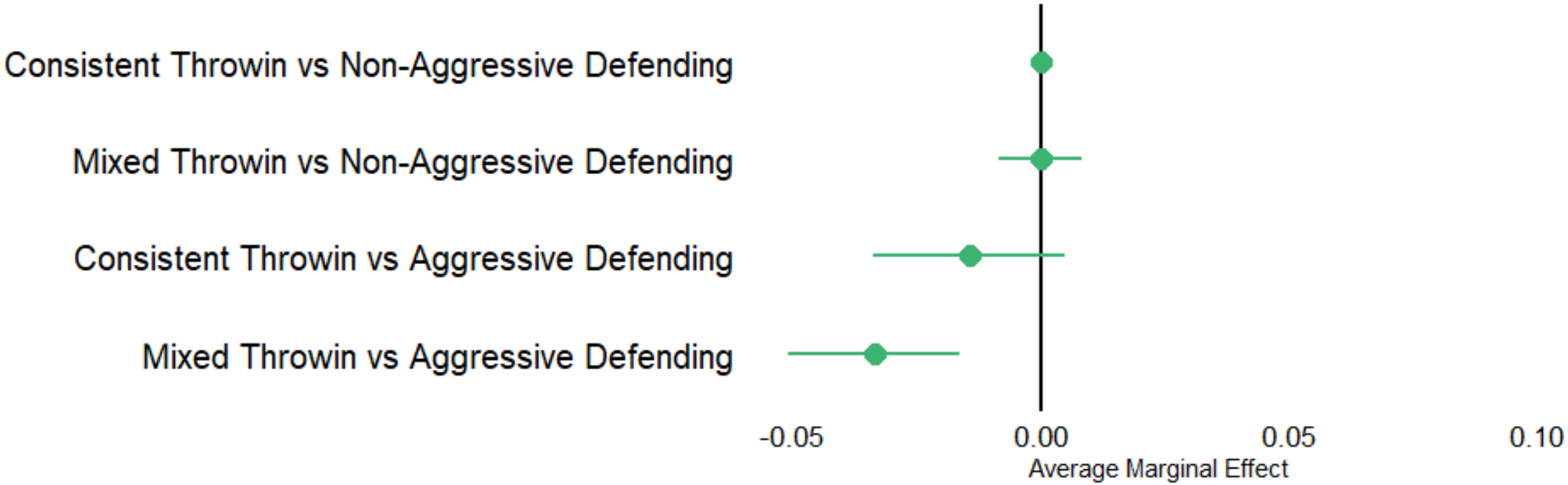
1. **Does the type of throw-in teams use in attack influence chance creation?**

Using a logistic regression model consisting of:
- Types of throw-in
- Whether it resulted in a chance or not
- Adjusted for team quality

2. **Do throw-in attacking and defending strategies affect chances created?**

Using logistic regression models consisting of:
- The throw-in strategy used by the attacking team
- The defensive strategy used by the defending team
- Whether it resulted in a chance or not
- Adjusted for team quality

2. Do Throw-In Attacking and Defending Strategies Affect Chances Created?



Tactical Applications

- Fast throw-ins against unsettled defenses or teams deploying a low block.
  - Example: Serge Aurier's throw-in for Spurs vs Olympiacos in Champions League

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Tactical Applications

- Fast throw-ins against unsettled defenses or teams deploying a low block.
  - Example: Serge Aurier's throw-in for Spurs vs Olympiacos in Champions League

- Train around using throw-in as press triggers in the defensive 3rd
  - Example: Bayer Leverkusen pressing Borussia Dortmund's advanced throw-in

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Tactical Applications

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- Train around using throw-in as press triggers in the defensive 3rd
  - Example: Bayer Leverkusen pressing Borussia Dortmund's advanced throw-in
- Rehearsed throw in routines to create chances
  - Example: Jordan Henderson blocking the opposition marker

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Key Takeaways

- Speed is important if throw-ins are to kick-start successful passages of play.
- Defending strategies are key to restricting throw ins from leading to goalscoring opportunities.
- Throw-ins are underutilized in football and coaches can take advantage of this!

Future Research

- Measuring clever throws
  - Allows the receiver to retain the ball under pressure
  - Identifies unexpected runs

- Difference clever throws make in creating goalscoring opportunities

Main Contributor

David Quartey

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Thank You