

ROKAS PUKŠTAS



Data Performance Analysis & Career Path Projection

GENERAL INFORMATION

Date of Birth: August 25, 2004

Place of Birth: Stillwatter, Oklahoma USA

Nationality: United States, Lithuania

Position: Attacking Midfield, Central Mid

Club: HNK Hajduk Split

Foot: Right

Height: 181 cm



Short Scouting Report

TECHNICAL ABILITY

- Solid technical base with the ability to carry the ball and progress play forward
- Passing involvement and touch volume could improve to match the demands of top possession-based teams

TACTICAL ABILITY

- Good spatial awareness and timing of runs into the box, especially when attacking crosses from wide areas
- Effective in transition and in attacking space from deeper positions
- Still room for improvement in movement during build-up phases and positioning in the half-spaces

ATHLETIC PROFILE

- Very strong athletic profile
- Excellent physical presence, aerial ability and duel intensity
- High energy player who consistently covers ground and contributes both offensively and defensively

MENTALITY

- Highly competitive and aggressive in duels
- Shows strong determination, work rate and leadership qualities on the pitch
- Brings intensity, commitment and a “warrior” mentality to the team

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

It should also be taken into consideration that Serie A represents a significantly higher competitive level than the Croatian Football League (HNL). Although the player's profile suggests he possesses qualities that could translate well to stronger and more demanding competitions.

ATTACKING - PLAYER COMPARISON

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Scott McTominay	Mario Pašalić
Goals	0.30 ★	0.29	0.27
Assists	0	0.10	0.13
Shots / On Target %	1.82 / 32.4%	2.09 / 42%	1.07 / 43.8%
xG	0.31 ★	0.25	0.18
Shot Assists	0.79	0.45	0.83
Key Passes	1.92 ★	0.78	1.07
Passes into Box	3.84 ★	2.38	2
Progressive Runs	2.71 ★	1.14	1.1
Fouls Won	2.46 ★	1.81	0.4
Touches in Box	9.45 ★	7.61	2.43

Context: Croatia – Italy Transfer Connection

- The geographical proximity between **Croatia and Italy** has created a strong football transfer connection over the past decades
- Italian clubs have **closely monitored the Croatian market for many years**
- **Greater financial power of Serie A clubs** compared to HNL clubs has facilitated numerous transfers
- Over the last **30 years**, many players who developed in the **Croatian Football League (HNL)** have successfully adapted to **Serie A**.
- Because of this, players who stand out in HNL are often **considered potential Serie A targets**

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

Strengths That Could Translate to Serie A

Aerial
Ability

Offensive
Runs

Attacking
Space

Physical
Duels

Ball
Carrying

Physical
Duels

Transition Play

Winning Second
Balls

Dribbling

DRIBBLING AND BALL CARRYING – PLAYER COMPARISON

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Scott McTominay	Mario Pašalić
Dribbles / Success	3.15 / 67.2% ★	1.95 / 58.5%	0.6 / 50%
Progressive Runs	2.71 ★	1.14	1.1
Losses (Own Half)	13.97	7.97	8.35
Recoveries (Opp Half)	5.56 / 60.2% ★	5.59 / 36.6%	5.49 / 44.2%

Rokas Pukštas and Serie A Interest

• Rokas Pukštas has already been **linked with several Serie A clubs**, including:

- **Udinese Calcio**
- **AS Roma**
- **Parma Calcio 1913**

• There is little doubt that Pukštas possesses **the physical and competitive qualities required for Serie A**.

• However, the key question remains: **Do his characteristics fit the dominant playing style in the league?**

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

Tactical Context of Serie A

- The **top 6–7 clubs in Serie A** base their possession play on:
 - technically elite players
 - high tactical intelligence
 - players comfortable on the ball in all areas of the pitch
- This technical standard applies **regardless of position or role within the team**.

DUELS – PLAYER COMPARISON

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Scott McTominay	Mario Pašalić
Duels Won	25.93 / 50.7% ★	16.27 / 47.2%	10.42 / 45.7%
Aerial Duels	7.58 / 52.6% ★	3.38 / 48.6%	2.9 / 41.4%
Defensive Duels	5.81 / 59.3% ★	3.28 / 63%	3.23 / 55.7%
Duels in Possession	3.10 / 39.7% ★	2.36 / 9%	2.9 / 41.4%

His qualities make him:

- a **high-energy midfielder**
- physically aggressive
- consistent in his intensity
- a player who brings **fight, leadership and competitiveness**

He can be described as:

A warrior-type midfielder and a quiet leader on the pitch.

Such profiles are valuable not only in **Serie A**, but also in many other leagues.

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

There are some **certain tactical deficiencies in defensive positioning**.

However, the data clearly highlights his strengths in:
Ball Recoveries - Duels Won – Second Ball Situations

These numbers underline that he is:

- physically strong
- highly competitive
- proactive in regaining possession

DEFENSIVE ASPECTS – PLAYER COMPARISON

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Scott McTominay	Mario Pašalić
Interceptions	2.46	3.31	1.96
Clearances	0.74	1.24	0.8
Sliding Tackles	0.25 / 60% ★	0.02 / 0%	0.1 / 33.3%
Yellow Cards	0.30	0.05	0.13

Movement in Different Phases of Play

It is important to distinguish between two types of movement:

Final Third Movement (Strength)

Pukštas is extremely effective when:

- attacking the box from deeper positions
- making **late runs into the penalty area**
- attacking crosses from wide areas

His key strengths here include: timing, spatial awareness and aerial ability

These aspects are **among the strongest parts of his game**.

Movement During Build-Up (Area for Development)

However, during **possession build-up phases**:

- his movement in the **half-spaces** and his ability to **position himself between lines** are **not yet fluid enough for the highest level of football**.

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

Passing - Player Comparison

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Scott McTominay	Mario Pašalić
Passes / Accuracy	24.26 / 77.7%	34.8 / 88.7%	52.19 / 89.4%
Long Passes / Accuracy	1.57 / 53.1%	1.09 / 60.9%	3.83 / 68.7%
Forward Passes / Accuracy	8.12 / 72.7%	7.99 / 76.5%	15.54 / 82.7%
Back Passes / Accuracy	5.12 / 87.5%	7.42 / 96.5%	6.52 / 94.4%
Passes into Final Third	4.33 / 71.6%	3.59 / 82.8%	7.32 / 85%
Passes into Box	1.18 / 58.3%	1.05 / 45.5%	1.76 / 67.9%
Passes into Space	0.20 / 25%	0.12 / 40%	0.37 / 45.5%
Crosses / Accuracy	0.74 / 26.7%	0.48 / 15%	0.6 / 44.4%
Received Passes	18.35	27.11	42
xA	0.11 ★	0.05	0.10
Secondary Assists	0.05	0	0.07

Technical Limitations

• The main concern lies in the **technical phase of the game**. Although Pukštas has improved in this area, he is **not yet at the level of the most technically refined midfielders in top European clubs**.

Statistical indicators show this through:

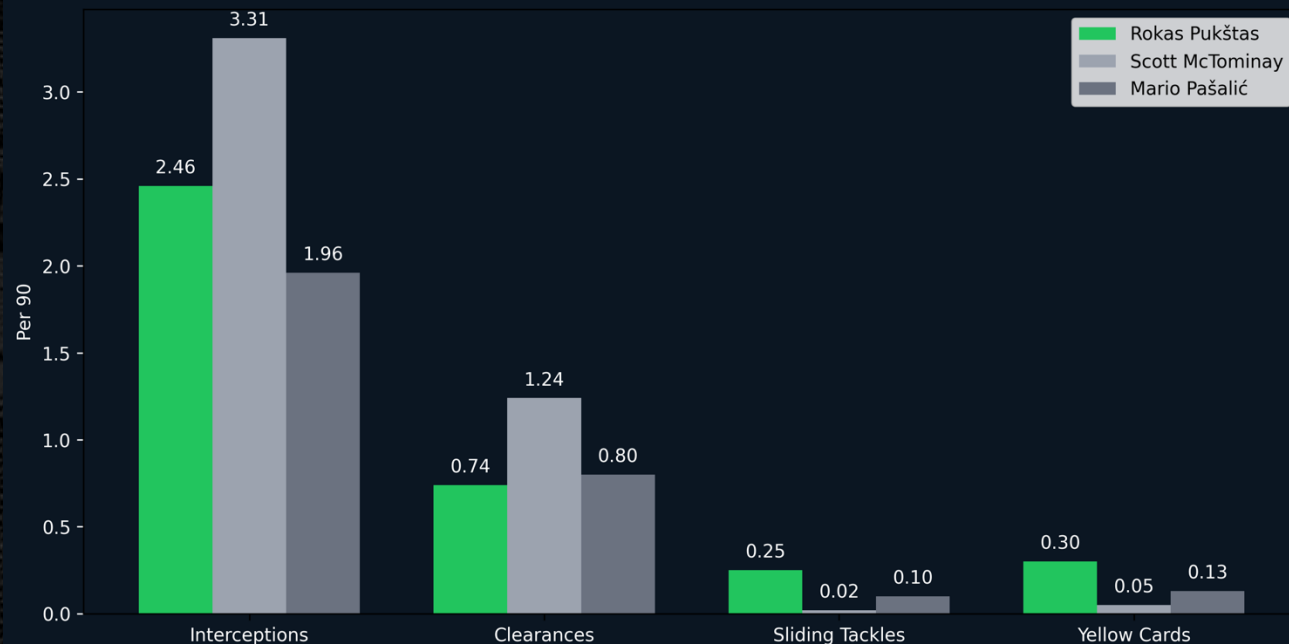
- fewer **touches on the ball**
- lower **passing involvement**
- fewer **passes played compared to similar players**

This is particularly notable given that **Hajduk often dominates possession in HNL matches**. This suggests there is still room for improvement in:

- **positional awareness**
- **movement during build-up phases**
- **understanding of space in possession structures**

Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

Defensive Metrics – Player Comparison



Transfer Value Question

- HNK Hajduk Split reportedly values Pukštas at around €8 million.
- This raises an important recruitment question:

Are top Serie A clubs willing to pay that amount for a player who still requires tactical and technical development?
Especially when those qualities are **central to their playing style**.

Alternative Scenario: Mid-Table Serie A Clubs

Another question arises:

- Could **mid-table Serie A clubs (8th–16th place)** afford such a transfer?
- And would **Pukštas himself** be satisfied with a move to that level of club?

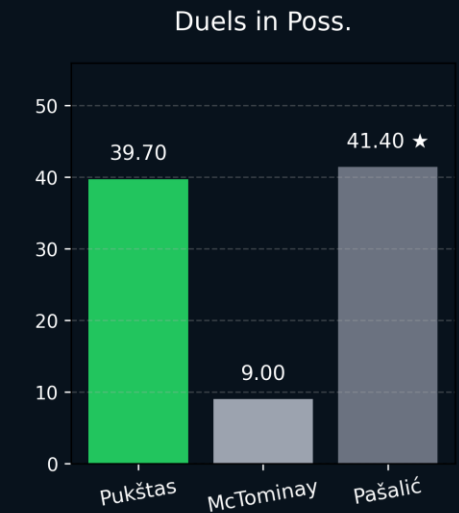
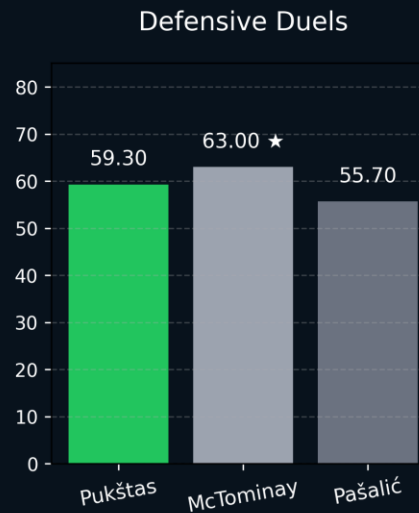
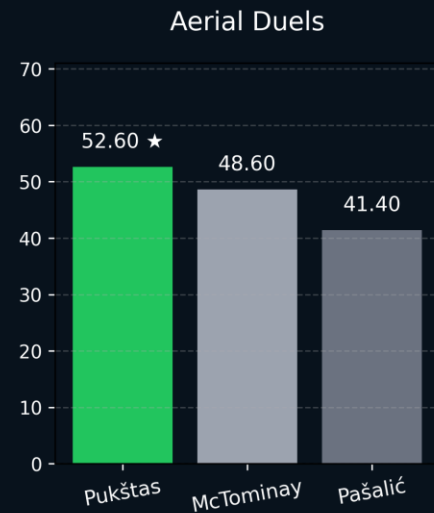
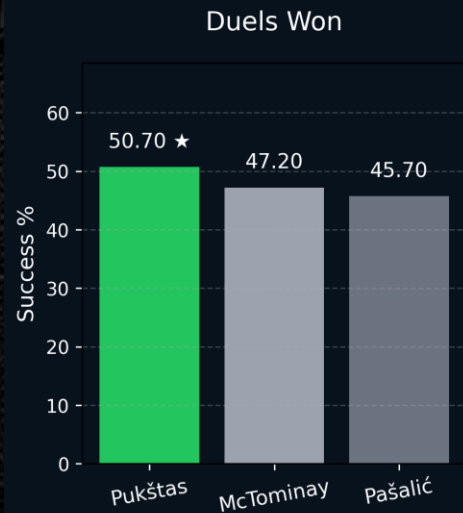
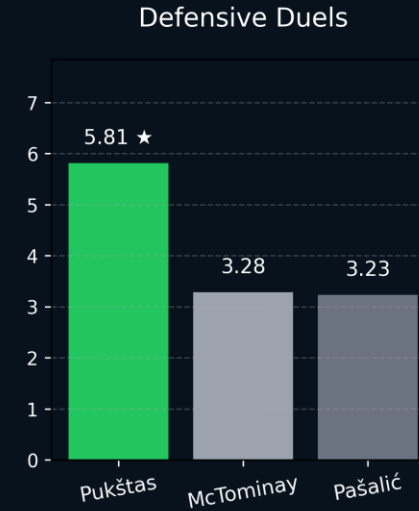
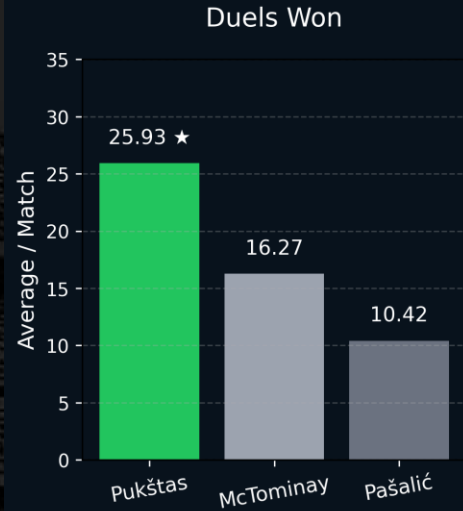
Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

ATTACKING – PLAYER COMPARISON

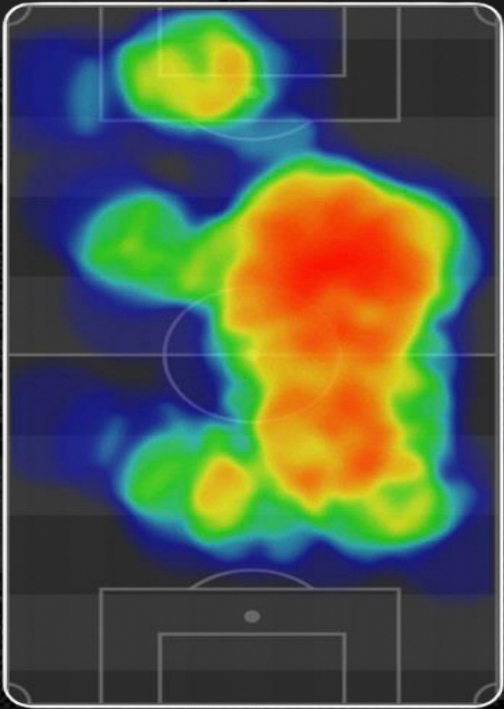


Performance Comparison With Similar Elite Players

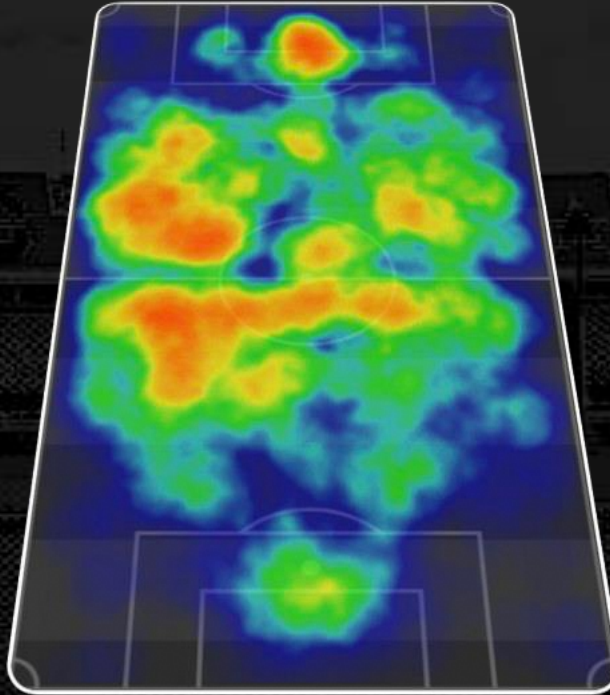
DUELS – PLAYER COMPARISON



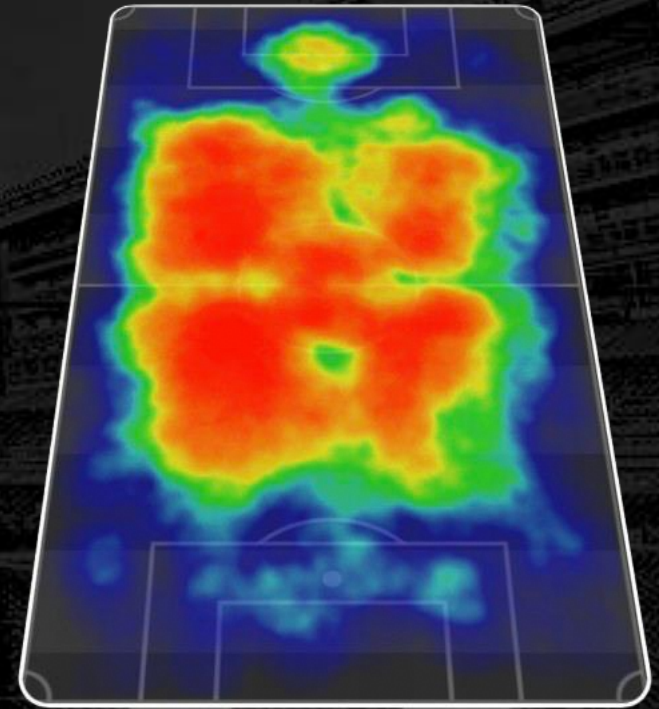
Heat Maps



ROKAS PUKŠTAS



SCOTT MCTOMINAY



MARIO PAŠALIĆ

Club Fit & Potential Destinations

1. Strong Development Clubs
In Good Leagues



2. Potential Top League Club
Destination

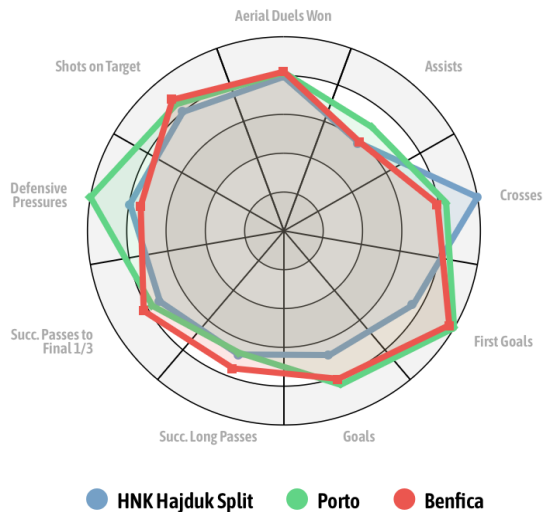


3. MLS – Later Future Market
Opportunity

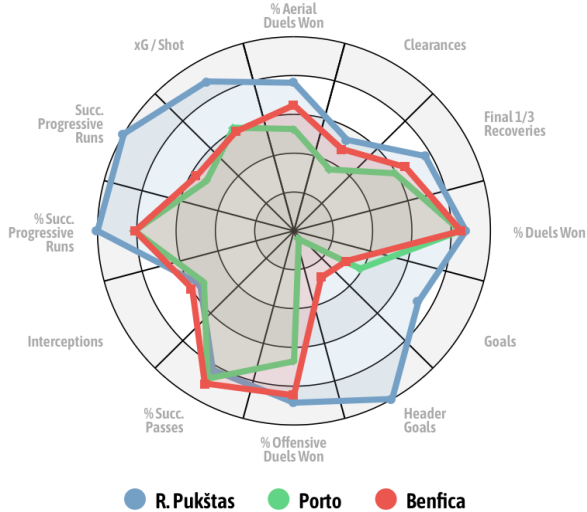


1. Strong Development Clubs In Good Leagues

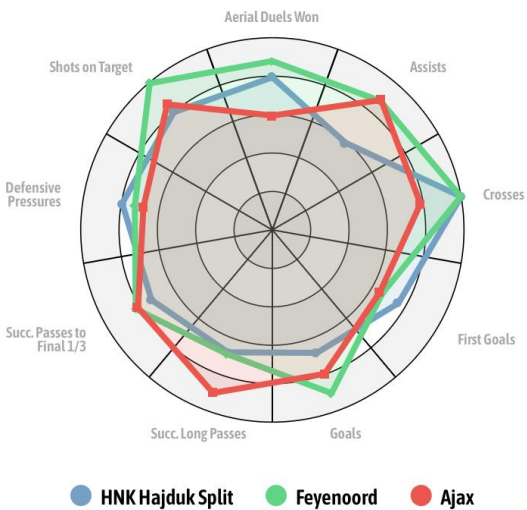
Teams Comparison



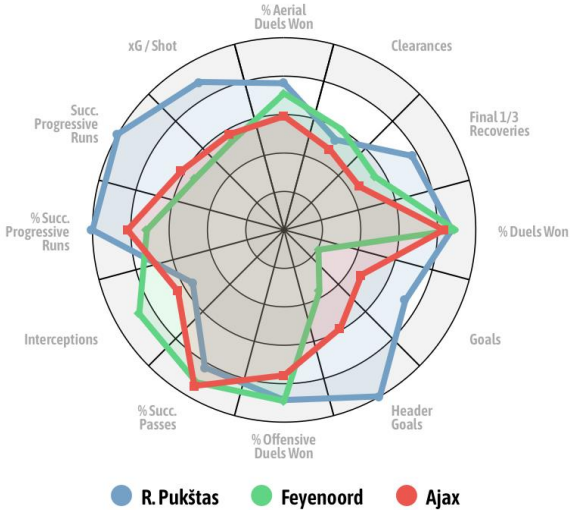
Players Comparison



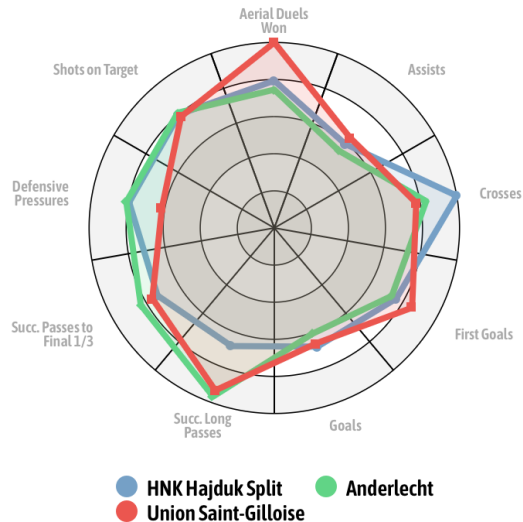
Teams Comparison



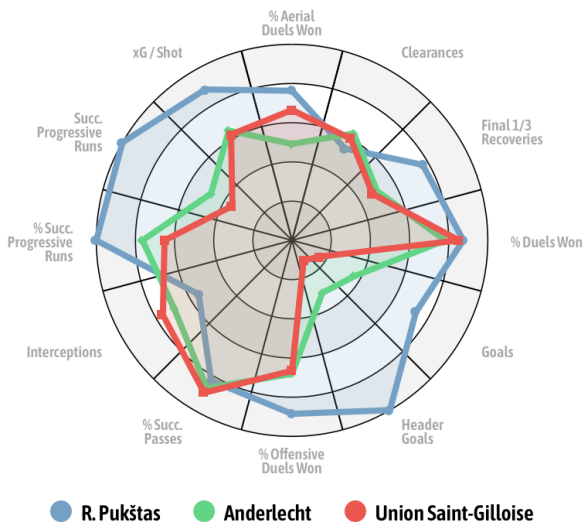
Players Comparison



Teams Comparison

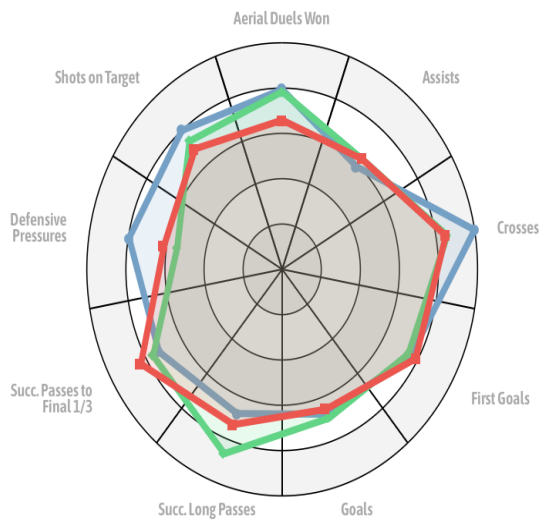


Players Comparison



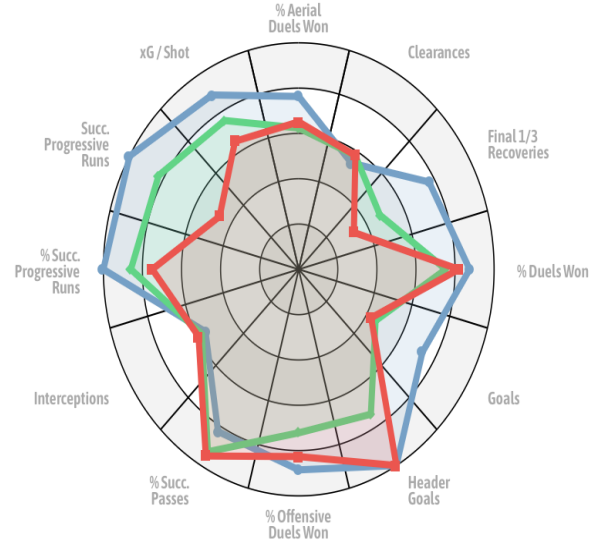
2. Potential Top League Club Destination – SERIE A

Teams Comparison



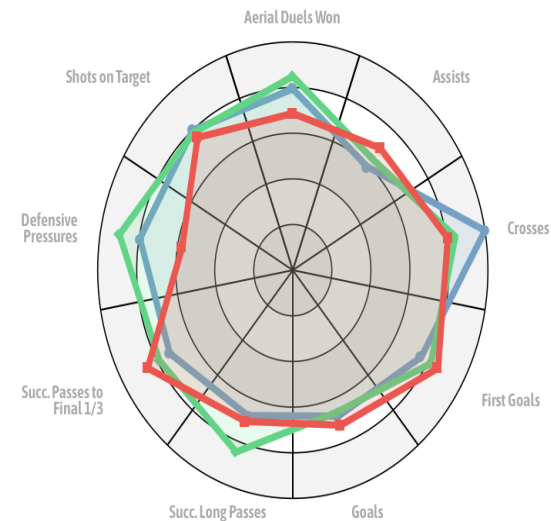
HNK Hajduk Split Atalanta Napoli

Players Comparison



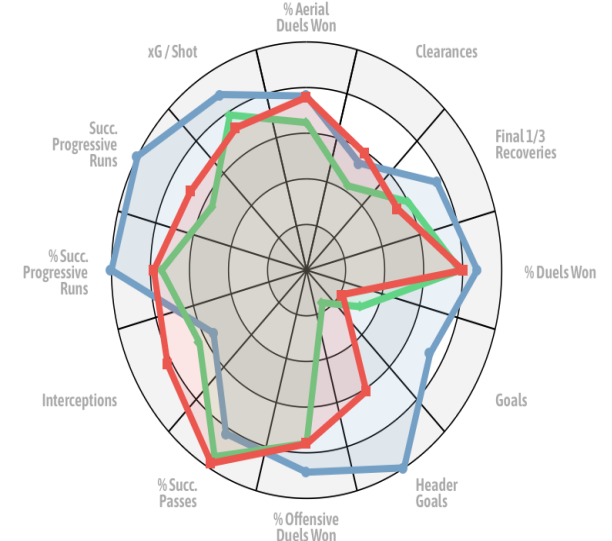
R. Pukštas Atalanta Napoli

Teams Comparison



HNK Hajduk Split Roma Milan

Players Comparison



R. Pukštas Roma Milan

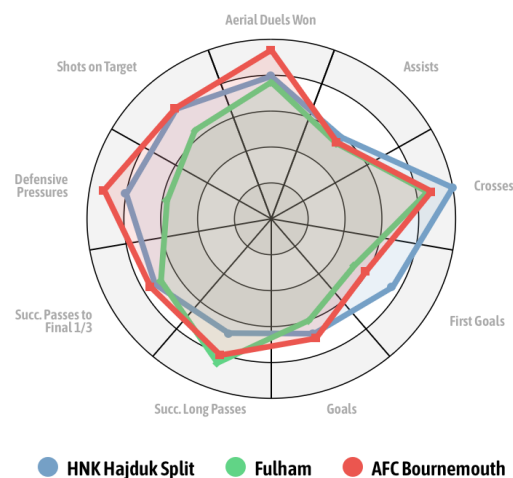
2. Potential Top League Club Destination – PREMIER LEAGUE

Joshua King is listed as a forward due to a best numbers in his club in these two segments. Mikkel Damsgaard and Ryan Christie, who are also midfielders, have the highest numbers of attacking runs and dribbles in their respective clubs. Pukštas has better numbers in both categories, and the only player with better dribbling numbers to him is King, although Pukštas has a higher dribble success rate.

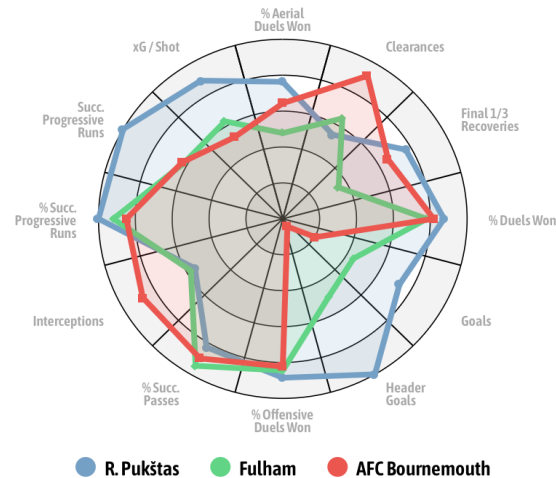
Pukštas Profile Comparison – Clubs Lacking This Midfield Profile

Club	Player	Attacking Runs	Pukštas Runs	Dribbles	Pukštas Dribbles
Fulham	Joshua King	2.67	2.71	3.35 (63.1%)	3.15 (67.2%)
Brentford	Mikkel Damsgaard	1.82	2.71	2.78 (45.2%)	3.15 (67.2%)
Bournemouth	Ryan Christie	1.92	2.71	2.64 (42%)	3.15 (67.2%)

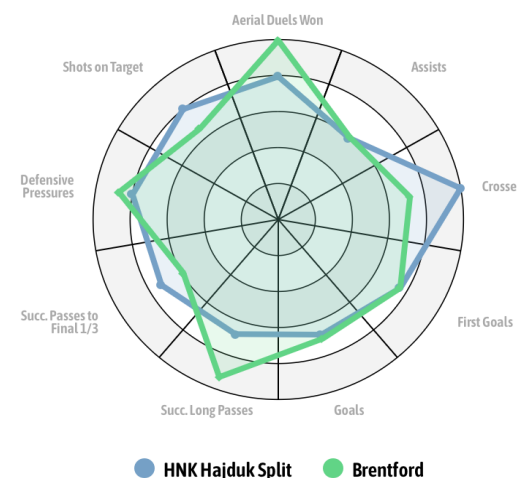
Teams Comparison



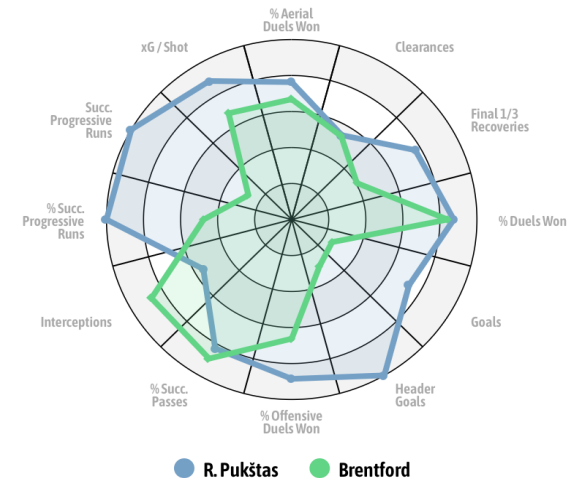
Players Comparison



Teams Comparison



Players Comparison



Comparison with Players from Clubs Lacking This Profile

- Statistical data shows that the areas where **Rokas Pukštas** stands out the most are **precisely the qualities currently lacking in these three teams**, particularly in the role of an advanced No.8 or attacking midfielder
- His profile brings **physicality, duel dominance, late runs into the box and ball progression**, elements that are not strongly represented in the current midfield options of these squads
- Although he plays for **Hajduk**, **a team that often dominates possession**, Pukštas is not primarily a possession-dominant midfielder
- His strengths are far more evident in **transition situations and open space**

ATTACKING PHASE - COMPARISON

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Emil Smith-Rowe	Mikkel Damsgaard	Ryan Christie
Goals	0.30 ★	0	0.22	0.24
Assists	0	0	0.17 ★	0
Shots / On Target %	1.82 / 32.4% ★	1.52 / 32.4%	1.59 / 49%	1.76 / 31.8%
xG	0.31 ★	0.22	0.13	0.14
Shot Assists	0.79	0.80	1.68 ★	0.80
Attacking Duels	9.45 / 47.4% ★	4.82 / 38.9%	6.76 / 34.5%	8.32 / 33.7%
Passes into Box	3.84 ★	2.72	3.02	2
Progressive Runs	2.71 ★	1.52	1.82	1.92
Fouls Won	2.46 ★	0.54	0.86	1.44



Comparison with Players from Clubs Lacking This Profile

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Emil Smith-Rowe	Mikkel Damsgaard	Ryan Christie
Duels Won	25.93 / 50.7% ★	9.6 / 36.7%	16.92 / 43.6%	18.96 / 40.5%
Aerial Duels	7.58 / 52.6% ★	1.38 / 22.6%	1.72 / 40%	2.32 / 31%
Duels in Possession	3.10 / 39.7% ★	1.29 / 17.2%	1.72 / 40%	2.16 / 44.4%
Attacking Duels	9.45 / 47.4% ★	4.82 / 38.9%	6.76 / 34.5%	8.32 / 33.7%

- When receiving **vertical passes after ball recoveries** from defenders or deeper midfielders, he becomes particularly dangerous, as he can use his **physicality and explosiveness to attack 1v1 duels at speed and break opposition lines**
- In the **middle third of the pitch**, his physical attributes and high number of **won duels** would be especially valuable. Teams in stronger leagues frequently encounter such situations due to the **higher intensity and balance of competition**
- In these phases of the game, Pukštas could fit well because he brings **energy, aggression and physical dominance**, qualities required to maintain intensity in top-level matches
- Moving from the **Croatian league to the Premier League would represent a major step up**, and it is realistic to assume that his statistical output could decrease by **around 20–30%** due to the higher level of competition
- Even with such an adjustment, he would **still remain competitive and in several key metrics outperform current players occupying the advanced midfield roles in these teams**

Comparison with Players from Clubs Lacking This Profile

- It should also be noted that his **technical qualities are currently not at the same level as some midfielders in top leagues**
- However, with **adaptation, continuous technical development, better playing surfaces and a higher tempo of competition**, there is clear potential for improvement in this area
- The statistical analysis indicates that Pukštas would particularly improve teams in:
 - **Aerial ability**
 - **Late runs into scoring positions**
 - **High volume of won duels**
 - **Successful dribbling and ball progression**
- His **dribbling and progressive carries could become even more effective in transition and counter-attacking situations**, which occur less frequently in the Croatian league due to the defensive approach of many opponents

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Emil Smith-Rowe	Mikkel Damsgaard	Ryan Christie
Passes / Accuracy	24.26 / 77.7%	41.3 / 90%	43.18 / 75.4% ★	38.96 / 80.3%
Long Passes	1.57 / 53.1%	0.76 / 47.1%	3.3 / 37.5%	3.6 / 53.3% ★
Crosses	0.74 / 26.7%	0.8 / 16.7%	2.75 / 32.5% ★	1.44 / 33.3%
Passes into Final Third	4.33 / 71.6%	3.35 / 86.7%	6.59 / 65.1%	6.88 / 75.6% ★
Forward Passes	8.12 / 72.7%	9.46 / 83.5%	15.86 / 66.9% ★	12.64 / 64.6%
Back Passes	5.12 / 87.5%	12.41 / 97.1% ★	8.27 / 90.9%	6.96 / 95.4%
Passes into Space	0.20 / 25%	0.18 / 50%	0.96 / 35.7% ★	0.80 / 40%
Received Passes	18.35	34.46 ★	32.44	27.04

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Emil Smith-Rowe	Mikkel Damsgaard	Ryan Christie
Dribbles	3.15 / 67.2% ★	1.61 / 61.1%	2.78 / 45.7%	2.64 / 42.4%
Turnovers (Own Half)	13.97	7.54 ★	13.46	11.84
Recoveries (Opp Half)	5.56 / 60.2%	4.73 / 50.9%	5.84 / 62.9%	7.36 / 62% ★
Progressive Runs	2.71 ★	1.52	1.82	1.92

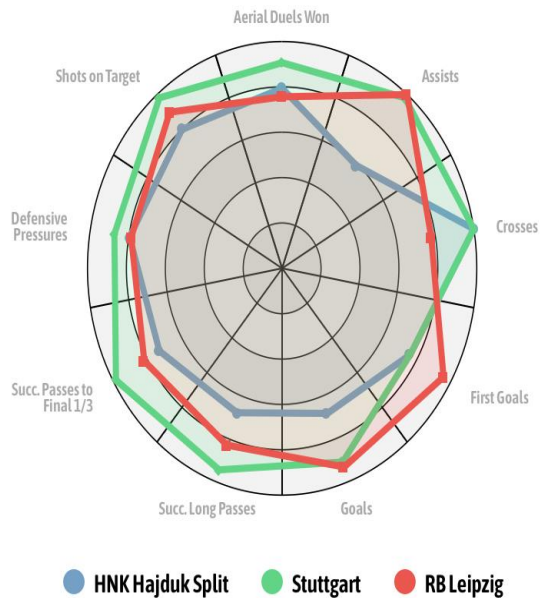
Comparison with Players from Clubs Lacking This Profile

Metric	Rokas Pukštas	Emil Smith-Rowe	Mikkel Damsgaard	Ryan Christie
Interceptions	2.46	2.32	2.68	3.28 ★
Defensive Duels	5.81 / 59.3%	2.15 / 32.3%	6.49 / 55% ★	6.16 / 51.9%
Sliding Tackles	0.25 / 60%	0.27 / 50%	0.24 / 57.1%	0.48 / 66.7% ★
Clearances	0.74	0.40	0.48	1.20 ★
Yellow Cards	0.30	0.04	0	0.32 ★

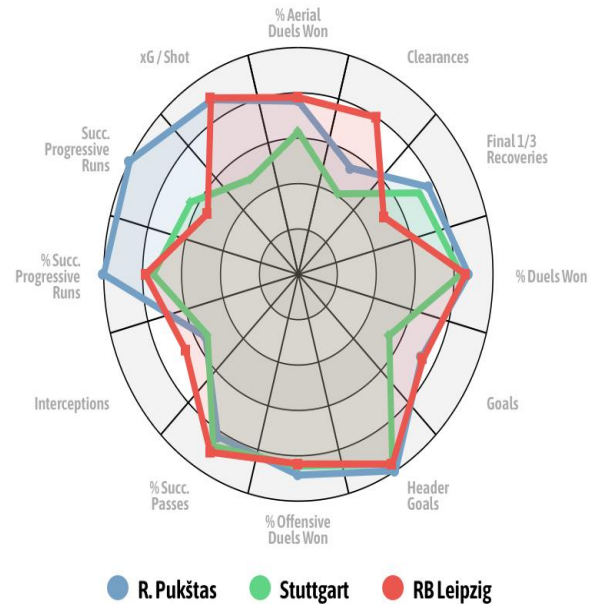
- Defensively, he could also contribute through **physical presence and aggressive defensive duels**, helping central midfielders maintain stability in the middle of the pitch
- Overall, Pukštas represents a **specific midfield profile** that could be highly valuable in certain tactical systems
- His **physical profile, ability to dominate duels and capacity to arrive into the final third from deeper positions** suggest that he could provide a **clear upgrade compared to current options in those teams**
- *Reportedly*, Pukštas attracted interest from **Newcastle United two seasons ago**, with several transfer insiders suggesting the club was prepared to invest **between €10–12 million** for his transfer.
- Although the move never materialized, such reports indicate that **his profile had already been identified and monitored by scouts from Premier League clubs**.

2. Potential Top League Club Destination – BUNDESLIGA

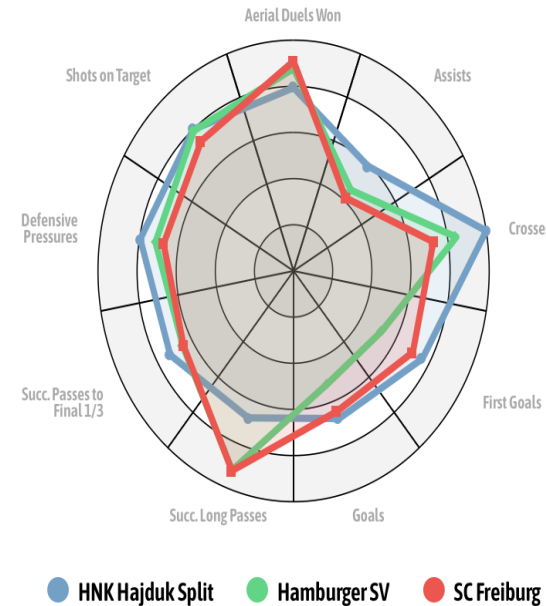
Teams Comparison



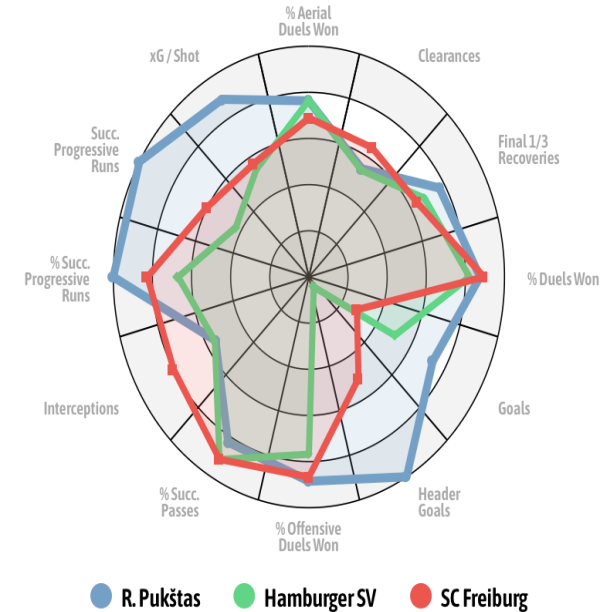
Players Comparison



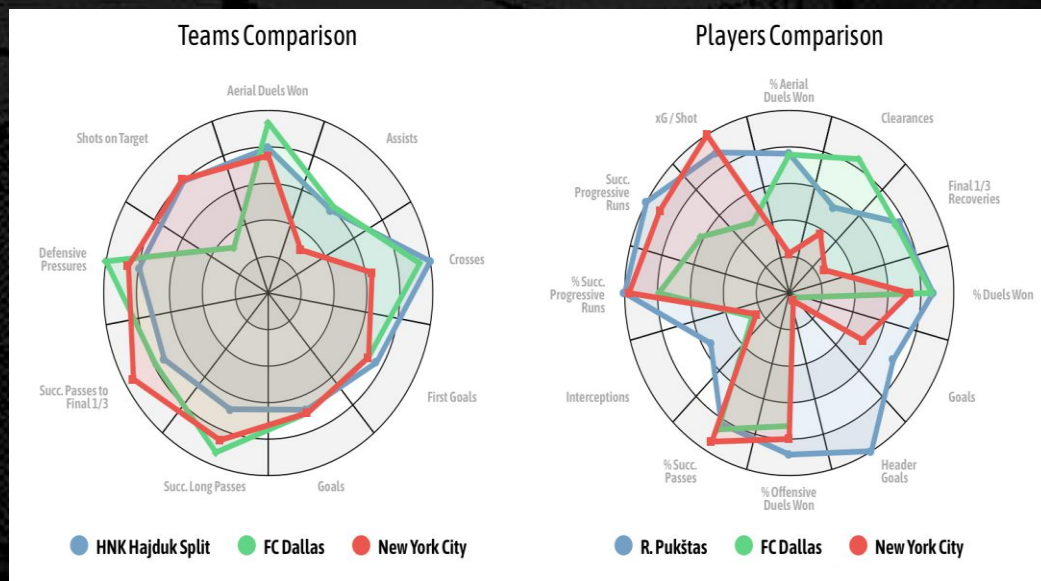
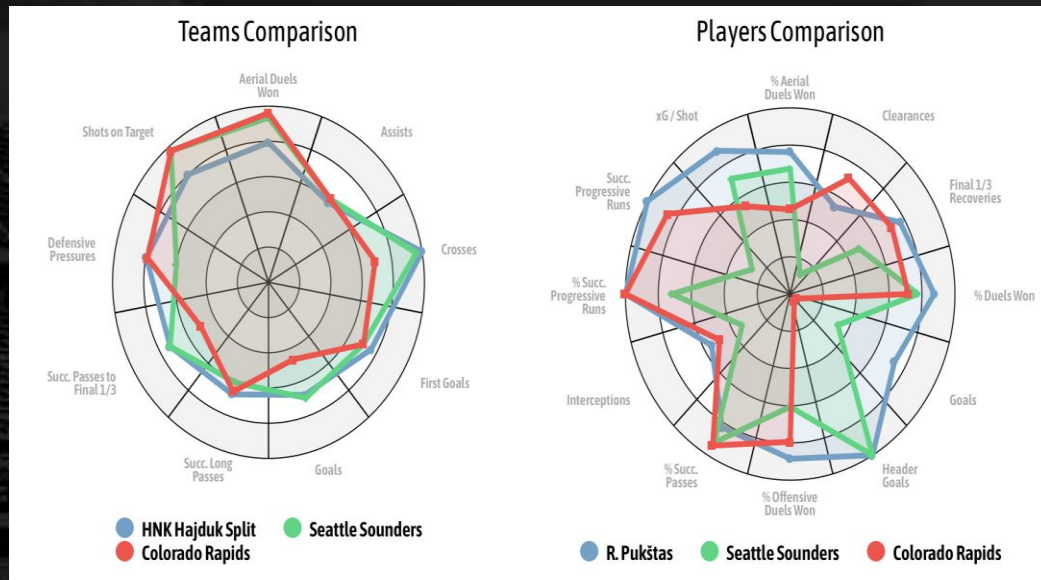
Teams Comparison



Players Comparison



3. MLS – Later Future Market Opportunity



- Rokas Pukštas possesses the quality and profile required to compete in **any** MLS team.
- His **physical attributes, intensity, and exceptional capacity to repeat high-intensity actions** make him an ideal fit for the demands of MLS, a league that has been steadily increasing in quality and competitiveness with every season.
- At this stage, it remains a question whether the immediate next step for Rokas should be a move to MLS or whether continuing his development in Europe and eventually progressing to one of the top European leagues would be the most logical pathway. We strongly believe he has **the talent, mentality, and potential to reach that level.**
- However, considering his nationality and his personal story, Rokas would likely become a **major success in MLS**. Players with his physical profile, mentality, and relentless work ethic are highly valued in the league. He could soon become a **USA national team player.**
- Throughout the last seasons, Rokas also received praise from experienced players such as **Ivan Rakitić**, who had the opportunity to observe his work closely on a daily basis.

DISCLAIMER

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HIGHLIGHTS



A black and white illustration of a man with short hair, seen from behind, sitting in a large, empty stadium. He is wearing a dark hoodie with the words "SharpEye Scouting" printed in white on the back. He is looking out over a soccer field where several players are visible. The stadium seating is arranged in rows, and the field is a light color. The overall tone is serious and focused.

Where Talent Can't Hide

SharpEye
Scouting