

Ethan Galbraith

Match Report: Swansea City vs Derby County

29-11-2025

By Willam Rees

Ethan Galbraith

Current club

Swansea

Nationality

Northern Ireland

Best position

Central Midfielder

Date of birth (age)

11/05/2001 (24)

Height

175cm

Foot

R



Current level

Top 6 Championship

Potential level

Mid Table Premier League

Movement and positioning to receive - *The ability to take up positions to be able to receive the ball by finding spaces and adapting to an open body position.*

- Moved intelligently through all three thirds, frequently adjusting his positioning to stay connected to the build-up. Used scanning to set his body early and create clean receiving angles, particularly in the left half-space.
- Dropped into deep areas to help progress play, then pushed higher to link combinations in the final third. Rarely static — always shifting to give teammates a passing lane or create an overload.
- Operated as a key outlet under pressure, showing comfort receiving with opponents tight to him and shaping his body to escape into space or release quickly.

Ball retention- *The ability to keep the ball in the team and escape high pressure situations by finding teammates in open spaces or dribbling away from the pressure.*

- Very secure on the ball, using small touches, feints and body adjustments to protect possession even with close pressure. His low centre of gravity and manipulation allowed him to stay composed in crowded areas.
- Rarely lost the ball in settled play; kept rhythm with clean touches and quick releases. Only major error came from trying to be too clever around the halfway line, losing it and allowing Derby to counter.
- Controlled in tight spaces, weaving in and out of pressure and combining in short spaces.

Ball progression – *The ability to enter higher-value zones on the pitch with dribbles, short passes and longer passes with the objective of getting closer to the opposition goal.*

- Strong progressive influence throughout the match, playing forward with intent and breaking lines with both carries and passes.
- Very good weight and accuracy across all range of passes, constantly moving Swansea up the pitch even when under pressure with long-range passes and diagonals.
- Made several purposeful forward runs from deep, dragging opponents and opening passing lanes for teammates before linking again in the next phase.

Infiltration – *The ability to push up to link with the forwards, to make runs in behind the defensive line, and to enter the box when crosses come in.*

- Supported attacks by stepping into higher spaces, combining around the edge of the box.
- Made purposeful forward movements with and without the ball, often helping connect actions in the final third rather than making deep runs.
- His goal came from arriving at the top of the box and creating just enough separation with a quick body feint before striking cleanly into the corner.

Defensive dueling – *Winning different types of defensive duels, such as aerial duels, frontal 1v1's, side-to-side duels and (sliding) tackles.*

- Competed well in ground duels by getting low and timing his interventions, poking the ball away or stepping in when opponents overplayed.
- Despite lacking physical size, he used balance and anticipation to arrive early and avoid direct duels with contact.
- Used his agility well in defensive moments, shifting his feet quickly to stay balanced and make it difficult for opponents to slip past him.

Dynamic pressing - *The ability to correctly decide when to apply pressure and to correctly do so with a high approach speed, good deceleration and correct use of the body.*

- Pressed with good intensity, stepping high when Swansea triggered their press and staying tight to his man to limit turning options.
- Occasionally found himself slightly out of position by pressing too aggressively, although this was partly influenced by Swansea chasing the game for most of the match.
- Maintained high levels of effort throughout the full 90, closing space quickly and showing willingness to push high to disrupt Derby's build-up.

Positional defending - *Defending the most dangerous zones and players in the midfield by showing spatial awareness, blocking passing lanes, and maintaining defensive compactness.*

- Stayed active defensively despite being smaller in stature, covering ground well and helping Swansea maintain access through central areas.
- Read situations clearly, using scanning and anticipation to be in the right pockets rather than relying on size or physical power.
- Read danger early and adjusted his starting position to stay goal-side, limiting opportunities for Derby to exploit space between the lines.

Conclusion

Ethan Galbraith contributed with a very controlled performance, standing out as one of Swansea's most reliable players in a match where they struggled for long periods. His technical level was clear throughout — clean touches, smart body shape, and constant scanning allowed him to handle pressure and connect every phase of play. He progressed the ball well, linked up intelligently, and covered significant ground. A single costly turnover aside, he managed the game with maturity and capped his performance with a well-taken goal from the edge of the box. Overall, a strong showing that highlighted his composure, intelligence, and influence in possession.

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