

Scouting report

Kobbie Mainoo

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Kobbie Mainoo



Current club

Manchester United

Best position

Central midfielder

Date of birth (age)

April 19th 2005 (20)

Height

175cm

Current level

Top 6 Premier League

Potential level

World Class Midfielder

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.*

- Takes up smart positions in the half-spaces so he's always an open option to play into.
- Times his movements nicely — checks out at the right moment so when he receives the ball his body position is already open and facing the pitch.
- Uses small pauses to pull his marker in, then steps away to receive in space.

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 when keeping the ball in the team — tidy first touch, strong frame, and doesn't rush his actions under pressure.
- Very comfortable player in tight spaces, he uses small touches and little shifts of balance, shrugging off players using his low centre of gravity.
- Hard to knock off the ball, he protects the ball well via shielding and finds simple solutions to escape pressure without losing control.

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.*

- Progresses play up the pitch with controlled carries from deep, using delicate and tidy touches.
- Connects actions through quick, forward-minded combinations when the angle is there, and recycles it appropriately when necessary.
- Reliable option in first-phase of the build-up — drops closer to the CBs as a stable outlet and progresses play up the pitch with a diverse range of passes.

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.*

- Gets into the box through delayed runs, arriving from deeper positions to meet cutbacks and second balls.
- Lets the forwards make the first movement, then fills the space they create to attack rebounds, layoffs, and loose touches.

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

- Defends frontal 1v1s with patience, stays upright, and waits for the attacker's touch before stepping in with controlled contact.
- In side-to-side duels he keeps his stance open and uses short, quick steps to stay connected until he can disrupt play.
- Anticipates loose balls well, steps in early to nick possession and consistently competes in 50/50s, hard to knock off the ball, very good upper body strength

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.*

- Picks his pressing moments well — waits for a loose touch or a poor body position before stepping in with precision.
- Once he goes, he closes space quickly over the first few steps, gets tight, and uses his body to shut off options without flying in.
- Can be a touch slow to decelerate at times, which leaves him arriving a bit square and makes it harder to turn pressure into a turnover.

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

- Keeps the midfield compact, holds his space, and naturally guides play wide rather than allowing open access through the middle.
- Blocks passing lanes intelligently, positioning himself to cut simple balls into the forwards and forces the opposition into less ideal routes.
- Steps out at the right moments — waits for a heavy touch before engaging and doesn't break the structure by jumping early.

Conclusion

Kobbie Mainoo's rise to stardom has been fast but fully earned. He went from running United's midfield at an academy level to becoming a starter in the first team, scoring in an FA Cup final and playing a major role for England at the Euros, all before turning 20. What stands out is how mature his game already is — he plays at his own tempo, receives under pressure like it's nothing, and keeps United stable in possession with his composure and timing. He's excellent in tight areas, protects the ball well, and links phases of play without forcing things. His weaknesses are mostly physical: he isn't explosive and struggles to cover huge distances. But the technical base, spatial awareness, and consistency he shows at his age are rare. He already looks like a long-term midfield piece for both United and England, with plenty of upside still to come.