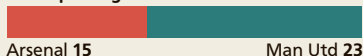


Tactical analysis

Denilson leaves Arsenal holding on

Arsenal's lack of an imposing defensive midfielder player was underlined as Manchester United had the better of the game at the Emirates Stadium despite their 2-1 defeat. United exerted greater pressure and created more scoring chances — as the goal attempts and passing figures indicate — partly because of the lack of defensive cover provided by Denilson, whose role as the holding midfielder is shown by Arsenal's average touch positions. The Brazilian's failure to track back nearly cost his team several times, notably when Wayne Rooney missed two easy chances

Attempts at goal



Successful passes in opposition half



Arsenal positions v Man United



As Cristiano Ronaldo and Gaël Clichy prepare to chase Gary Neville's pass down the right, Denilson is unaware that Arsenal have only three players marking three Manchester United forwards near the penalty area



Mikaël Silvestre, the central defender, has had to move across to help Clichy to deal with Ronaldo, leaving Arsenal outnumbered in the centre. Park Ji Sung will leave the ball and give Rooney a clear strike on goal, with Denilson nowhere



Ten minutes later, as Silvestre marks Park and Clichy watches Ronaldo, Dimitar Berbatov darts into space to collect Anderson's pass as Denilson ball-watches. Five seconds later, with Arsenal's defence all at sea, Rooney will miss another sitter

United rue Rooney regression

Manchester United's downturn in results – two draws and a defeat in their past five matches after six successive wins – owes much to the disappearance of Wayne Rooney's scintillating form

Rooney past five Man Utd games

No goals in 277min
One shot per 15min
One shot on target per 40min
One chance created for team-mate per 92min

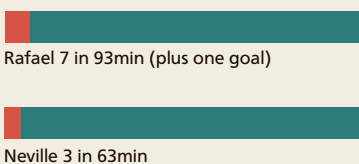
Previous five United games

One goal per 37min
One shot per 10min
One shot on target per 17min
One chance created for team-mate per 27min

Neville faces fight

With Ryan Giggs no longer a first-choice for Manchester United after struggling last season, will Gary Neville be the next of the 1990s golden generation to fall away? Yet to return to his best this season after a long-term injury, he allowed Cesc Fàbregas to wriggle away from him to set up Samir Nasri's second goal on Saturday and was outshone both defensively and in attack by Rafael Da Silva, his replacement on the hour

Successful tackles in past two matches, v Celtic and Arsenal



Nasri flies flag

Arsenal have endured criticism for conceding goals from corners but they managed one themselves on Saturday. OK, so 59 seconds elapsed between Cesc Fàbregas's flag kick and Samir Nasri finding the net, but no Manchester United player touched the ball in the meantime

Touches in build-up to Arsenal's second goal

