

At first glance, scoring 22 or 23 goals in a season sounds like a remarkable achievement for any footballer. It's a tally many forwards would dream of, and yet, at big clubs — especially Liverpool — fans sometimes label such seasons as "bad" or "disappointing." Sounds bonkers, right? But there's more to those numbers than meets the eye.



Let's unpack the reasons behind this strange phenomenon, focusing on key themes such as price tag pressure, the shadow of Mohamed Salah's output, the debate between pure goal totals and overall goal contributions, injury impacts, and why some seasons just need resetting.

1. Price Tag Pressure at Big Clubs: The Cost of Expectations

Big transfers come with big price tags. For instance, when a club drops £50 million or more on a player, fans and analysts alike automatically set sky-high expectations. Performance isn't judged in isolation but in light of that fee and the player's perceived potential to be a game-changer.

- **Flashscore Player Pages:** These handy pages list all appearances, goals, assists, and minutes played — perfect for sanity-checking a player's raw output against the hype.
- **Oddstrader Offshore Betting Apps:** Odds reflect public and expert belief in player impact. Prices slashed sharply after a big signing signal expectation bubbles ready to burst if numbers don't match.

For example, if a £60 million forward nets 22 goals in 40 games, some might slap a "bad season" tag when the required standard (dictated by fee and hype) is closer to 30+. Meanwhile, a £10 million striker scoring the same is hailed a success.



Sanity Check: Minutes Played and Injury Context

Here's where many casual pundits miss the plot: injury time and total minutes played. Two players may both score 22 goals, but if one took 4,000 minutes (over 40 games) and the other hit 22 in 2,800 minutes across 30 games, their actual efficiency differs sharply.

- Goals per 90 minutes is a key stat in understanding "actual" performance
- Injuries dramatically impact rhythm, fitness, and confidence — factors that raw totals can never reveal

Flashscore's minute-by-minute data can highlight these nuances, reminding us not to rush to judgment based on headline totals alone.

2. Replacing Mohamed Salah's Output: The Impossible Benchmark

No one looking at Liverpool can ignore Mohamed Salah's freakish scoring record over the past few seasons. The Egyptian winger averaged over 30 league goals a season pre-injury — an elite standard few can match.

When fans say a player had a "bad season" with 22 or 23 goals, it's often because they are implicitly comparing them to **Salah standards**. With the bar set so high, that output begins to look modest, even average, by comparison.

Player	Season	Goals	Matches	Goals per Match
Mohamed Salah	2021/22	35	23	0.66
	2022/23	22	38	0.58

In Liverpool's context, if a player is tasked primarily with replacing Salah's output, fans often expect either volume or spectacular moments — not just steady, solid returns. Anything less fuels cries of underperformance.

3. Goal Contributions vs Goals: The Bigger Picture

Goal totals are glamorous, but it's goal contributions (goals + assists) that often reveal the fuller story of a forward's impact. tribalfootball.com A player with 22 goals but only 1 assist might feel "selfish" or limited compared to another with 18 goals and 12 assists.

- **Flashscore Team Pages** expose how a player fits into the team's attacking patterns — who creates chances for them, and vice versa.

- Are they dragging defenses, creating space, or dropping deep to link play? Sometimes the raw stats don't tell the nuanced story.

Fans passionate about the "Salah standards" know this well — Mohamed Salah isn't just a goal machine; his link-up, pressing, and chance creation are elixir-level qualities for Liverpool's elite scorers.

Debate: Should we judge a striker by goals alone?

Consider two scenarios:

1. Player A scores 23 goals but provides 2 assists. He largely finishes chances created by others.
2. Player B nets 18 and assists 10, regularly dragging defenders out of position to create openings for teammates.

Who had the better season? The answer depends largely on the team's style, fan expectations, and tactical role. This active debate informs why fans might call 22 or 23 goals "bad" — if the overall goal contribution doesn't meet perceived standards.

4. Injury Context and Season Resets

Players aren't robots. Injuries can derail form and fitness, affecting goal tallies even at the best clubs. A blistering start can be scuppered by niggles, or a player integrating tactical changes may struggle in limited minutes.

Fans often forget this. A "bad season" label might stick despite the player's actual capability if they had weeks or months out or were eased back from injury.

Season resets happen post-recovery: stat boosts, confidence returns, and tactical adjustments can push someone from "disappointing" to "key contributor" within a calendar year.

Using Data to Understand Injuries and Impact

Here's where tools like Flashscore prove invaluable for context:

- Total minutes played
- Number of starts vs. substitute appearances
- Goals scored before/after injury spells

This data tells a more balanced story, painting a fuller picture beyond headline goals.

5. The Myth of "Bad Season" with Strong Goal Totals: Why Narratives Need Nuance

Labeling a 22- or 23-goal season as "bad" makes for dramatic headlines, but it often ignores nuance. Fans' frustrations boil down to:

- **Elite scorer expectations:** When surrounded by world-class teammates, anything less than prolific can feel underwhelming.
- **Price tag pressures:** Millions spent = pressure to deliver beyond just solid numbers.
- **Comparisons to legends:** Salah's shadow haunts all Liverpool forwards.
- **Injuries and game-time adjustments:** Ignored in many simplistic fan critiques.

So, before jumping to “bad season” verdicts, it’s always worth sanity-checking the full context — minutes played, roles assigned, assists, injury context, and how the player’s contribution meshes with the team tactics.

Conclusion: The Complex Truth Behind Goal Totals Perception

In football, numbers only tell part of the story. 22 or 23 goals can mean “world class” or “disappointing” depending on circumstances. At Liverpool, the benchmark set by Mohamed Salah, the hefty transfer fees, and the expectations placed on forwards skew perception dramatically.

Using data from **Flashscore** for deep-dive stats, combined with market expectations reflected through **Oddstrader’s** odds, fans and analysts can better calibrate their views. Instead of rushing to label a season “bad” based on goal totals alone, it pays to dig deeper and appreciate the full tapestry of performance.

At the end of the day, football isn’t just about tallying goals — it’s about impact, context, and the often invisible factors that shape results. So next time someone says a player had a bad season despite 22 goals, remind them: the numbers might lie, but context doesn’t.