

The end of a timeless debate? Leading maths professor solves the eternal equation and identifies Cristiano Ronaldo as the Greatest Footballer of All Time



- Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo tops the G.O.A.T. Index following innovative new mathematical modelling
- Analysis of data by Dr Tom Crawford, Mathematician at the University of Oxford, identifies Lionel Messi and Pelé as close company within the Top 3

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It is the eternal football question that continues to be debated all over the world, “*Who is the greatest of all time?*”

Finally, football fans may have the definitive answer as Cristiano Ronaldo edged his way to top The G.O.A.T. Index, a new data driven algorithm developed by Dr Tom Crawford, Mathematician at the University of Oxford.

Commissioned by LiveScore, one of the world’s leading real-time sports updates providers, Dr Crawford analysed dozens of history’s most iconic footballers since the beginning of the sport as part of one of the most in-depth research studies of all time, and assessed their brilliance against seven unique categorised data points.

Returning a maximum G.O.A.T. Index score of 100, the key differentiators for Cristiano Ronaldo were his Club Titles, International Goals, and Individual Records, creating a narrow advantage over his nearest challengers. Cristiano Ronaldo also performed highly for the Ballon d’Or Awards, with his total currently five.

Incorporating factors such as international and domestic goals and titles, as well as individual honours and career milestones, the in-depth analysis also identified those who enjoyed true ‘Z-factor’ seasons where their impact on the pitch significantly out-performed others from the previous five seasons.

[[Click here to see Dr Tom Crawford unveil The G.O.A.T. Index on LiveScore’s YouTube Channel](#)]

The G.O.A.T. Index Top Ten:

| | | |
|-----|---------------------------|------|
| 1. | <i>Cristiano Ronaldo</i> | 100% |
| 2. | <i>Lionel Messi</i> | 95% |
| 3. | <i>Pelé</i> | 87% |
| 4. | <i>Ferenc Puskás</i> | 58% |
| 5. | <i>Ronaldo Nazário</i> | 52% |
| 6. | <i>Marco Van Basten</i> | 44% |
| 7. | <i>Alfredo Di Stefano</i> | 37% |
| 8. | <i>Michel Platini</i> | 33% |
| 9. | <i>Diego Maradona</i> | 32% |
| 10. | <i>Johann Cruyff</i> | 30% |

The Seven Key-Criteria

Dr Tom Crawford's algorithm assessed players against seven weighted categories.

1. *Club Goals*
2. *Club Titles*
3. *International Goals*
4. *International Titles*
5. *Ballon d'Or Awards*
6. *Individual Records*
7. *'Z-factor' Seasons*

Comprising generational stars whose prominence and peaks spanned the 1950s through to the current day, The G.O.A.T. Index Top 10 identified several legends from South American and European football. Notable in his absence from the Top 5 is Argentine icon Diego Maradona, known for some of football's greatest moments, such as his 1986 wondergoal versus England. Despite this, the algorithm took into consideration the sporadic nature of his brilliance across a relatively small number of seasons.

The G.O.A.T. Index was commissioned by LiveScore to help provide the science behind the longest-running debate in football. In May, LiveScore announced Cristiano Ronaldo as its Official Global Brand Ambassador.

Ric Leask, Marketing Director at LiveScore, said;

"As football fans we have all grown up mesmerised by the most iconic players of our respective generations. However, when it comes to debating the Greatest of all Time, crowning the G.O.A.T. has been a difficult challenge.

For the first time, we wanted to apply the science of maths to help us solve the eternal question, and it has been fascinating to watch Professor Tom Crawford pour over the numbers on behalf of millions of global fans. The G.O.A.T. Index is about far more than a score, for us it helps to settle a debate that has run for generations. In May, we backed our man as we unveiled Cristiano Ronaldo as our Official Global Brand Ambassador, and now we know for sure that we have the maths on our side."

Dr Tom Crawford, Mathematician at the University of Oxford, commented:

"As a massive football fan, I have long debated with my friends who the greatest player of all time is. I have loved bringing maths to the masses over the past few years, so being able to showcase how you can use it within the world of football has been a lot of fun. Whilst Cristiano Ronaldo has come out on top from my algorithm, it is clear that all the other players' stats are absolutely incredible, and I am sure the debate will continue!"

To see how Dr Tom Crawford created The G.O.A.T. Index for LiveScore, head to [\[insert link\]](#).

For more information, please contact press@livescore.com.

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About LiveScore:

An early pioneer in the online sports media space, LiveScore™ was founded in 1998 and is a global sports media business, real-time sports updates provider and live streaming service. Following its acquisition in 2017, the LiveScore business was subsequently demerged into the Anzo Group in 2019. Today, LiveScore continues to



deliver the top quality content that its users have come to expect, with its up-to-the minute sports updates. LiveScore boasts active users across 200 territories making it quite simply one of the world's best-known brands in the market. LiveScore is also proud to be the Official Global Scoring Partner of LaLiga Santander.

Notes To Editors:

The G.O.A.T Index was researched and created independently by Dr Tom Crawford from the University of Oxford. The algorithm and final results were completed on Tuesday 20th July 2021.