

# FROM FLAME TO FAME.

## WOMEN PLAYER CARDS IN EA'S FC24 AND THEIR JOURNEY TO ACCEPTANCE

Michaela Wawra, Alexander Pfeiffer

The inclusion of women player cards in EA's FC24 Ultimate Team (FUT) represents a significant shift in sports video gaming, marking the first time female footballers have been integrated into this popular mode. This study explores the community's evolving perceptions of this inclusion through a qualitative content and sentiment analysis of two key Reddit threads. The first thread, analyzed prior to the game's release, captures initial skepticism and concerns, particularly around realism and the impact on FUT's competitive integrity. The second thread, from the near endgame phase, reveals how these perceptions have shifted, with many players eventually embracing the diversity and new dynamics brought by female players. Despite the positive reception, challenges such as card saturation and ongoing debates about the balance between realism and fantasy remain. The study highlights the educational impact of including women in FUT, contributing to greater awareness of women's football. The findings suggest that while the inclusion has been polarizing, it has also catalyzed important discussions about gender inclusivity in sports video games, setting the stage for further research and broader acceptance in the gaming community.

Keywords: EA Sports FC24, FIFA Ultimate Team (FUT), Loot Boxes, Women Player Cards, Gaming Community Sentiment



## 1. Introduction

Since its inception in FIFA 09, Ultimate Team (commonly referred to as FUT) has evolved into one of the most popular and financially lucrative game modes in EA Sports' association football video games. [1] Designed to allow players to build and manage their dream teams, FUT combines elements of strategy, skill, and chance, offering a dynamic experience that has captivated millions of players worldwide [2]. Player cards, representing real-life footballers, are central to this mode and are obtained through packs that players can purchase or earn within the game. These packs function as loot boxes, a feature introduced initially in free-to-play mobile games where players could access the game for free but were incentivized to purchase these randomized packs. This system has become a significant revenue source for game developers. However, the reliance on randomization and the potential for gambling-like behavior have sparked considerable debate, with concerns about the risk of gaming disorder [3, 4,14].

A loot box is a virtual item within a video game that contains a randomized selection of other virtual items, which can be utilized by players once the loot box is unlocked. These items, often termed "loot," may enhance the player's in-game experience or increase their chances of success. Loot boxes can be obtained either through gameplay achievements or by purchasing them through microtransactions. The process of obtaining items from loot boxes is likened to gambling mechanisms, such as slot machines or scratch lotteries, because the outcome is random and does not depend on player skill. This randomization, coupled with the potential need to purchase multiple loot boxes to obtain a desired item, has raised concerns about the predatory nature of loot boxes, particularly given their accessibility to minors [14, 15, 4, 16, 19].

For instance, players in FIFA's Ultimate Team mode can use real-world money to buy 'player packs,' which include a randomly selected group of footballers.

Loot boxes in FUT function similarly to traditional trading cards, where players buy packs without knowing what specific items they will receive. These packs can include player cards, consumables, and other in-game items that can enhance the performance of a team. The player cards evolve over time, as more and more special edition cards are being release [5]. The value of the contents varies widely, with some packs containing rare and highly sought-after players while others might offer less desirable items, often referred to as "fodder" [6] by the community.

The randomness of these packs is what drives both the excitement and the controversy surrounding FUT. Players can spend in-game currency (earned through gameplay) or real money to purchase these packs, leading to concerns about the potential for players, especially younger ones, to spend excessively in pursuit of rare cards [7]

This business model proved so successful that it was later adopted by major developers in pay-to-play games, leading to increased revenue. In fact, Electronic Arts (EA) became the first major game developer to introduce loot boxes with the launch of FIFA Ultimate Team (FUT), a new online-only game mode, in FIFA 09 [14].

Ultimate Team's reliance on loot boxes has been both a driver of its success and a source of significant criticism. The thrill of opening packs and the possibility of acquiring a top-tier player like Lionel Messi or Kylian Mbappé can be incredibly appealing. Hand in hand with building your very own squad you relate to, combining strategic decision, tactics and players you adore in real life. However, this system has also been criticized for fostering a "pay-to-win" environment, where players who spend more money on packs have a better chance of building stronger teams. This issue is compounded by the fact that the contents of packs are random, leading to frustration when players spend money only to receive low-value cards. As already mentioned, we identified player types in regard to their behavior when it comes to loot boxes and spending FIAT money to purchase them, instead of relying only on cards achieved through gameplay. Those playertypes include [4]:

**Esports Players/Streamers:** These players often have predefined budgets and require top-tier squads for competitive play, using loot boxes strategically to maintain their edge.

**Self-Budgeted Players:** Players in this category carefully manage their spending, often sticking to a budget and making calculated decisions about when to invest in loot boxes.

**High Division Aspirants:** These players aim for high competitive rankings and may occasionally overspend on loot boxes in pursuit of the perfect team, sometimes realizing too late that skill, not just team composition, determines success.

**Pressure-Driven Purchasers:** These players are often influenced by external factors, such as social media or peer pressure, leading them to make spontaneous purchases that can exceed their budget.

**Road to Glory Players:** Proud of their ability to succeed without spending money, these players focus on earning rewards through gameplay alone, often achieving high levels of success without financial investment.

The introduction of women players into FUT with the release of EA Sports FC 24 marked a significant shift in the mode's history. Not only did it represent a departure from the FIFA branding after EA's split from the governing football body, but it also introduced a new level of inclusivity by allowing female footballers to be part of mixed-gender teams. [8] This was a bold move by EA, reflecting broader societal changes towards gender equality in sports, but it also sparked intense debate within the gaming community. A reason why EA has been focusing on reducing toxic behaviour within the game. [9]

Initially, the inclusion of women was met with skepticism, with many players expressing concerns that it would detract from the realism of the game. Some feared that high-rated female players would upset the balance of FUT, particularly in a mode already criticized for its reliance on randomization and the influence of loot boxes. We would like to introduce a particularly insightful sentence from the pre-release Reddit thread in our analysis here, as it effectively encapsulates the core issue at the heart of the debate surrounding the inclusion of women in FC24: *"I'm really hoping they keep it separate as it just isn't realistic... Men and women will never play in the same teams professionally, so why muddy the waters?"* This sentiment was echoed by others who were wary of the impact on the game's competitive integrity and the already contentious economy driven by loot boxes. [10]

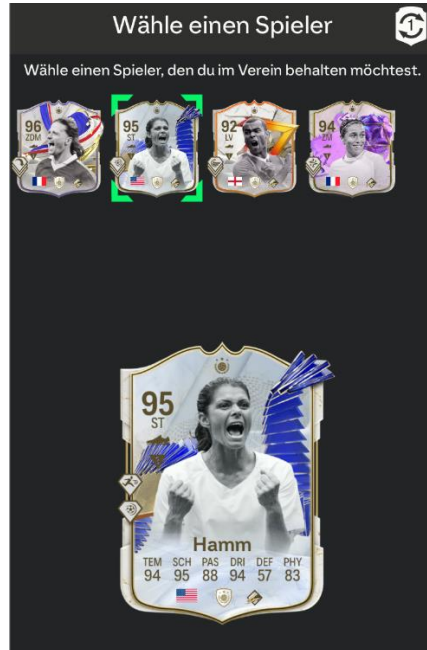


Figure 1. Mia Ham (TOTY-ICON edition) - a member of Alexander Pfeiffer's FC24 Squad.  
Female and Male Icons in one pack, the player can decide, whom to pick.

However, as players spent more time with the game, sentiments began to shift. Many who were initially resistant to the inclusion of women came to appreciate the diversity and new dynamics they brought to FUT. The realization that FUT had long embraced fantasy elements, such as the use of Icons (retired legendary players) or “Future Stars” (young promising players with stats they might have in the future on the real world’s pitches), helped ease some of the initial concerns.

Over time, this shift in sentiment was further supported by content created by popular YouTube influencers within the FIFA community. Influencers like Mike LaBelle, with 310,000 followers [11] and Zelonius, with 40,900 followers [12], began producing videos that embraced the use of female player cards. These videos showcased the competitive viability and unique attributes of female players, helping to normalize their inclusion in the game. However, it remains unclear whether these influencers were driven purely by a genuine belief in the value of these cards, a desire to generate views and likes, or if they were potentially incentivized by EA as part of affiliate marketing efforts.

Moreover, the inclusion of women has also had a positive impact beyond the virtual pitch, increasing awareness of women's football among players who might not have followed it otherwise. This educational aspect has helped bridge the gap between virtual gaming and real-world sports, fostering a new generation of fans for women's football. As one commenter reflected, *"I think it's equally good for women's football too. Brought a lot of attention to the players."* [13]

## **2. Related Research – Loot box controversy and gaming community reaction**

The implementation of loot boxes in top-tier games, particularly after the 2017 release of *Star Wars: Battlefront II* by Electronic Arts, sparked global debate. This controversy highlighted concerns over the ethics of monetization practices in games, a discussion that continues today [14]. This shows it is not the first time EA is under critic by the gaming community.

The controversy surrounding loot boxes intensified due to consumer backlash, particularly on social media platforms like Reddit. Electronic Arts (EA) faced significant criticism for its heavy reliance on microtransactions, culminating in widespread outrage during the beta testing of *Star Wars: Battlefront II*. The backlash was so severe that EA was forced to remove the microtransaction system just before the game's official release. EA's initial attempts to defend its practices on Reddit were met with overwhelming negativity, resulting in the most downvoted comment in the site's history. This consumer resistance movement not only damaged EA's reputation but also led to a significant loss in stock value. This incident also ignited calls for greater regulation of the video game industry, particularly concerning microtransactions and loot boxes [17].

The gaming community's reaction, especially on platforms like Reddit, has proven to be a crucial factor in shaping the industry's approach to loot boxes. Developers now recognize the importance of engaging directly with customer communities and maintaining transparency to build consumer confidence. Proactive measures, such as revealing the odds of loot boxes before any backlash occurs, are seen as vital to maintaining good relationships with players. The case of *Battlefront II* demonstrated that empathy and accountability are essential in customer relations, as opposed to the dismissive attitudes previously displayed by some developers [17].

The game FIFA has been used as example and even been researched in many recent studies [18, 14, 15, 4, 5]. Especially [4] has focused on the game FIFA ultimate team, where the author explores the relationship between loot box spending in FIFA Ultimate Team (FUT) and gaming disorder, identifying employment status and reward sensitivity as key predictors of spending behavior.

The results of a content and sentiment analysis of two significant Reddit threads are now examined: one from before the release of EA FC24 and the other from the late-stage, or endgame, phase of the game. These threads provide first insights into how players' perceptions of women in FUT have evolved over time, from initial resistance to a more nuanced acceptance. By analyzing these discussions, we aim to explore the impact of this landmark change on the Ultimate Team community and what it signifies for the future of sports video games.

### **3. Methods**

Our study employs a qualitative content and sentiment analysis of two key Reddit threads to explore community reactions to the inclusion of women in EA's FC24 Ultimate Team. The first thread, posted prior to the game's release, captures the initial skepticism and concerns surrounding the introduction of female players. The second thread, from the near endgame phase, provides insights into how player sentiments evolved after engaging with the game over an extended period.

The analysis involved systematically reviewing comments within these threads to identify recurring themes, such as realism, gender inclusivity, and the impact of loot boxes on the game's economy. Sentiment analysis, aligned with the methods discussed by [23], was conducted to gauge the overall tone of the community's responses, categorizing them as positive, negative, or mixed. By manually coding sentiments, as recommended in qualitative sentiment analysis, we ensured that the nuances of player opinions were captured, allowing for a detailed understanding of the factors driving their perspectives.

Direct quotes from the threads were used to illustrate these themes and sentiments, providing a richer, more contextualized view of the community's evolving attitudes towards the inclusion of women in FUT. This approach

allowed us to comprehensively explore the complex and varied reactions within the gaming community.

### **3.1 Self-Criticism and Limitations**

While this study offers first insights into community reactions, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The analysis of only two Reddit threads serves as a preliminary exploration rather than a comprehensive study. This approach provides a first look into the topic, acting as an indicator of broader trends and as a nudge for further research. The findings should be interpreted with caution, as the sample is limited to specific discussions within a particular online community. Future research could benefit from a more extensive data set, incorporating a wider range of social media platforms, forums, and player demographics to achieve a more representative understanding of player sentiment.

## **4. Results of the Content and Sentiment Analysis of Two Reddit Threads**

The inclusion of women players in EA's FC24 Ultimate Team (FUT) marked a groundbreaking shift in sports video games, sparking significant debate about gender inclusion and gameplay dynamics. Early player reactions, as captured in Reddit discussions, reflected skepticism about the impact on realism, with many concerned about the integration of female players into a traditionally male-dominated mode. However, as players engaged with the game, sentiments began to shift, revealing an evolving acceptance of women in FUT.

In FC24, women occupy significant positions in the top 10 rankings based on "gold cards" (best type of the basic card set, without taking special edition cards into account. Learn more about different type of cards here [20]) with Alexia Putellas tied for second place alongside Kylian Mbappé, both boasting an overall rating of 91. Despite women comprising less than one-tenth of the player base (1,501 women to 16,169 men), they are prominently represented among the highest-rated cards. Notably, female players like Wendie Renard and Mapi Leon lead in defensive ratings, underscoring their competitive viability in FUT [21].





Figure 2 - Gold Cards Putellas and Mbappé in comparison

#### 4.1 Initial Reactions: The Pre-Release Thread

The first thread, titled "Are mixed (Male & Female) Teams confirmed for FUT in EAFC24?" [10], set the stage for a heated discussion about the potential impact of including women in FUT. The original poster expressed a common sentiment at the time: *"I'm really hoping they keep it separate as it just isn't realistic... Men and women will never play in the same teams professionally, so why muddy the waters?"* This post immediately drew a flood of responses, many of which reflected deep concerns about the direction EA was taking with its popular Ultimate Team mode.

One of the most vocal criticisms was the perceived loss of realism. A commenter argued, *"So tired of people using shapeshifters and icons to justify this. It's simply not the same."* They were frustrated that female players, particularly those with high ratings from day one, would make the game less realistic, likening the situation to worsening weather: *"Realism isn't black and white. The game doesn't need to be 100% realistic currently for people to be against it becoming more unrealistic."* This comment captures the fear that FUT would become more of a fantasy game, straying further from its roots as a football simulation.

Another player dismissed the idea that FUT was already unrealistic enough to justify the inclusion of women. *"I mean, you can't really call much of UT realistic anyway considering you have Icons like stated and then shapeshifter cards and ridiculous cards for very average players,"* they noted, highlighting the

perceived inconsistency in arguments that supported the inclusion based on existing fantasy elements like shapeshifter cards, which allow players to perform in positions they wouldn't typically play, such as a goalkeeper becoming a striker.

Despite these concerns, some players saw the inclusion of women as an inevitable evolution of the game, albeit not without potential drawbacks. *"Only 4% of players used women's teams in kick-off a single time,"* one commenter pointed out, questioning whether catering to a small minority justified the potential disruption to the game's balance and realism. Another commenter went further, arguing that if women were to be included, their ratings should be significantly lower to reflect what they perceived as the realistic gap in skill: *"If they're included, but they're all rated below 74, fair enough. But any more and we may as well add Spider-Man while we're at it."*

The thread also included more extreme views. One particularly strong reaction came from a commenter who stated, "I have no problem with adding women into FUT only if they'd have realistic ratings - below 20 for base cards and below 35 for icon women cards. That's it. No way Marta or Kerr are better than Mbappe, CR7, Son, Haaland, etc." This comment reflects a deeply entrenched belief in the superiority of male footballers, with the suggestion that even top female players should be rated far lower than their male counterparts. This can be seen as toxic behaviour and highlight one of the extremes, of the discussion in regard to female FUT cards.

## 4.2 Evolved Perspectives: The Near-Endgame Thread

Nearly a year later, the community had spent considerable time in the game and had the opportunity to engage with the mixed-gender teams. The thread titled "I assume we can now finally all admit women have been a positive addition to this game?" [13] captures the evolved sentiments of the community as the game approached its endgame phase. This thread has more than 400 comments and has therefore been chosen to represent the status quo of the discussion.

## 4.3 Positive Receptions and Cultural Impact

A significant number of players expressed that their initial skepticism had transformed into appreciation. One player admitted, *"I was a massive hater. Can't lie, love the girls now. Bompastor made this game fun for me."* This comment highlights a broader trend among players who, after spending time with female

players in the game, came to appreciate their contribution to the gameplay experience. Another player shared a similar story, saying they had packed Gold Putellas early in the game and quickly realized that the inclusion of women was beneficial, particularly for raising awareness of women's football: *"I think it's equally good for women's football too. Brought a lot of attention to the players."*

The educational impact of including women in FUT was another recurring theme. Many players admitted that they were previously unfamiliar with female footballers but had come to know and appreciate them through the game. *"I only knew about Putellas, now I feel like I know all the women from top teams,"* one commenter noted, reflecting how the game served as a gateway for many to discover and follow women's football, thereby expanding the sport's fan base. This finding can be perceived important for the "game-based learning" community and highlights the point from Konstantin Mitgutsch, who almost ten years ago started to speak about the learning transfer from games to real world context (see [22]).

#### **4.4 Challenges and Frustrations: Card Economy and Gameplay Mechanics**

Despite the positive reception from many, significant challenges and frustrations persisted, particularly concerning the game's economy and the saturation of cards. The term "fodder" was frequently used to describe how some players viewed the majority of female cards—valuable primarily as material for SBCs (Squad Building Challenges) rather than as key members of their teams. *"Never had an issue, more fodder,"* one player remarked, indicating that they didn't see these cards adding substantial value to their gameplay experience.

The issue of card saturation, exacerbated by the inclusion of women, was a common point of contention. *"Card saturation is too high, except for that I have never had a problem with women in the game,"* one player commented. They acknowledged the positive aspects of inclusion but were concerned that the sheer number of cards had diluted the excitement of opening packs. Another player expressed frustration with the game's RNG, particularly when receiving female players they didn't want: *"Will I pay to open a pack and a what? Will I go on weekend league and hope to win POTW or something and it's a woman POTW? I don't understand that."*

Skepticism about the motivations behind these changes also lingered. Some players felt that EA's decision to include women was driven more by a desire to

complicate the card economy than by any genuine effort to enhance the game. *“Let’s be very honest and real with yourselves—EA only added them to make it harder to pack better players,”* one commenter stated, reflecting a broader distrust of EA’s intentions.

#### 4.5 Realism vs. Fantasy: Ongoing Debate

The tension between realism and fantasy in FUT continued to be a divisive issue. For many players, FUT has traditionally been a male-dominated space, and the inclusion of women challenged their expectations of what a “realistic” football simulation should look like. As one commenter expressed, *“I like to play a realistic XI, which would be 11 men,”* reflecting the discomfort some players felt with the idea of mixed-gender teams.

A substantial part of the debate centers on the physical attributes of female players compared to their male counterparts, particularly in key positions like goalkeeper and center-back. Many players questioned the competitive viability of female goalkeepers, noting differences in height and physical presence. Comments like *“It feels unrealistic when a 5’4” female goalkeeper can stop shots just as effectively as a 6’5” male goalkeeper”* highlighted concerns about how these attributes translate into gameplay. Similarly, the physicality of female defenders—especially their ability to win aerial duels against taller male players—was frequently cited as an area where realism seemed to be compromised.

In FC24, the introduction of detailed player attributes such as strength, heading accuracy, and jumping has further intensified these discussions. Some players argued that high ratings in these attributes for female players seemed inconsistent with their real-world performances. For instance, the ability of female players to out-muscle or out-jump male players in certain scenarios was seen as unrealistic by some, leading to frustrations about the game’s mechanics.

#### 4.6 Hostility and Exclusionary Attitudes

Unfortunately, some reactions remained deeply hostile and exclusionary. *“We don’t want women in FUT because we just want to play with hairy sweaty dudes, that’s all. Women SUCK at football,”* one commenter declared, dismissing any notion of inclusivity. This comment, laden with derogatory language, reflects the extreme end of resistance within the community, where the inclusion of women is seen not just as unnecessary but as an affront to the game’s male-centric identity.

However, more balanced views also emerged, with players recognizing that the inclusion of women, while controversial, had brought positive changes to the game. *"If you don't like it, then don't buy, don't play,"* one commenter suggested, also emphasizing that the changes were inevitable and that the community would adapt, particularly if women proved to be competitively viable.

#### 4.7 Cynicism and Resignation

Cynicism toward EA's motives **were** also prevalent, with some players feeling that the company was more interested in complicating the game's economy than in genuinely improving it. *"EA have really turned the game into shit,"* one commenter remarked, expressing frustration over various changes to the game, including the inclusion of women. Despite their harsh criticism, there was an ironic resignation in their comment: *"This for me is definitely end of an era. (Proceeds to buy it.) No but really, let's fuck EA."* This captures a sentiment where, despite their dissatisfaction, players continue to engage with the game, possibly due to a lack of alternatives or a deep-rooted attachment to the franchise. The German term to explain it would be "Hassliebe".

### 5. Conclusion

The inclusion of women in EA's FC24 Ultimate Team has catalyzed a significant and multifaceted discussion within the gaming community, reflecting a wide spectrum of opinions on the balance between realism, fantasy, and inclusivity. Initially met with substantial skepticism and concern about diluting the realism of the game, many players feared that integrating female players would undermine the authenticity of FUT. The pre-release discourse was marked by apprehension, with critics questioning whether this move catered to a small minority at the expense of the broader player base.

However, as players engaged with the game over the year, sentiments evolved. While some maintained their original concerns, others came to appreciate the diversity and new dynamics that female players brought to FUT. The game's educational impact, particularly in raising awareness of women's football and expanding the fan base, has been a significant positive outcome. Many players who were initially unfamiliar with female footballers found themselves learning about and enjoying these players, leading to a broader cultural impact beyond the game.

Despite the positive developments, challenges remain. The issue of card saturation and the impact on the game's economy, as well as ongoing debates about the balance between realism and fantasy, continue to generate mixed reactions. Some players still express frustration with how the inclusion of women has affected pack openings and gameplay dynamics, while others see it as a refreshing change in a game that had become increasingly repetitive.

Hostility and exclusionary attitudes, though present, have been countered by more inclusive perspectives that advocate for embracing the evolving nature of FUT. As the game continues to develop, the community's feedback will be crucial in shaping future iterations of Ultimate Team. The overall trend suggests that while the inclusion of women has been a polarizing issue, it has also been a catalyst for change, encouraging a broader discussion about the future of gaming and the importance of inclusivity in virtual sports. This ongoing dialogue will undoubtedly influence how EA approaches similar decisions in future releases, balancing innovation with the diverse expectations of its player base.

To build on the findings of this research, it is suggested that, in addition to repeating the study with a larger, more quantitative dataset, interviews be conducted with players across various levels of professionalism, ranging from casual gamers to competitive Esports players. These interviews would provide valuable insights into how the inclusion of women in FC24 Ultimate Team has impacted their gameplay experiences and perceptions.

By engaging directly with this diverse group, future research can explore the broader implications of gender inclusivity in sports video games and validate the initial trends observed in our study. This approach would help deepen our understanding of how these changes are being received across the player spectrum, from those who engage with the game casually to those who compete at the highest levels.

## FROM FLAME TO FAME.

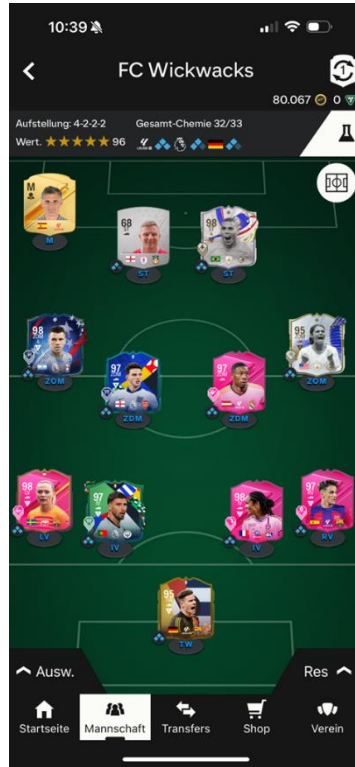


Figure 3 - Endgame Squad from Alexander Pfeiffer, total money spent for lootboxes - 50 €. Two female player cards are in the final team

## 6. Personal Reflection from the Authors

Reflecting on our exploration of how women player cards in EA's FC24 have transitioned from a source of controversy to a celebrated feature, we'd like to share some personal insights into why this topic is particularly meaningful to us.

Michaela Wawra is currently pursuing her doctorate at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, where her research is centered on the intricate world of loot boxes in video games. Her work delves into the complex dynamics of virtual economies and examines how in-game purchases, like loot boxes, influence player behavior and game design. For Michaela, this topic is more than just an academic inquiry; it's a critical analysis of how modern gaming intersects

with economic principles, often blurring the lines between entertainment and gambling.

Alexander Pfeiffer, on the other hand, approaches this topic from a lifelong passion for EA's football games. Having been an avid player since the early days of the franchise, Alexander has witnessed the series' evolution firsthand, from straightforward gameplay mechanics to the sophisticated, economy-driven systems that define today's Ultimate Team mode. This extensive experience has given him unique insights into how these changes have shaped the player experience over the years.

In 2023, we co-authored a paper that introduced a player type model within FIFA, categorizing players based on their engagement with loot boxes. This work laid the foundation for our decision to explore the perception of female player cards in FC24. We recognized a gap in the academic discourse, with little attention given to how these new additions were being received by the gaming community. This realization fueled our passion to pioneer this research, hoping to inspire other scholars and game studies enthusiasts to further investigate this evolving aspect of sports video games.

## About the Authors

MICHAELA has a master's degrees in Business Administration and is in a praedoc position at University for Continuing Education Krems in Austria. Her research focuses on game studies especially on loot boxes and their economical impact. Since 2023 she is a doctoral candidate at the Vienna University of Economics and Business.

*LinkedIn: [michaela-wawra-39708723a](#)*

ALEXANDER PFEIFFER, a Max Kade Fellowship recipient, focused on the impact of blockchain technologies on game-based education at MIT's Education Arcade. He has returned to Austria, where he leads the emerging technologies experiences lab at the University for Continuing Education Krems. He co-founded tech start-ups Picapipe GmbH and B & P Emerging Technologies Consultancy Lab. Dr. Pfeiffer holds a doctorate and a social and economic sciences degree from the Vienna University of Economics and Business, a Master of Arts from University of Krems, and an Executive MBA from Alaska Pacific



University. He is also Ph.D candidate at the University of Malta in the field of AI.

*Website: <https://www.alexpfeiffer.at/>*

## AI Disclaimer

The authors fully embrace the exciting possibilities offered by Artificial Intelligence, particularly tools like [GPT-4, Teams Version]. While such tools are invaluable for tasks like qualitative content analysis, translation, and other helpful endeavors, it's important to remember that the true magic (and occasional missteps) happens under human oversight. So, while the AI might assist in structuring ideas or untangling complex sentences, the responsibility for any content quirks, structural hiccups, or clarity confusions rests squarely on our human shoulders. In short, if something's gone awry, blame the humans, not the helpful AI—it's only doing its best to follow our sometimes unclear instructions!

## References

- [1] eSports.com, 2024. Knapp 7,5 Milliarden: EA macht Rekordumsatz dank FIFA 23. Available at: <https://www.esports.com/de/knapp-75-milliarden-ea-macht-rekordumsatz-dank-fifa-23-413727> [Accessed 19 August 2024]
- [2] PC Games, 2024. EA Sports FC 24: Spielerzahlen nach Woche 1. Available at: <https://www.pcgames.de/EA-Sports-FC-24-Spiel-74640/News/Spielerzahlen-nach-Woche-1-1430952/> [Accessed 19 August 2024]
- [3] Pfeiffer, A. & Sedlecky, G., 2020. An Introduction to Gambling in the Context of Game Studies. *Mixed Reality and Games: Theoretical and Practical Approaches in Game Studies and Education*, pp.transcript Verlag, pp. 281-296; <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839453292-026>
- [4] Lemmens, J. S., 2022. Play or pay to win: Loot boxes and gaming disorder in FIFA ultimate team. *Telematics and Informatics Reports*8, p. 100023; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teler.2022.100023>.
- [5] Wawra, M- & Pfeiffer, A. (2023). The Freedom of Choice Subtitle: A Preliminary Analysis of Lootboxes in EA FIFA Ultimate Team and the Introduction of a Player Type Model. In *FREEDOM | OPPRESSION | GAMES & PLAY*, University of Krems Press
- [6] FIFPlay, 2024. SBC Fodder. Available at: <https://www.fifplay.com/encyclopedia/sbc-fodder/> [Accessed 19 August 2024].

- [7] Meschik, M., 2018. "Loot Boxes" – Über die Verwandtschaft von Videospiel und Glücksspiel. *medienimpulse*, Jg. 56, Nr. 1, pp.1-20.
- [8] ORF, 2024. FIFA: Was bedeutet SBC-Fodder? Available at: <https://oe3.orf.at/stories/3036440/> [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [9] play3.de, 2023. EA Sports FC 24: Darum sind erstmals Frauen in Ultimate Team dabei. Available at: <https://www.play3.de/2023/07/19/ea-sports-fc-24-darum-sind-erstmal-frauen-in-ultimate-team-dabei/> [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [10] Reddit, 2024. Are mixed male/female teams confirmed for FUT in EA Sports FC? Available at: [https://www.reddit.com/r/EASportsFC/comments/14wl18r/are\\_mixed\\_male\\_female\\_teams\\_confirmed\\_for\\_fut\\_in/](https://www.reddit.com/r/EASportsFC/comments/14wl18r/are_mixed_male_female_teams_confirmed_for_fut_in/) [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [11] YouTube, 2024. EA Sports FC 24 Official Reveal Trailer. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IxTVnZ7s2I> [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [12] YouTube, 2024. EA Sports FC 24 Ultimate Team Trailer. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvW47dhlA5Y> [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [13] Reddit, 2024. I assume we can now finally all admit women have no place in FUT? Available at: [https://www.reddit.com/r/EASportsFC/comments/1cviq3t/i\\_assume\\_we\\_can\\_now\\_finally\\_all\\_admit\\_women\\_have/?rdt=62499](https://www.reddit.com/r/EASportsFC/comments/1cviq3t/i_assume_we_can_now_finally_all_admit_women_have/?rdt=62499) [Accessed 19 August 2024].
- [14] Baeck, J. & Claeys, I., 2021. Restitution of money spent on loot boxes in video games? *Computer Law & Security Review*, 41, p.105566. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clsr.2021.105566>.
- [15] King, D. L. & Delfabbro, P. H., 2018. Video Game Monetization (e.g., 'Loot Boxes'): a Blueprint for Practical Social Responsibility Measures. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 17, pp.166–179. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-018-0009-3>.
- [16] Zendle, D., Meyer, R., Cairns, P., Waters, S. & Ballou, N., 2020. The prevalence of loot boxes in mobile and desktop games. *Addiction*, 115, pp.1768–1772. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14973>.
- [17] McCaffrey, M., 2019. The macro problem of microtransactions: The self-regulatory challenges of video game loot boxes. *Business Horizons*, 62(4), pp.483-495. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2019.03.001>.
- [18] Adam, M., Roethke, K. & Benlian, A., 2021. Gamblified digital product offerings: An experimental study of loot box menu designs. *Electronic Markets*, 32, pp.971–986. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-021-00477-0>.
- [19] Brooks, G. A. & Clark, L., 2019. Associations between loot box use, problematic gaming and gambling, and gambling-related cognitions. *Addictive Behaviors*, 96, pp.26-34. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2019.04.009>.
- [20] eSports.com, 2024. FIFA FUT Karten Glossary. Available at: <https://www.esports.com/de/glossary-fifa/fifa-fut-karten> [Accessed 19 August 2024].

[21] Sports of the Day, 2024. FC 24 FUT Equality: What EA Makes Women Better At and What It Doesn't. Available at: <https://www.sportsoftheday.com/fc-24-fut-equality-what-ea-makes-women-better-at-and-what-it-doesnt/> [Accessed 19 August 2024].

[22] YouTube, 2024. EA Sports FC 24 - Women in FUT Trailer. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oII7orT98OI> [Accessed 19 August 2024].

[23] Kirilenko, A. P., Wang, L., & Stepchenkova, S. O. (2022). Sentiment Analysis. In R. Egger (Ed.), *Applied Data Science in Tourism: Interdisciplinary Approaches, Methodologies, and Applications* (pp. 363-374). Springer International Publishing.