



EPL Matchweek 33 Recap: Haaland Fires Man City Back Into Title Race as Arsenal Stumble

Description

What a weekend of Premier League football. Matchweek 33 delivered drama, goals, and a seismic shift in the title race as Manchester City gave Arsenal a very unwelcome Sunday morning wake-up call. From Erling Haaland's ice-cold winner at the Etihad to Liverpool's statement Merseyside Derby victory, here is everything that went down across the most gripping Premier League weekend in months.

The Big One: Manchester City 2-1 Arsenal

This was the match the entire Premier League season had been building towards. Arsenal arrived at the Etihad Stadium as table-toppers, three points clear with a game fewer played. They left with nothing and a renewed sense of anxiety about what the final run-in holds.

It was Rayan Cherki who drew first blood, the French midfielder dancing through Arsenal's midfield before slotting coolly past Gianluigi Donnarumma in the 15th minute. For a brief, glorious 107 seconds, it looked as though Donnarumma's positioning error might be forgiven as Kai Havertz pounced on a loose clearance to equalise in the 17th minute but the drama was only getting started.

Enter Erling Haaland. The Norwegian striker, who had been unusually quiet in the first half, burst into life on the hour mark. A pinpoint Rodri pass split Arsenal's defensive line, and Haaland who else? finished with ruthless precision in the 64th minute to restore Manchester City's lead.

Arsenal threw everything at City in the final quarter of the match. Mikel Arteta's men huffed and puffed, but Pep Guardiola's side held firm. The full-time whistle triggered wild celebrations at the Etihad and sent shockwaves through the title race.

Goals: Cherki (15'), Havertz (17'), Haaland (64')

Title Race Update: Arsenal Still Lead, But City Lurking

The result means Arsenal remain top of the Premier League table on 70 points, but Manchester City have closed the gap to just three points and crucially, City have a game in hand. With five matches remaining for Arsenal and six for City, every single game now counts.

Arsenal still hold their destiny in their own hands. Win their remaining five matches and the title is theirs. But City, buoyed by Haaland's 29th league goal of the season and Guardiola's tactical masterclass, will fancy their chances of hunting down the Gunners in this final sprint.

Position	Club	Played	Points	GD
1	Arsenal	33	70	+38
2	Manchester City	32	67	+35
3	Liverpool	33	62	+29
4	Chelsea	33	56	+18
5	Newcastle United	33	54	+15

Merseyside Derby: Everton 1-2 Liverpool

While the title race grabbed all the headlines, Liverpool were quietly getting on with business at Goodison Park on Sunday. A hard-fought 2-1 victory over Everton kept the Reds firmly in the top-three conversation and further eased relegation pressure on their Merseyside neighbours.

Mo Salah and Virgil van Dijk both reflected on the importance of the win post-match, with Van Dijk calling it a "massive derby win" that showed Liverpool's character. The result extends Liverpool's unbeaten run in the Premier League to nine matches and keeps Arne Slot's side well within reach of a Champions League spot.

Villa Thriller: Aston Villa 4-3 Sunderland

If you missed the Aston Villa vs Sunderland match on Sunday, you missed seven goals and one of the most entertaining games of the Premier League season. Villa came out on top in a breathless encounter at Villa Park, scoring four times in a match that had twists, turns, and everything in between.

Sunderland, who won promotion from the Championship this season, have been a revelation in the top flight and even in defeat, their attacking intent was on full display. However, Villa's quality ultimately told, with Unai Emery's side securing all three points in a game that kept fans glued to their seats from first whistle to last.

Chelsea 0-1 Manchester United: The Blues Stumble Again

Chelsea's top-four ambitions took yet another hit on Saturday as Manchester United secured a crucial 1-0 win at Stamford Bridge. The Red Devils, who have shown flickers of improvement under their new manager after a turbulent start to the season, ground out a professional victory that sends a statement to the rest of the league.

For Chelsea, it was a frustrating afternoon – a blank in front of goal against a disciplined United defensive unit. The Blues remain fourth in the table, but with Newcastle United breathing down their necks, the pressure is mounting as the top-four race enters its final chapter.

Nottingham Forest 4-1 Burnley: Forest Flying

Nottingham Forest showed exactly why they have been one of the stories of the Premier League season with a dominant 4-1 thrashing of Burnley on Sunday. Nuno Espirito Santo's side have been electrifying going forward, and this performance was another reminder of just how far they have come.

Burnley, already relegated, offered little resistance as Forest's attacking players ran riot. For Forest fans, who witnessed their club in the Championship not so long ago, watching their side put four past a Premier League opponent at the City Ground is the stuff of dreams.

Leeds United 3-0 Wolverhampton Wanderers

Leeds United continued their impressive return to the Premier League with a comfortable 3-0 victory over Wolverhampton Wanderers at Elland Road on Saturday. The Yorkshire club's attacking displays have been one of the highlights of this season, and they showed no mercy against a Wolves side still battling to preserve their top-flight status.

For Wolves, the result adds pressure to their relegation battle – they now find themselves looking nervously over their shoulder at the sides below them with just five games to play.

Weekend's Other Results at a Glance

- **Brentford 0-0 Fulham** – A hard-fought west London stalemate that does little for either side's season ambitions.
- **Newcastle United 1-2 AFC Bournemouth** – A shock result at St James' Park that will concern Eddie Howe. Bournemouth's win continues their impressive run of form.
- **Tottenham Hotspur 2-2 Brighton & Hove Albion** – Spurs dropped two points at home in a match they really needed to win to stay in European contention.

What to Watch This Week

The Premier League does not stop. With the title race at its most thrilling point all season, every midweek and weekend fixture is now a potential turning point. Can Arsenal respond and put the pressure back on Manchester City? Will Liverpool sneak into the top two? And can Chelsea hold off Newcastle in the top-four battle?

Keep checking back on Little Big Red Dot for all the latest Premier League updates, match reports, and analysis as the 2025/26 season races towards its breathtaking conclusion.

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