



Manchester United's £314m bench: Ronaldo, Casemiro, Maguire and 368 caps

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[Manchester United](#)'s bench for their 1-0 win over [Southampton](#) cost north of £300 million (\$352m) — Southampton's entire match-day squad did not even come close.

But it paid off, as Erik ten Hag led United to their second consecutive [Premier League](#) win, courtesy of a [Bruno Fernandes](#) strike, after sticking with the same starting XI that beat [Liverpool](#) on Monday night.

That meant the Dutchman had one of the most expensively-assembled list of substitutes, costing around £314 million, in top-flight history, with players costing £192m left on the sidelines throughout the 90 minutes.

"We've spent on five players the amount that Manchester United has spent on one player," said Southampton manager Ralph Hasenhuttl.

Before the game started, [Cristiano Ronaldo](#) took his seat alongside [Casemiro](#), United's new £60m midfielder and his former [Real Madrid](#) team-mate, and [Donny van de Beek](#) — a £35m buy from Ajax in 2020.

Midway through the first half, [Harry Maguire](#) — who cost £80 million — Van de Beek and £50m right-back [Aaron Wan-Bissaka](#) all stood up, put orange bibs on and started warming up.

Six minutes later they returned to the dugout, handed over the bibs and off went [Fred](#) — a £52m buy from Shakhtar Donetsk in 2018 — with Casemiro and Ronaldo to give their muscles a stretch.

Assembling the cast list for that little sequence alone has cost Manchester United around £297m in transfer fees. [Luke Shaw](#), a £27m buy from Southampton in 2014, took the overall total north of £300m.

Manchester United's substitutes

Tom Heaton	N/A	3 (England)
Harry Maguire	£80m	46 (England)

Cristiano Ronaldo	£10.2m	189 (Portugal)
Fred	£52m	27 (Brazil)
Casemiro	£60m	63 (Brazil)
Luke Shaw	£27m	21 (England)
Aaron Wan-Bisakka	£50m	0
Donny van de Beek	£35m	19 (Netherlands)
Alejandro Garnacho	N/A	0

You then have to consider the wages some of those players are on, with Ronaldo earning around £450,000 a week and Casemiro pocketing a healthy £375,000 a week. Maguire is thought to be on £190,000 a week, while Shaw is closer to £150,000 a week.

But you pay for experience: United's bench had an average age of 28.3, with Garnacho the youngest at 18 and Ronaldo the oldest at 37. The nine substitutes boasted a combined 368 international appearances to date.



Shaw, Maguire and Wan-Bissaka warm up at St Mary's (Photo: Matthew Ashton – AMA/Getty Images)

Ronaldo's 189 caps for [Portugal](#) skew that figure but, for the second match in a row, [England](#) defender Maguire was left to watch proceedings from the bench, alongside his international team-mate Shaw. The [World Cup](#) is less than three months away and [Chelsea](#) asked about Maguire's availability in talks over [Christian Pulisic](#), but the United captain is expected to stay.

Ronaldo was the first player Ten Hag turned to during the second half, even if the manager was non-committal about [the 37-year-old's future after the match](#).

Throughout the match, Ronaldo had been the most animated player on United's bench, where he was restricted to gesticulating his pleasure or disgust about what he was witnessing from his seat.

But then Ronaldo received the nod from Ten Hag, put on his Manchester United top, doused himself in water and entered the pitch in place of [Jadon Sancho](#) with over 20 minutes to go. Within seconds of his introduction, the United fans inside St Mary's belted out "Viva Ronaldo" and teased the home supporters about only coming to watch one of football's greatest players.



Former Real Madrid team-mates Ronaldo and Casemiro (Photo: Kieran Cleeves/PA Images via Getty Images)

The reality of Ronaldo's cameo is that it had little impact on the outcome of the game, though. He managed only four of his 11 ball touches inside Southampton's penalty box and did not register a shot on goal.

At one point it looked as though he might have to come off when he went down in the middle of the pitch holding his foot.

Ronaldo spent most of the pre-match warm-up talking to Casemiro and the Brazilian followed him onto the pitch in the 80th minute to make his Manchester United debut.

Casemiro, 30, replaced [Anthony Elanga](#) and parked himself alongside [Scott McTominay](#) in midfield.

The five-time [Champions League](#) winner had 11 touches of the ball, completed all eight of his passes and made one tackle. He made one important interception inside United's area and could be seen communicating with [David de Gea](#) and the defence.

"It was quite good for him (Casemiro) to see the Premier League, it's a different style," said Ten Hag. "He had a good pre-season with a lot of training sessions, we have to integrate him in a team and a way of playing and integrate him with his team-mates."

Southampton were in the ascendancy by the time Casemiro was introduced and his role was to help shore up the midfield and ensure United maintained their slender lead.

Fred was given a similar task when he entered the pitch in the 92nd minute. By this point, all of United's players had the same role: stopping Southampton from scoring a late equaliser.

In the coming weeks you would expect Casemiro to take a spot in the starting XI, and the United manager will have to make a call on Ronaldo if he remains at the club once the transfer window closes in September.

The bench could look entirely different for [Arsenal](#)'s visit to Old Trafford on September 4, after the transfer window has shut, but it certainly served its purpose on the south coast.