Name: _____ Date: _____

How Did Lamine Yamal Set So Many Youngest Records?

Reading level 10 (6th grade) · 1050 words

Who is Lamine Yamal, and how did one teenager end up with so many "youngest ever" records? He is a Spanish forward, born in 2007. He plays on the right wing for FC Barcelona and for the Spain national team. In 2024 he was part of the Spain team that won the European Championship, the Euro. Through November 2026 he still plays for both teams. This book follows his records one at a time. It asks what each one really measures.

The story starts in an academy. FC Barcelona's website says Yamal came through La Masia, the club's youth system. It says he moved up the age groups faster than any player of his generation. The same page describes his game. He takes defenders on, creates chances, and can play as a striker, an attacking midfielder or a right winger. Those are the club's own words. That is worth remembering whenever a club describes its own player.

In April 2023 he played his first game for Barcelona's first team. It was a 4 to 0 win over Real Betis in La Liga, Spain's top league. He was 15. The club's own match report called him the youngest Barcelona debutant ever in La Liga. It added that three players were younger when they debuted in the old Catalan Championship, in games from 1903, 1912 and 1920. So a record can depend on which games count.

That September, on the 8th, he made his debut for Spain. It was a qualifier for the 2024 Euro, against Georgia. A qualifier is a game that helps decide which teams reach the tournament. He came on as a substitute, and about half an hour later he scored in a 7 to 1 win. UEFA lists him as the youngest scorer in Euro qualifying. Barcelona's site says he is the youngest player and the youngest goalscorer in Spain's history, through November 2026.

Then came the Euro itself. It was held in Germany from June 14 to July 14, 2024. Twenty-four national teams were split into six groups of four. The top two in each group went on to the round of 16, along with the four best third-place teams. After that, every game was a knockout. There were 51 games in all. A player needs minutes on the field to set records, and Yamal got them. He played in all seven of Spain's games and started all but one.

On June 15, 2024, he started against Croatia in a 3 to 0 win. He became the youngest player ever to appear at a Euro, beating a mark from the last tournament by about nine months. In the round of 16, a 4 to 1 win over Georgia, UEFA says he also became the youngest to play in a Euro knockout game. In one tournament he had already taken two records, and the best was still ahead.

The goal came in the semi-final in Munich on July 9, 2024. France had scored first. About

twenty minutes in, Yamal curled a left-footed shot from outside the penalty area. It hit the post and went in. Spain went on to win 2 to 1. One report from Spain's football federation said the shot flew at 102 kilometers an hour, about 63 miles an hour, from 25 meters. Sky Sports said 25 yards, which is about two meters less. The two reports use different units, and no page explains the difference.

Why does a ball curl at all? Arun Bansil, a physicist at Northeastern University, called the Magnus force the "absolute key" to bending a kicked ball. As the ball spins, one side moves with the oncoming air. The other side moves against it. That speeds the air up on one side and slows it on the other. Faster air has lower pressure, so the ball is pushed sideways, toward the faster air. The effect is named for Heinrich Gustav Magnus. He showed it in the 1850s.

The goal made Yamal the youngest scorer in Euro history. UEFA gives his age that day as 16 years and 362 days. It says the old record was 18 years and 141 days, set at the Euro in 2004. The days matter. A "youngest" record is decided to the day. It can fall only when someone younger does the same thing. Until then it stands, and it is the record of one thing only, scoring at a Euro.

Yamal was more than a scorer. At the Euro he had one goal and four assists. An assist, by the stats company Opta's rule, is the last touch by a teammate before a goal. Spain beat England 2 to 1 in the final on July 14 and won the title, its fourth. Yamal became the youngest player ever to appear in a Euro or World Cup final. UEFA named him Young Player of the Tournament.

UEFA also picks goals. Its technical observers study games the way coaches do, and they pick a Player of the Match for every game. They chose a top ten, and they named his curl against France the official Goal of the Tournament. In October 2024 he received the Kopa Trophy at the Ballon d'Or ceremony in Paris. Barcelona's site calls it the award for the best young player. For the 2024/25 season, the club's page lists 18 goals and 21 assists.

In 2025/26 the club's page says he scored 24 goals. He was named La Liga Player of the Season. At the 2026 World Cup he scored his first goal in that tournament, in Spain's win over Saudi Arabia. Spain went on to win the World Cup. On November 3, 2026, he scored early in a 3 to 0 Champions League win over Aston Villa. Barcelona says that made him the top Champions League scorer among players under 20.

Every record in this book is dated, and each one can be broken. A number that was true in November can be wrong by the next summer. The record for youngest Euro scorer can only fall at a Euro. The next one is scheduled for June 9 to July 9, 2028, in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. So the real question is never only who is the youngest. It is youngest at what, counted how, and until when?

Questions

1. Why does the book say a record can depend on which games count?

A. Barcelona keeps no record of its debuts
B. Yamal debuted in a friendly game
C. Some players debuted in older games that other lists leave out

2. According to the book, what pushes a spinning ball sideways?

A. The weight of the ball
B. Lower pressure in the faster air on one side
C. The grass on the field

3. In the sentence "UEFA also picks goals," what does picks mean?

A. Chooses
B. Digs up
C. Plays on a guitar

4. What did Yamal do against Georgia in the round of 16, according to UEFA?

A. Missed a penalty
B. Became the youngest to play in a Euro knockout game
C. Played for the first time in Spain's shirt

5. Which statement about the 102-kilometer-an-hour shot speed is best supported by the book?

A. It was timed by UEFA's referees
B. It was the fastest shot in history
C. It comes from one report, which did not say how the speed was measured

6. When is the next Euro scheduled?

A. June 9 to July 9, 2028
B. June 14 to July 14, 2024
C. November 2026

Words to know

academy: training school
qualifier: entry match
physicist: physics scientist
pressure: pushing force
assist: setup pass
observers: expert watchers

Answer key: How Did Lamine Yamal Set So Many Youngest Records?

1. C. Some players debuted in older games that other lists leave out
2. B. Lower pressure in the faster air on one side
3. A. Chooses
4. B. Became the youngest to play in a Euro knockout game
5. C. It comes from one report, which did not say how the speed was measured
6. A. June 9 to July 9, 2028