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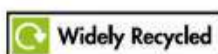
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WELCOME

Normally at this time of year, things start to become a lot clearer. Title races are reaching their conclusion, the relegation battle is coming to an end, and we begin looking forward to the domestic and European finals.

But as I write this, things have never been more unclear. The COVID-19 pandemic has swept across the globe and changed life as we know it. Sport – like everything else – is on hold. Arguments over VAR and fretting over injuries ahead of Euro 2020 seem like distant memories.

For our part, this issue of FFT has been put together by the team working tirelessly out of the office. And while such a scenario can be tough at times, it can also inspire new ideas. We have found that to be the case with this issue – and hope you agree, too.

In this magazine, you will find our rundown of the 100 greatest managers ever: a look at the best tactical minds, motivators and – most importantly – winners.

Elsewhere, we bring you a bumper eight-page quiz to test your football knowledge, plus terrific stories about Liverpool, La Masia and Blackburn's 1994-95 champions.

While the sport we know and love is taking a break, we hope FFT can provide you with your football fix and also offer some light relief.

Enjoy the issue – and take care.

James Andrew
@JamesAndrew_
@FourFourTwo



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5 THINGS YOU'LL LEARN INSIDE

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Which football legend's nose is being used as a necklace by thieves

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Who celebrated the league title on a theme park ride alongside Judith Chalmers

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Which leading 1970s gaffer has a famous goat named in his honour

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Which former Spurs star has been inundated by requests to kiss his knee

5

Which tune Roy Hodgson loves to sing at full volume in the dressing room

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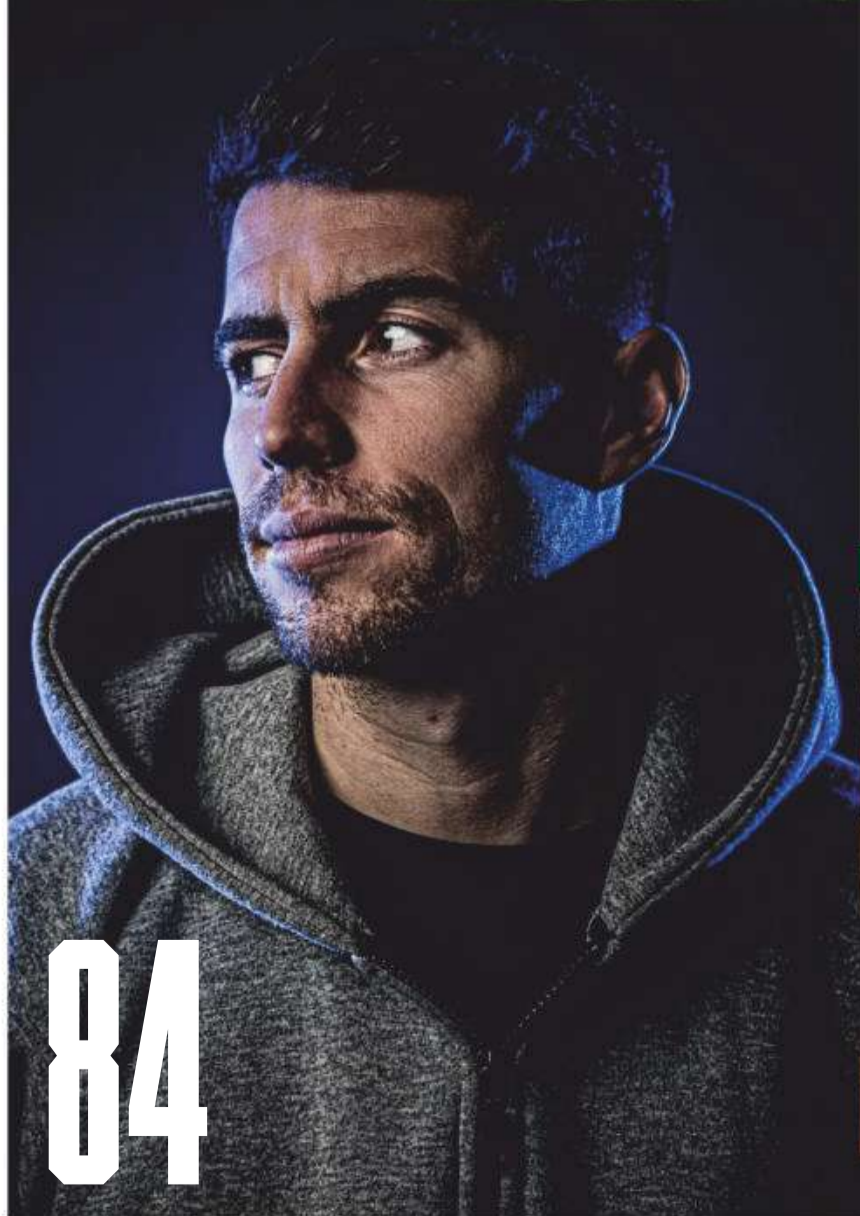
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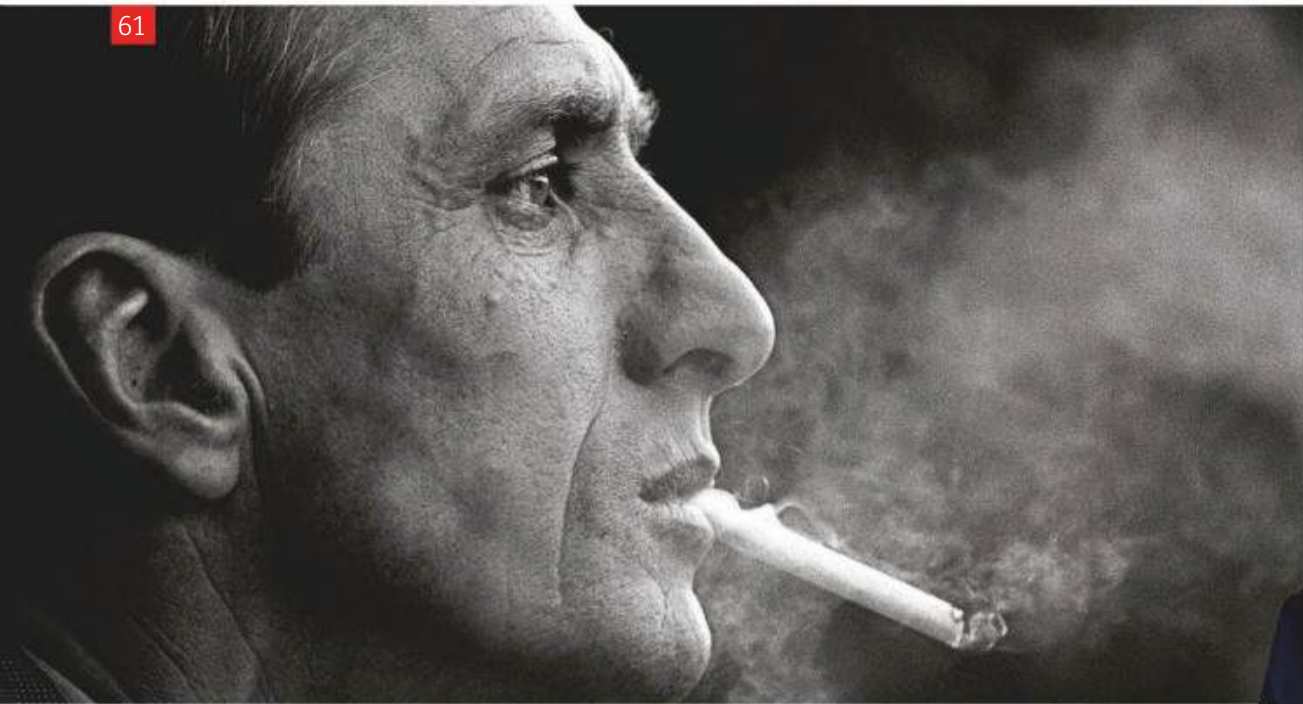
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YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

When I played with Peter Crouch, there would always be a picture in the paper of us standing next to each other. I was one chromosome from being a midget!

SHAUN WRIGHT-PHILLIPS

Words Chris Flanagan Portraits Richard Cannon

Shaun Wright-Phillips hasn't played peek-a-boo in years, and he's loving every second of it.

Yes, he may be 38 years old now. Yes, he may have a Premier League winner's medal on his mantelpiece. Yes, he may have won 36 caps for England. But ask him, on *FourFourTwo's* behalf, to hide behind a curtain and then burst out for a few photos, and SWP is bang up for it.

"I'll try not to pull the curtains down," he says, chuckling, after *FFT* has made our odd request at the Hollywood Arms near Stamford Bridge, the home of his former club Chelsea.

Several minutes of giggling ensues, as the ex-winger is fleetingly transported back to the innocent days of childhood, trying to sneak a peek without getting himself tangled up in the curtain. "It's like I can't get out of the flipping thing – I'm only 5ft 5in!" he laughs.

That enthusiasm runs in the family – father Ian Wright, the Arsenal talisman who adopted Shaun at the age of three, has carried it into his mid-fifties.

Wright-Phillips' permanent residence is in Arizona these days, after he ended his playing career with Phoenix Rising following a spell at New York Red Bulls. Now, though, the one-time Manchester City star is back in England and ready to answer your questions...

Was your smaller frame a hindrance when you started out?

Graham Russell, via Instagram

I never thought it was an issue. I always played with kids who were much bigger and older than me, which gave me the toughness I needed for someone small. I knew that my agility would give me an advantage, too. My height was more of an excuse for other people. [*FFT*: Could you get on theme park rides?] I'd stand on my tiptoes or wear some thick-soled trainers. That normally worked!

How did it feel when you were let go by Nottingham Forest aged 17?

Sally Jepson, Mansfield

When it was time to sign the YTS forms, they said, "Yeah, we think we're going to sign you." Me and my mum were an hour into the train journey back down south when we got a phone call saying they'd done a U-turn. It became, "You're too small, not good enough, and we're not going to give you that contract." It was a reality check, because I'd put all of my eggs in one basket. [*FFT*: How tall were you then?] Knowing me, 3ft 10in! I must have been around 4ft 6in or so, but I'd like to think I offered something a bit different. I was fortunate that the same scout who took me to Nottingham Forest then took me to Manchester City

for a trial. In a way, I owe Forest a thank you, because they gave me the drive to prove them wrong.

Growing up, did being the son of Ian Wright add any extra pressure?

Xavier Silva, Hoxton

I didn't pay too much attention to that – him and Mum always believed in my capabilities, whether it was football or something else. Even if I hadn't made it in football, I'd still be as grateful to him for stepping in for me. They brought up me and my brother Bradley to believe if you want something bad enough, you'll do whatever it takes.

We'd take a ball with us everywhere, even to the shops, and go and see Dad play as much as we could. One match that stands out is the 1990 FA Cup Final against Man United – he was at Crystal Palace and scored twice in a 3-3 draw. I started out as a striker, like him, before moving to central midfield and then to the right wing.

What was Manchester City like before the takeover?

Cal Pattinson, via Instagram

I started at Maine Road and, for me, it'll always be sorely missed. The fans were amazing – close to 40,000 in the Premier League, Division One and Division Two.

They've been getting the rewards for the years and years of support they all gave the club back then.

Your first goal was a late winner at Millwall – how was that experience?

Kyle McGarry, Stockport

Man City and Millwall fans never got on, for whatever reason. Millwall's were at Man City and a fight broke out, so City supporters were banned for that game at The Den. We had no fans there, and it was the game when I scored my first goal. Darren Huckerby ran over to sit in the empty away end, which was cool.

Manchester City won the First Division title by 10 points in 2002, scoring 108 goals. What was Kevin Keegan like as your manager?

Eddie Talbot, Gorton

He was amazing: always so enthusiastic, and he was known for open, attacking play. It was awesome to be part of that team. I remember one game at Crewe, when I hit a shot that just went over. Ali Benarbia ran over to me and said, "Why didn't you just score?" I said, "What do you think I was trying to do?!" About 10 minutes later he hit a shot, scored, then ran over to me and said, "See? I wanted to score, so I just scored." I was like, "Ali, not everyone can do that!" ▶



CLUBS

1999-2005 Manchester City

2005-08 Chelsea

2008-11 Manchester City

2011-15 QPR

2015-16 New York Red Bulls

2017 Phoenix Rising

COUNTRY

2004-10 England



You were named Young Player of the Year four times at Manchester City – did it become a running joke?

@spursdab, via Twitter

Yeah, it did! I was the youngest player in Man City's first team and people would say, "You know you've won it this year, right?" I'd be like, "How would I know?" and they'd say, "Well, you won it a year ago, and you haven't really done much different this time!"

When you scored the final goal in the 4-1 thrashing of Manchester United in March 2004, did the ball really stay in play on the touchline?

Connor Slack, via Instagram

Somehow, yes. I was actually hoping it didn't! We were winning 3-1 and I was looking at the ball on the line, thinking, 'Please go out so we can kill some time'. Man United were well-known for coming back. I could see the ball was staying in, so I thought, 'All right, I guess I'm going to have to run'. Once I got there, all the fans were shouting, "Go! Go!", and I just thought, 'OK, why not?' I was very happy with the goal, but a few people I spoke to after weren't because they'd bet on 3-1 – I apologise... [Laughs] I did a robot celebration for that goal, before Peter Crouch started doing it – he got noticed more because he's taller!

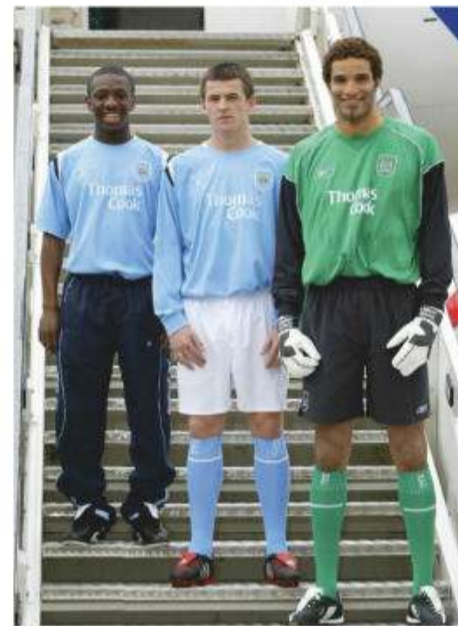
That one would be in my top five – my favourite goal was at Highbury because we never got anything against Arsenal. I knew Dad was watching and that he'd be happy for me, and also mad because it was against his team!

Below "Just don't mock my height..."

Bottom Whatever happened to those other two, anyway?

Right SWP 4-1 CR7

Far right Well, it's not as if City were ever going to win it...



Were you ever scared of Joey Barton at Manchester City?

Liam Davis, Doncaster

[Smiles] No way – me and Joey are like brothers and have been since we were 17. He was my first room-mate at City, so I have nothing but love for the guy – although he used to think he could play *Championship Manager* while hogging the TV remote. I said, "You have to pick one or the other!"

I do feel he's misunderstood, but with Joey, if you get under his skin he won't take it lightly. He'll tell you he could have done things differently sometimes, but in the heat of the moment it doesn't go that way. Sometimes he's kicked out at me about something and I've told him to eff off, but afterwards we'd hug it out. That's how we've always been.

How did it feel to sprint from halfway and score against Ukraine at St James' Park – on your England debut?

Joe Kelvin, North Shields

Putting on the shirt and representing my country was a dream come true. Coming on was so nerve-wracking, but my dad

always said, "Just do what you've been doing." I had to do something to catch the eye – I tried to let people know, 'I'm here, I'm not moving'. David Beckham was the captain and I was coming in to challenge for his place, but the way he treated me was incredible. There were games later on when he knew I could be starting ahead of him, but he always rooted for me.

You received racist abuse in a match against Spain at the Bernabeu in 2004 – how did it affect you?

Ben Marsden, via Instagram

It was demoralising – I couldn't believe it existed, and on such a huge stage. But you don't want to let it get to you on the pitch, as you don't want to let down the fans who have travelled to support you. It was hard to deal with.

Now, there's a rule where players are allowed to walk off the pitch. If that was the case back then, would I have gone off? Yes, I think I would have. [FFT: The Spanish FA were fined £45,000 over it...] Realistically, what is £45,000? Nothing. It's very easy for them to go, 'OK, here's

your £45,000'. To them, it's like a slap on the wrist. It needs to go a lot deeper. If they know the exact section where it's coming from, ban the section, whether the people there did it or not. Then the supporters who aren't doing it will start policing it, because they won't want to miss any matches.

To this day, I don't know what actually happened to that fan. Did they get fined or anything? From what I know, nothing happened. [FFT: Did you ever experience racist abuse in England?] It happened to me at Millwall, but everyone knows that. That's been going on from my dad's era, and before then.

You chipped the late equaliser when Manchester City came back from 3-0 down to win 4-3 at Tottenham in the FA Cup. Where does that rank in your best career victories?

Andy Inman, Uttoxeter

At the very top. In the first half we were getting worked, then Joey got sent off at half-time. I didn't know that was even possible! But we all came together in the dressing room and said, "Look, they're

not expecting us to come out fighting – they'll take their foot off the gas, and if we can get one goal quickly, it changes everything." Sylvain Distin got that goal, and our belief just grew. At 3-2, we knew we had them on the ropes, even though we had 10 men. It was almost like they were a man down – we seemed to keep finding space. The way that game went was so weird.

What were the players thinking when Stuart Pearce put David James upfront as City chased a UEFA Cup place in the final match of the 2004-05 campaign against Middlesbrough?

Kelly Roberts, Oldham

[Laughs] It was funny. I couldn't believe it, and no one saw that coming! Jamo was always talking about it, and he was pretty quick for a long ball in behind, so I think that was the route Pearcey was going down. But if you were Jon Macken watching on the bench, what would you be thinking? You're a striker – you score goals – and instead of throwing you on the pitch, he sticks David James up top! I'd think, 'OK, it's time for me to retire...'

Why did you leave Manchester City?

Harry Brewer, via Instagram

Maybe I was a little naive, but I thought I'd be at City for my whole career. Then Chelsea made a bid for me and City said they were accepting it. I took it as, 'OK, obviously you don't want me at the club any more'. On the way down to London, I cried like I was 12. I cried for an hour – I was emotionally broken. A few months later, I found out the truth behind what happened: City had no choice but to sell me, because they were possibly about to go into administration or something along those lines.

Chelsea was a new chapter in my life. I loved it there and the supporters were tremendous with me. I had some tough times, but they always cheered for me.

Would you have signed for Arsenal if they had come in for you, or would the comparisons with your dad have been too tiring?

William Greenwood, via Facebook

They came in for me at the same time as Chelsea, but Arsene Wenger wanted to wait until January. I've always been brought up to strike while the iron's hot, because you never know what's going to happen a week later. If I'd got injured, I might have missed both opportunities. Dad told me, "Son, of course I'd love it if you played for Arsenal, but we've got to take you where you fit best." We didn't have to make a choice – Arsene made the decision for us.

Dad was over the moon when I went to Chelsea, though. He came with me, and as we were walking into Stamford Bridge he was giggling like a big kid. He looked at me and said, "Son, what's the matter? Aren't you happy about this?" I said, "Yeah, I am – I'm just a lot more laid-back than you!"

Did you think Jose Mourinho gave you a fair chance at Chelsea?

Freddie Smith, Fulham

Yes, I did – when he gave me a chance, the rest was down to me. I just had to get used to the fact that I'd come from a team where pretty much everything went through me, and at Chelsea there were loads of other players who were amazing at creating things and scoring goals. Once I got used to that, I started to be more involved.

Mourinho was a revelation for me. He was so premeditated in so many ways. We played Spurs in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup, and on the Thursday before the game he said, "This is the team, but be ready: if we're losing, I'll bring you on, we're going to draw, and then we'll go to White Hart Lane and win the replay." That's exactly what happened. I scored in the replay, too.



We played Man United in the final and he said, "I'm going to ask something of you: don't attack as much as normal – I need you to track back and double up on Cristiano Ronaldo." That's what I did, and we won. Stopping Ronaldo scoring felt like I'd scored myself.

Were you surprised not to be selected in England's squad for the 2006 World Cup, especially when 17-year-old Theo Walcott was included?

Jake Christie, via Instagram

Yes I was surprised. To be in pretty much every England squad for three years and then miss out was heartbreaking. Theo hadn't played much first-team football for Southampton or Arsenal by then, so the fact he got his opportunity in front of me – it could have destroyed me. But the manager has to make decisions and I respected it.

What are your memories of the night when England lost at home to Croatia and failed to qualify for Euro 2008?

Melanie Higham, Bristol

The rain, the umbrella... and letting the country down. We tried, but there were some games where things didn't go our way, and that was one of them. I don't think it was anything to do with the way Steve McClaren set the team up; at that time, it seemed Croatia simply wanted it more than us. Possibly, we walked in believing we'd win, rather than showing we were going to win.

"ARSENAL CAME IN FOR ME AT THE SAME TIME AS CHELSEA. MY DAD SAID, 'SON, I'D LOVE IT IF YOU WENT TO ARSENAL, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GO WHERE YOU FIT BEST'"

Do you regret breaking Dean Ashton's ankle while on England duty?

Ben Page, via Instagram

Anyone would tell you I wasn't a nasty player. I didn't go into a tackle with the intention of hurting a player; only to win the ball – which I did in that case. I did actually get to the ball before him, and because he was swinging, he went into the back of my foot. When I found out what had happened, I was devastated. A lot of the lads told me, "We know you didn't mean it, so don't be too hard on yourself." But a week or so later, I heard that he was trying to sue me. I was like, "Excuse me?" I didn't mean to do it and was feeling bad enough already. It got a bit salty in that situation and I haven't seen him since.

Were you surprised to hear that Jose Mourinho had left Chelsea in 2007?

Jason Bennett, Hounslow

Very surprised. I don't know how many years it had been since Chelsea were so dominant. You've seen what they've had to go through to get that back, and they still haven't really done it. We found out inside the dressing room. Jose walked in

and said, "Guys, I've just been told I'm leaving, so I wanted to say bye and wish everyone the best." That's how sudden it was. None of us saw it coming, and it was emotional: there were some people in tears, and they couldn't work out why it had happened. I'd been in a situation like that before, when Kevin Keegan left City [in 2005]. He didn't even come in to say goodbye – we heard later that he'd gone, and I've not seen or talked to him since that day!

What went through your mind when Manchester City gave you the chance to go back in 2008?

Dave Blackburn, Glossop

I said yes immediately. I needed to play more to stay in the England squad, so as soon as City came in, I told my agent, "Get it done." [FFT: You scored two goals away at Sunderland in the first game of your second spell...] Back to normality! I only trained once or twice beforehand and didn't think I'd be ready to play 90 minutes. Afterwards, they gave me the stats from the game and said I'd done 96 sprints. I said, "F**k knows how I did that!" [Laughs] ▶

"WE KNEW BALOTELLI WAS CRAZY WHEN HE LIT FIREWORKS IN HIS BATHROOM. WE SAID, 'WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? YOU'VE GOT A GARDEN - SET THEM OFF THERE!'"

How different was life at Manchester City following the 2008 takeover? You signed just before it happened, so did you know it was imminent?

Ollie Tinker, via Instagram

Nope, or I would have signed 48 hours later! I didn't know anything about it – I don't think anyone did. We started to hear some things, then Robinho arrived, which showed where they were looking to take the club. It was exciting, but with that comes a lot of change. Under Mark Hughes we were 6th [in mid-December 2009, having finished 10th in 2008-09]: he drew a few games in a row and got the sack. He didn't warrant it, but that's what happens when money is involved. They wanted the elite players and they wanted to dominate.

Me and Roberto Mancini got on really well, but our ideas clashed. I didn't think what he wanted from me was doable at times without my side of the team being exposed. It was a highly structured way of playing; he knew what he wanted. I'd say, "What if that pass isn't on? I can't just pass it and run – if they block it, it's two versus one." He'd say, "Just pass it."

Of all the players at Manchester City in your second spell, who was best?

Paul Benson, Southwold

Stevie Ireland. We had this connection, on and off the pitch. He knew where to find me and I knew where to make runs for him. He was very good.

What's the craziest thing you ever saw Mario Balotelli do?

Neil Hocking, Bebington

[Laughs] I never actually saw too much; it was more what we heard. There were always new reports that Mario had done something! He was such a lovely bloke, but was like a kid in a candy store who'd never seen a sweet before. The biggest thing he did that no one could believe – when we all realised he was a bit crazy – was lighting fireworks in his bathroom. Everyone was like, "Wow, what is wrong with you... you've got your own garden – just walk a few yards and let them off out there!" [Laughs]

What's your favourite souvenir from the 2010 World Cup?

United Colors of Football, via Facebook
My England shirt – it was an honour to represent my country on the big stage,



but I was gutted it didn't work out how we wanted. I liked Fabio Capello, but it was strange at the tournament because none of us could grasp the rules around eating. We'd eaten a certain way for 10 years, and suddenly we weren't allowed butter on our toast, and no ketchup.

We didn't start well. I had one chance against the USA that in any other game I probably would have scored. Then the Algeria match was intense: if we'd lost, it was over. Everyone has to understand Wayne Rooney's reaction at the end. He simply wanted to win and emotions get the better of you sometimes – what he said wasn't something he really meant.

Were yourself and Peter Crouch England's most underrated duo? Magic happened whenever you were together...

Ben Gillie,

via Facebook

[Laughs] I used to love playing with Crouchy.



Teams thought he was going to flick the ball on, but I knew he wouldn't do that. They'd back off and he'd bring it down on his chest – that was the time for me to run in behind, because the backline pushed up to him and it allowed me to beat the offside trap.

The next morning, there would always be a picture in the paper of me and him standing beside each other. I was small but, standing beside Crouchy, I was one chromosome from being a midget! We used to have a good laugh. It eventually got to the point where I said, "I'm going to stand beside you on purpose", just so people could see it again!

How did it feel to be playing for QPR when Manchester City won the title in 2012 with Sergio Aguero's last-minute goal?

Dean Manley,

via Instagram

There were quite a lot of mixed

emotions, particularly because we were winning the game 2-1. I was delighted, because I knew it would keep us in the league, but at the same time I was like, 'Oh F**k! I've just f**ked up my club, the team I would love to win the title'. Then they scored in injury time, and then they scored again! By then, I knew we were safe – it was a really weird moment, but luckily it all worked out perfectly for QPR and Man City. I was pleased, because it was another season in the top flight for QPR, and the team I had represented for almost a decade were Premier League champions for the first time.

Why do you think things didn't work out at QPR when the big names came into the club?

Alan Bird, via Instagram

It's all good having a lot of money, but you still have to bring in the right players and build a team that suits QPR. We had some amazing individual players at the club, but I don't think we ever gelled as a team or as a squad. There were times when it did get very cliquy around the



Clockwise from below “Mixed emotions” on the Premier League’s finest finale; Stephen Ireland: better than Aguero, Silva, Jo...; classic Balo banter; classic Fabio banter; “Say cheese”; Bulls on parade



Did you enjoy your brief spell at New York Red Bulls? Was your brother the main reason you came to MLS?

Miguel Vazquez, via Instagram
I loved every minute of it. I was playing alongside Bradley, and it was something completely different for me. I played in the CONCACAF Champions League and visited places such as Guatemala, which was hostile. Me and my brother played together at Man City, but we were very young and took it for granted back then. We appreciated it more when I went to Red Bulls. For the first few months I was there, we converted his basement and I then lived underneath him, in a town called Whippany in New Jersey. It was a great place to be, although the first winter put me off – it was like 28 inches of snow! [Laughs]

What was it like to play with Didier Drogba once again at Phoenix Rising?

Harry Kenton, Reading
The way that happened was pretty funny. I went to have a look around, but then Didier phoned me and said, “What are you doing in Phoenix?” I asked why. He said, “I was in Phoenix and I’m thinking about signing.” To have myself, Didier, Jordan Stewart and Peter Ramage to help start up Phoenix Rising was a great opportunity. I still live there – the sun shines all the time!

At the end of 2017 I had knee surgery, and by the time I’d done my rehab, the salary cap spaces had all gone. I tried to drag out retirement: I didn’t actually say I’d retired until last year, because once you say that, you can’t go back. I retired organically, which allowed me to come out of the game smoother.

It hasn’t escaped people’s notice that your son, D’Margio, has impressed on loan with Blackburn Under-18s from Manchester City. If he was wanted by Man United, would you be happy? Or have you already told him never to go to the dark side?

Fiona Cameron, via Instagram
I’d be very happy for him, even though it burns me to admit that! Man United are a massive football club, so as much as I wouldn’t want him to join the dark side – and I’ll probably get a bit of stick for saying this – if no one else came in for him, you can’t really turn down Man United. He can play on the right or left wing, and I’m pleased he’s with City. I’ll give him advice whenever he needs it, but I try not to tread on his toes too much.

Who would you say is the best player in your family?

Stewart Urwin, Leighton Buzzard
We’re very different footballers. Dad was purely a goalscorer; Brad is a goalscorer but he has got that attacking midfield creativity, too; I was a winger who loved to dribble; and now my son is different to us all again – he’s incredibly skilful with a great end product.

My little brother, Brett, actually had a bit of everything, but due to illness he didn’t get the chance to show the world what he could do.

This is such a hard question. I’m going to give it to Bradley – he did it the hard way, but in the US he’s shown everyone what he’s been doing since his Sunday League days. Me and Dad knew he could do it since he was nine. [FFT: You picked up 36 England caps, to your dad’s 33 – does that make you better than him?] No! He should have played more games for England. I’d never claim that I was better than him! [Laughs]

place – sides were starting to be taken. For a club that’s struggling and battling relegation, you have to stick together – that’s the only way you’re going to get through it. And if you don’t do that, it’s just going to get worse.

Did you ever feel comfortable at QPR? With the high turnover of players, did it seem like your position was always under threat?

Dan Shorthouse, via Instagram
Towards the end, it did get a bit difficult. The last year and a half at QPR was the toughest part of my career. There were a lot of stories that Harry Redknapp put

out, saying I wouldn’t leave the club and that I was staying there for the money, which isn’t me at all. I never asked to be paid what they were paying me, and no one would just quit and walk away from what they were getting. I had to make sure that before I left, I had a solid plan of where I was heading next. When that was all going on and I wasn’t involved in the side, I’d always go to all the games and support my team-mates. I kept on training very hard, hoping things would eventually change. Unfortunately, they didn’t. Then I got a chance to move to America and play alongside my brother at New York Red Bulls.

★ STAR QUESTION ★

Did you ever ride a Harley Davidson to training and get yourself fined?

Des Goh, via Facebook
[Laughs] No, I was a bit too clever – if I did ride it, I’d park it out of sight and walk from there, so I never got fined! That was at Chelsea, although I think Mourinho would have just laughed at me. Mine were always trikes – it was Wayne Bridge who got me into them, because he had a bike. He said, “You should get one – I know you like your quad bikes.” I bought one, but by the time it gets to 4pm or 5pm in England, it’s too cold and your hands freeze up!



HIGHS & LOWS

HIGH: 2002
Helps Man City win First Division title in first season as a regular

LOW: 2004
Subjected to racism during third England appearance in Madrid

HIGH: 2005
Named in PFA Team of the Year, playing for Man City

LOW: 2006
Misses out on Sven-Goran Eriksson’s World Cup squad

HIGH: 2007
Lifts FA Cup, a year after winning Premier League

LOW: 2013
Suffers relegation from Premier League with QPR



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HYUNDAI PUT FANS UPFRONT

Hyundai has teamed up with Chelsea to form Hyundai FC – a nationwide grassroots football initiative offering unforgettable opportunities to youngsters and coaches

Hyundai has put grassroots football first in 2019-20, partnering with Chelsea to offer some unforgettable experiences to young players and coaches.

So far, the initiative has provided a variety of unique opportunities for 11 boys' and girls' teams from around the UK.

On top of new strips and a Stamford Bridge pitch day, Chelsea laid on a special session at their Cobham training base for the grassroots coaches. They were also sent bespoke training plans for the campaign ahead, and received multiple visits from the Blues' team of expert Foundation coaches.

As a result, more than 150 youngsters from under-8 to under-16 levels have been making the most of the project, highlighting Hyundai's 20-year commitment to putting the fans first.

"Chelsea Foundation coaches have travelled up and down the country providing bespoke training sessions to clubs who have never had access to this level of coaching before," says Rory Bidgood, an international development coach with the west London giants. "It's been rewarding to watch the players and coaches grow throughout."

Ashley Andrew, the Managing Director of Hyundai Motor UK, said, "The response we've had from players, coaches and parents has been so positive – everyone has been able to benefit from these really special experiences with Chelsea."





CLUBS

- Anstey Nomads
- Barnoldswick Town Jrs
- Bishop Auckland St Mary's Jrs
- Byfleet Village
- Cleethorpes Town
- Crofton Jrs
- Kilgetty
- Marston Green
- Whiteley Wanderers
- Willaston White Star
- Woodley Saints Wolves

DEALERSHIPS

- Sturgess Hyundai - Loughborough
- Cars2 Bradford Hyundai
- SG Petch
- Johnsons Hyundai
- Read Hyundai Grimsby
- Cars2 Wakefield Hyundai
- Station Garage Kilgetty
- Motorfair
- Richmond Hyundai
- Holdcroft Hyundai Crewe
- Eden Motor Group





CORONAVIRUS ROUND-UP



MEANWHILE IN.....

...Belarus, fans have been attempting to stay healthy by drinking vodka, driving tractors and dressing as rabbits

1

“DOES MY HARE LOOK ALL RIGHT?”

The Belarusian Premier League was the only European division to continue into April – and didn’t just let fans in to see games. Giant rabbits got in, too.

Rather than shutting the country down, president Alexander Lukashenko countered that citizens could

ward off coronavirus by drinking vodka, also declaring that ‘tractors will cure everyone’. He described sport as ‘the best anti-virus remedy’, so football ploughed on – bringing the bonus of overseas television deals from countries eager to screen live football... *any* football.

The Belarusian Premier League delivers such delights as FK Minsk vs Dinamo Minsk (El Minskico for short),

plus Dynamo Brest vs FK Slutsk (no sniggering). Fans of many clubs opted to stay away for their own safety – at BATE Borisov, a group of women decided the only sensible option was to don giant yellow rabbit masks for protection during a game against FK Rukh.

There’s no word from Lukashenko yet as to whether dressing as a rabbit is now official government advice.



2 “SLOW DOWN, FIDO!”

It’s not just footballers who have been getting bored during the lockdown – match officials have been left at a loose end as well.

In Tanzania, FIFA assistant referee Frank Komba relieved the monotony of life indoors by dressing up in full kit and filming himself charging up and down an imaginary touchline in his living room, dramatically raising his flag for offside at random intervals. Can’t risk letting the muscles in that flag arm waste away, after all.

In England, Anthony Taylor (above) went for something more simple – agreeing to be papped by the media while taking his dog out for a run.

We suspect Bobby Madley probably won’t be agreeing to do the same.



3 ZLATAN’S NOSE: IDEAL FOR A NECKLACE

As previously reported by *FFT*, things didn’t go well when Zlatan Ibrahimovic announced that he’d bought shares in Swedish club Hammarby. Furious that he’d abandoned his old team, Malmo diehards vandalised a statue that had been erected in his honour.

The vandals took a hacksaw to the statue’s nose, which then disappeared despite pleas for its return. Amid the global emergency, though, has been news of its sighting: according to a TV personality, Zlatan’s massive hooter is being worn as a necklace by a Malmo fan who turned up at a party donning the unorthodox jewellery.

It’s claimed that the necklace-wearer came like a king, left like a legend.



4 A FRENCH STAG DO

First goats took over the north Wales town of Llandudno, and now deer have taken over French football.

With most football pitches deserted in recent months, the local wildlife quickly assembled to reclaim what they believe is rightfully theirs.

The northern French city of Reims may have produced the country’s first team to reach a European Cup final, but now it’s almost entirely dominated by deer – one was spotted waltzing onto a pitch, presumably preparing for a kickabout and to recreate some famous Kashima Antlers goals. Or something.

As the keen mammal’s lust for power surges, it’s surely only a matter of time before they seize control of Ligue 1 and tell Neymar where to go.



5 SPORTING DISTRACTION

In refugee camps right across southern Europe, football has provided some brief respite from a humanitarian crisis exacerbated by the coronavirus.

On the Greek island of Lesbos, around 20,000 people – many from Syria and Afghanistan – are living in overcrowded surroundings in the Moria camp, which has made them especially vulnerable to the possibility of a virus outbreak.

Around 40 per cent of those at Moria are reported to be children and several of them were pictured playing football on a nearby road, using a pair of rocks for goalposts as they took a break from the congested conditions of the camp.

Even in hugely challenging times like these, the beautiful game can provide a bit of welcome relief.



6 FIELD HOSPITAL

With hospitals and medical centres pushed close to capacity in many countries, football has been lending its facilities to help save lives.

Borussia Dortmund have turned one stand at their Signal Iduna Park home into a coronavirus treatment centre, while a temporary field hospital has been set up on the pitch at Sao Paulo’s Estadio do Pacaembu (above).

The 40,000-capacity arena staged matches at the 1950 World Cup, and has also hosted Palmeiras, Corinthians, Santos and Sao Paulo.

Brasilia’s 2018 World Cup stadium is also being used, as is the legendary Maracana in Rio de Janeiro, following the suspension of football in Brazil.



7 JUST A STORMTROOPER PLAYING AN ACCORDION

People have been finding various ways to keep themselves entertained during lockdown – some better than others.

Nolberto Solano was arrested in Peru for visiting a friend’s house, prompting a noise complaint from neighbours (it’s unknown whether he was playing his trumpet). Claudio Caniggia’s son got arrested twice in 24 hours for breaking the rules, while Norwich’s Timm Klose posted an Instagram story accidentally showing a *Pornhub* browser on his PC.

Eintracht Frankfurt defender Martin Hinteregger was more productive: he dressed as a Stormtrooper and played the accordion. Unlike Solano, there was no need for the force to be with him.



8 HALA MADRIZ

It wasn’t just in Belarus where football carried on – three more nations across the globe kept going, too.

Burundi attempted to settle a gripping title race between rivals Musongati and Le Messenger Ngozi, while Tajikistan got their 2020 season underway as Istiklol fought back to beat Khujand 2-1 in the much-anticipated Tajik Super Cup.

In Nicaragua, the Clausura continued as Managua competed for the title, and one of the clubs battling relegation was the mighty Real Madriz (if you hail from a region called Madriz, what else are you going to call your club, eh?).

It’s unknown if their local adversaries are Atletico Madriz, managed by a chap called Ziego Simeone.



9 UNITED FRONT

With no matches to attend, fans have been getting creative in an attempt to keep spirits up.

A Leeds supporter ventured down to Elland Road to give the Billy Bremner statue (above) a face mask, in a bid to amuse his fellow fans, while followers of German outfit Rot-Weiss Essen did something even more unusual.

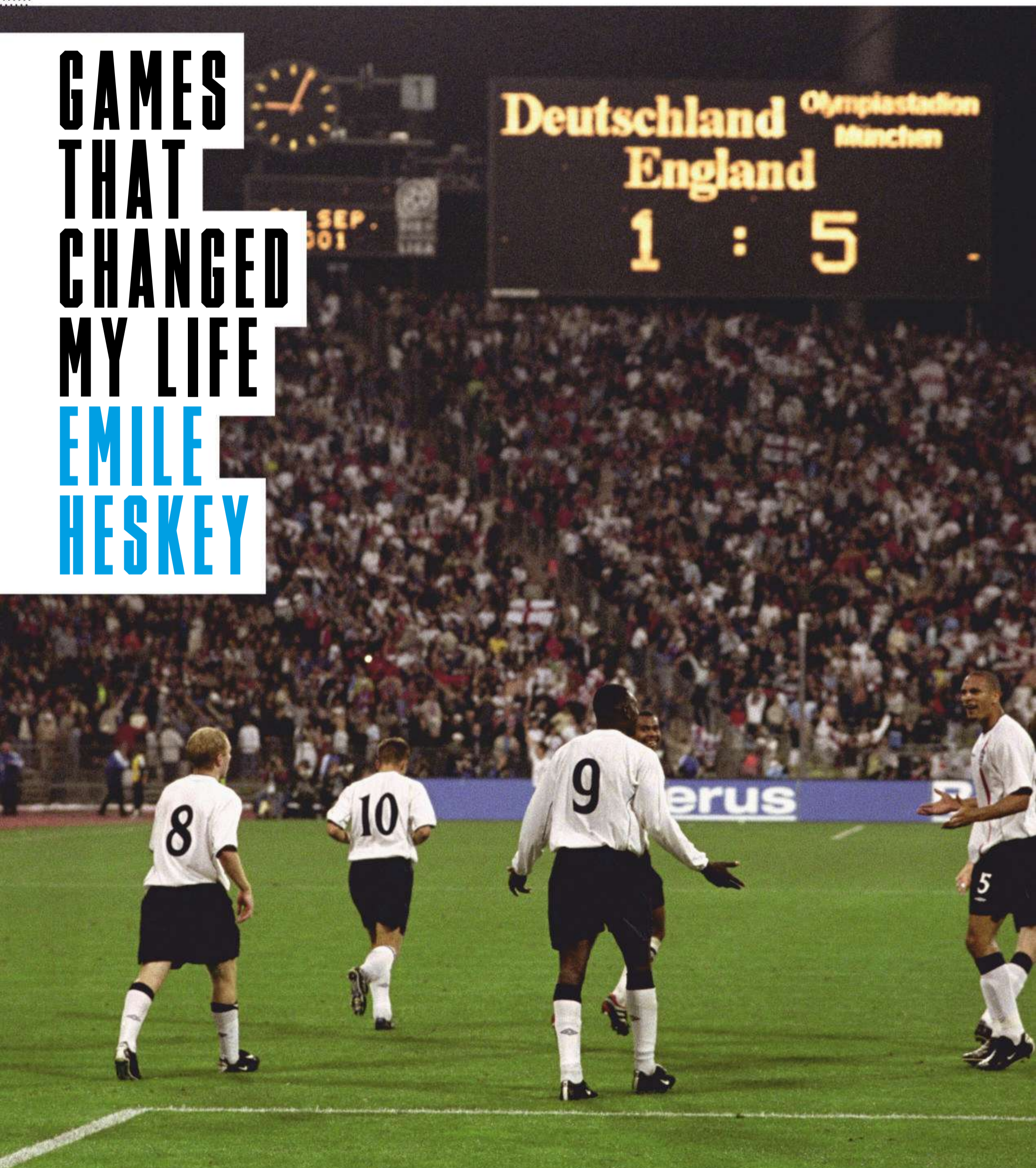
Strapped for cash because of the lack of fixtures, the fourth-tier team raised funds by urging supporters to take part in a virtual home game.

Fans purchased virtual tickets, virtual beers for €4 and even virtual bratwursts for €2.50. They probably tasted a little more papery than usual, once people had printed them at home.



GAMES THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

EMILE
HESKEY



Leicester 3 Norwich 2

December 17, 1995 First Division

“I was 17 and this was one of my first games. We were 2-1 down, but I came off the bench and set up Iwan Roberts, and then scored myself with 10 minutes left to make it 3-2. Rob Ullathorne played a back-pass, and I nicked it off him to score. About a year later, he joined us! I always backed myself to make an impact as a substitute, especially when I was younger – I was bursting with energy to play and didn’t feel any pressure. We were in between managers and Martin O’Neill was watching in the stands [having quit Norwich that morning, before taking over Leicester], but it didn’t matter to me.”

Leicester 1 Middlesbrough 1

April 6, 1997 League Cup final

“We’d played Middlesbrough at home three weeks before and got battered 3-1, so O’Neill used Pontus Kaamark to mark Juninho out the game – he just followed him around. They had an amazing team, with him, Fabrizio Ravanelli and Emerson, but we were confident. I hit a two-yard worldie at the end of extra time to equalise, and we won the replay at Hillsborough. It was brilliant playing at Wembley – you got so much energy from all the fans. The Twin Towers were still there and you saw a sea of blue as you drove in. It was the first of three finals from 1997-2000, and my fondest memory at Leicester.”

England 0 Argentina 0

February 23, 2000 Friendly

“It was my first start and I played very well. I was so good that they took their centre-back [Roberto Sensini] off after 40 minutes because I’d destroyed him! Years later, I met an Argentine journalist who worked in London, and he said I got him in trouble. Their coach, Marcelo Bielsa, had asked him to do some research on the England team, and he told Bielsa I wouldn’t start because Kevin Phillips was in such good form. After the game, Bielsa phoned him and said, ‘I’m not talking to you ever again!’”

Germany 1 England 5

September 1, 2001 World Cup qualifier

“Everyone knows exactly where they were. It was important because we’d already lost to Germany in the last match at the old Wembley, which was Kevin Keegan’s final game as manager. We went 1-0 down but regrouped, and it was an incredible feeling at full-time. Sven-Goran Eriksson was very calm and never got irate. You knew exactly what he wanted from you – he’d move pieces around on his little clipboard, so when you went on you had all the information you needed. It felt like the start of something special for the ‘Golden Generation’.”

Alex Jennings

Emile Heskey was speaking at an event for the EFL



“WE’VE BEEN HEX-ED”

Coronavirus may have ended Panama’s 2022 World Cup dream already

When Panama arrived at the 2018 World Cup, they were the apple of world football’s eye. Two years later, everything has gone not so much pear-shaped as hexagonal for Los Canaleros.

In a deeply questionable piece of FIFA planning, the CONCACAF qualifying phase for Qatar 2022 has been turned into something approaching a lottery, and it’s clear that Panama don’t have access to the numbers. In fact, it’s not clear whether they had any access to anything, including the information required to give themselves a chance of advancing to two World Cup finals in a row.

Gary Stempel, who took over as interim boss after the resignation of Hernan Dario Gomez following the 2018 tournament, has witnessed the meltdown at first-hand. “It hasn’t been a great couple of years,” Millwall’s former community outreach officer tells *FFT*. “Qualifying for the last World Cup is something no one here will ever forget, but have we made the most of the opportunity it presented? I think you would have to say no, we haven’t.”

The board running football in Panama has resembled a merry-go-round since Russia 2018 – and things got worse when CONCACAF unveiled the new format for World Cup qualifying, giving new strength to ‘The Hex’.

The Hex, aptly named if you’re not in it, is a six-team group from which the top three progress to the 2022 World Cup, as was the case in 2018. This time, though, there’s no pre-qualifying round to secure your spot in the Hex – you’re either in, or you’re out.

The top six CONCACAF teams in June’s FIFA rankings are automatically in, but with coronavirus kiboshing all fixtures before then, Panama are out: as of April’s standings, the top six were Mexico, USA, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Honduras and El Salvador. There’s no place either for Alphonso Davies’ Canada, joint hosts of the 2026 World Cup.

Worse still, when the format switch was first mooted, initial indications suggested that CONCACAF’s internal rankings would be used, rather than FIFA’s equivalent. With Panama nestled in the top six of the CONCACAF internal rankings, they booked tough friendlies against the USA, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay in 2019, losing three of them 3-0 and drawing with Brazil – negatively impacting their FIFA ranking.

The forced cancellation of their recent internationals against El Salvador and Costa Rica was the final insult of the farcical affair. “Panama were effectively playing World Cup qualifiers without knowing it,” says Stempel, who stood aside last year to let Julio Dely Valdes take over. Dely Veldes has since been replaced by Americo Gallego. “The whole thing is an absolute mess.”

There remains the tiniest glimmer of hope, however: Panama will head into what’s effectively a repechage competition with 29 other nations, the winner of which will face a play-off against the fourth-placed team in the Hex. Win that, and they’ll go into another play-off against a team from another continent. Win that, and they’ll reach the 2022 World Cup. Easy.

Richard Edwards

ASK A SILLY QUESTION

TOM 'DEMON' HUDDLESTONE

The former Spurs and Hull midfielder, now at Derby, talks *FFT* through scary movies and brilliant barnets

Interview Nick Moore Illustration Bill McConkey

Hello Tom. What do you think of actor Tom Hiddleston? Do you resent him for twisting algorithms? "No, Google, I didn't mean Tom Hiddleston..."

Hi mate. I like him – I had my time on Google! We do get loads of tweets that are meant for each other, but I've seen him in quite a few films and he's a very good actor.

Should he be the next James Bond?

There's a lot of speculation about Idris Elba doing it. That would definitely be an interesting option – he'd be brilliant. You're set up to do well as Bond, in my opinion. It's hard not to do a great job. Hiddleston could do it, yeah.

On social media, there's a guy from Florida called Tom Haddlestone. His life must be tough...

Tom Haddlestone? Florida? He sounds like he's doing OK for himself!

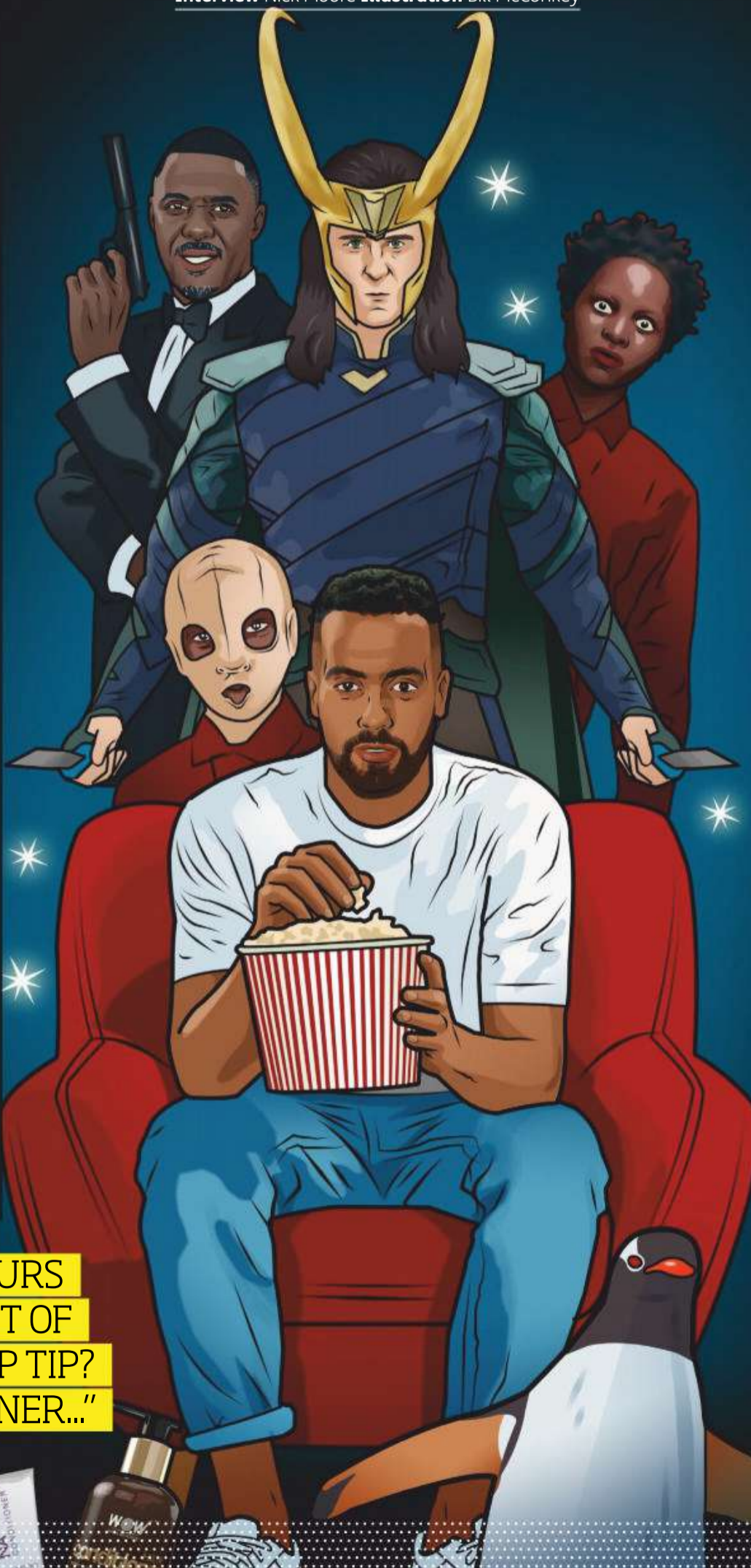
You grew your hair for two and a half years – until ending your goal drought – to raise money for charity. What's the best thing about having big hair?

It was pretty good that it could be put into five or six different styles after you dried it... not that they were very stylish. I used to mess about after training and blow-dry it into a middle parting – that was quite funny.

What's the downside to having such volume on your head?

It would take hours to dry fully, so that was a bit of a ballache. And you have to look after it. My top tip? Use really good conditioner. As someone with short hair, you don't realise how important that is. It gave me insight into the maintenance that people with longer hair have to do. My second tip? Don't say you won't cut your hair until you score, in case it ends up taking 55 games!

"THE HAIR TOOK HOURS TO DRY – IT WAS A BIT OF A BALLACHE. MY TOP TIP? USE GOOD CONDITIONER..."



If you had still not scored now, do you think you're stubborn enough to have kept the long hair?

Well it was for charity, so I'd have had to stick it out! I did get nervous at times, as it went on for ages. I was so relieved when I scored for Hull against Fulham – it was on my birthday and we were 3-0 up, so I just went for it. We raised more than £36,000, so it was all worthwhile!

Who had history's mightiest afro?

Carlos Valderrama – it was a bit floppy, but what a player. He was technically so good, and if you put a bright blond afro on that, it's going to stick out.

Did you visit The Deep aquarium when you lived in Hull?

I meant to go for four years, but never did. Sorry. I've heard some good things, though. I'm going to take my little one because he loves penguins.

Now, your name is an anagram of 'The Demon Told Us'. Ever tried to contact the spirits using a Ouija board?

I wouldn't have the bollocks to try that, but a few people at my school dabbled in it. The Demon Told Us sounds like it could be a horror film. I've seen enough films to put me off having a go.

Are you a horror fan?

Yeah. I saw *Us* recently. That was freaky. It's about a family, and there's another version of themselves trying to get into their house.

Sounds terrifying. Does your birthday, on December 28, perk up the dull part in between Christmas and New Year?

When I was a kid, it got overshadowed by Christmas a bit. Now, there's usually a game so you can't celebrate properly. It's not like guys with birthdays in June.

December 28 is an absolutely classic date for a game, isn't it?

Yeah, there's often a match. I've either been training or playing on my birthday since I was 16, so never had a big party or anything. When I was young it used to bother me, but after I retire I'll be too old to want to celebrate!

Ah well. Cheers for chatting, Tom!

Thanks!

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INTERVIEW

KEMAR ROOFE

The ex-Oxford forward joined Anderlecht from Leeds last summer – swapping Marcelo Bielsa for Vincent Kompany

How have things been for you during the lockdown?

It's been really strange, just stuck in the house 24/7. Players are so used to going outside. It's like being injured – you don't know what to do with yourself. I've got a couple of kids so we've been trying to keep them occupied, doing schoolwork, spending more time in the garden and playing loads of board games.

When did things halt at Anderlecht?

We went into lockdown in the middle of March – Belgium was probably a week or so ahead of England. Schools in Belgium closed on the Friday, then we came back to England that weekend as our parents are there. The club have done video calls

most days that are group sessions with the fitness coach. He'll film himself, then we'll all copy him together. We've been given some running exercises, too – the best time to do them is usually at night, when everyone's back at home and the pavements are quiet.

You joined Anderlecht in August – how did the move come about?

I got a call from Vincent Kompany, who said he was keen on signing me. It was a new project for him, he knew what he wanted and it sounded great. I was a bit surprised he knew who I was! Everyone knows Anderlecht worldwide, so it was difficult to turn them down. I might not have got that chance again.

Was there any interest from Premier League clubs?

There was, but nothing is ever concrete until you put pen to paper – many things could change. With Kompany there was no messing about: he went 100 per cent to get me, which gave me confidence to sign for Anderlecht.

What has Kompany been like to work with in his first season as a manager?

Top. Not many people could do his job – he's player, captain, coach and manager all in one. I don't know how he has the time and energy to do so much, and at a high standard. He leads by example, but isn't someone who has his own way and that's it – he gives you his opinion.

Craig Bellamy is there as well...

Yes, he's in charge of the under-21 side. I speak with him as much as I can – I'm always trying to pick his brain, as he has so much experience.

In 2011, you lived in Iceland on loan at Vikingur Reykjavik – did that help when you had to move abroad again?

One of my big strengths is being able to adapt wherever I am. Going to Iceland, it didn't really feel like I was in a different country because I was living my normal life, playing football. It's been the same in Belgium. Yes, I'm living in a different country, but I'm playing football and life is the same. English is the first language at Anderlecht, and that's been crucial.

You suffered a few injury setbacks and Anderlecht had a difficult start to the season, but you scored seven goals in 16 appearances before the shutdown...

It was going quite well for me. The injury at the start was very frustrating, and the team were learning the new system and getting used to each other. It's the same as Manchester City when they appointed Pep Guardiola, the best manager in the world at the time. In his first year, they didn't win the league and everyone was questioning if Pep was even that good! That's what Kompany told us, so all the players would still believe in his process, because the press and fans were saying, 'It's not working, we keep losing'. Before the season ended, results had picked up.

How special was your time at Leeds?

Really special. I've watched the Amazon documentary and it brings back all the memories – the blood, sweat and tears that we put into it, then the bad ending. It was painful then, and it was painful to watch it again. I missed the second leg of the play-off semi-final against Derby due to injury, and it was horrible. There was nothing I could do to affect it.

What was it like working with Marcelo Bielsa at Elland Road?

I learned so much – it was an education. We would work on five different systems before each game, with specific roles for each formation – it opened my eyes. We could line up in a 4-4-2 for kick-off, then play two minutes and switch to gain an advantage over the opposition. We were always prepared for anything.

How hard was it to leave?

Very. I was settled and all the fans were great, but my contract was running out and it's part of football. The ideal world would have been getting promoted at Leeds and staying there in the Premier League, but it wasn't to be. It might still happen for them – it would be amazing. [FFT: Could you go back one day?] If the opportunity was right, I'd never say no.

At Oxford, you told us you owned 65 pairs of trainers. What's the latest?

I've slowed down a little, but I still have all the ones I had before, plus more! I've got quite a few in Belgium and the rest in England. I've been packing some stuff and the trainers take up a lot of boxes!

Jamaica have expressed an interest in calling you up. Could that happen?

Possibly. I've always dreamed of playing international football. They reached out, we had a chat and it may be something that happens. If the opportunity to play for Jamaica comes up, I'd love to do it.

Chris Flanagan



Maniche

Portugal 2-1 Netherlands, Euro 2004

Portugal may have been 1-0 up in a nail-biting Euro 2004 semi-final after Cristiano Ronaldo's first-half header, but their slim advantage was under severe threat from an Oranje onslaught as they approached the hour mark in Lisbon.

However, just like they had done after losing to Greece in the tournament opener, and during their quarter-final victory over England on penalties, the hosts found a way to get through. And they did it in style thanks to their newly-crowned Champions League winner, Maniche.

"Holland came close to equalising as the second half started," the 42-year-old ex-Benfica, Porto and Sporting midfielder tells *FourFourTwo*. "We needed to find a way out. The atmosphere in the stadium was getting increasingly tense – but then, out of nowhere, we grabbed a breath of fresh air. When Ronaldo tapped a short corner towards me, I only had eyes on the goal."

He certainly found it. In a moment of unplanned genius, Maniche unleashed a pinpoint strike from the corner of the penalty area which soared over a sea of Dutchmen and beyond goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar's helpless leap.

"I decided to follow my instincts," he continues. "At the moment I received the pass from Ronaldo,

I noticed [Edgar] Davids rushing from the far post in an attempt to leave our players offside. I aimed the ball slightly above Davids and it went exactly how I imagined – finding the net in the only place I knew Van der Sar wouldn't reach."

Jorge Andrade's own goal halved the deficit five minutes later at Sporting's Estadio Jose Alvalade, but Portugal hung on to progress to their first-ever major final. Maniche's goal had been crucial – but not everyone was convinced he meant it.

"I still get fans asking me that – of course it was intentional!" he chuckles. "Look at how I adjust my body for the shot. It was one of the most beautiful goals of my career, even though we ultimately lost the final to Greece."

"I received many offers to do adverts because of that goal – one, for supermarket chain Continente, was even shown in Holland before we played them at Euro 2012. It was just an amusing way of saying hello to my Dutch friends!

"As well as that rocket in 2004, I also scored the winning goal against them in the 2006 World Cup last 16. It's a country that brings me a lot of great memories. All these years later, I hope they don't take it personally..."

Marcus Alves

ROMESH RANGANATHAN

The Gooner-crazy comedian remembers an embarrassing encounter with Wrighty and a really shameful sitter

Why are you an Arsenal fan?

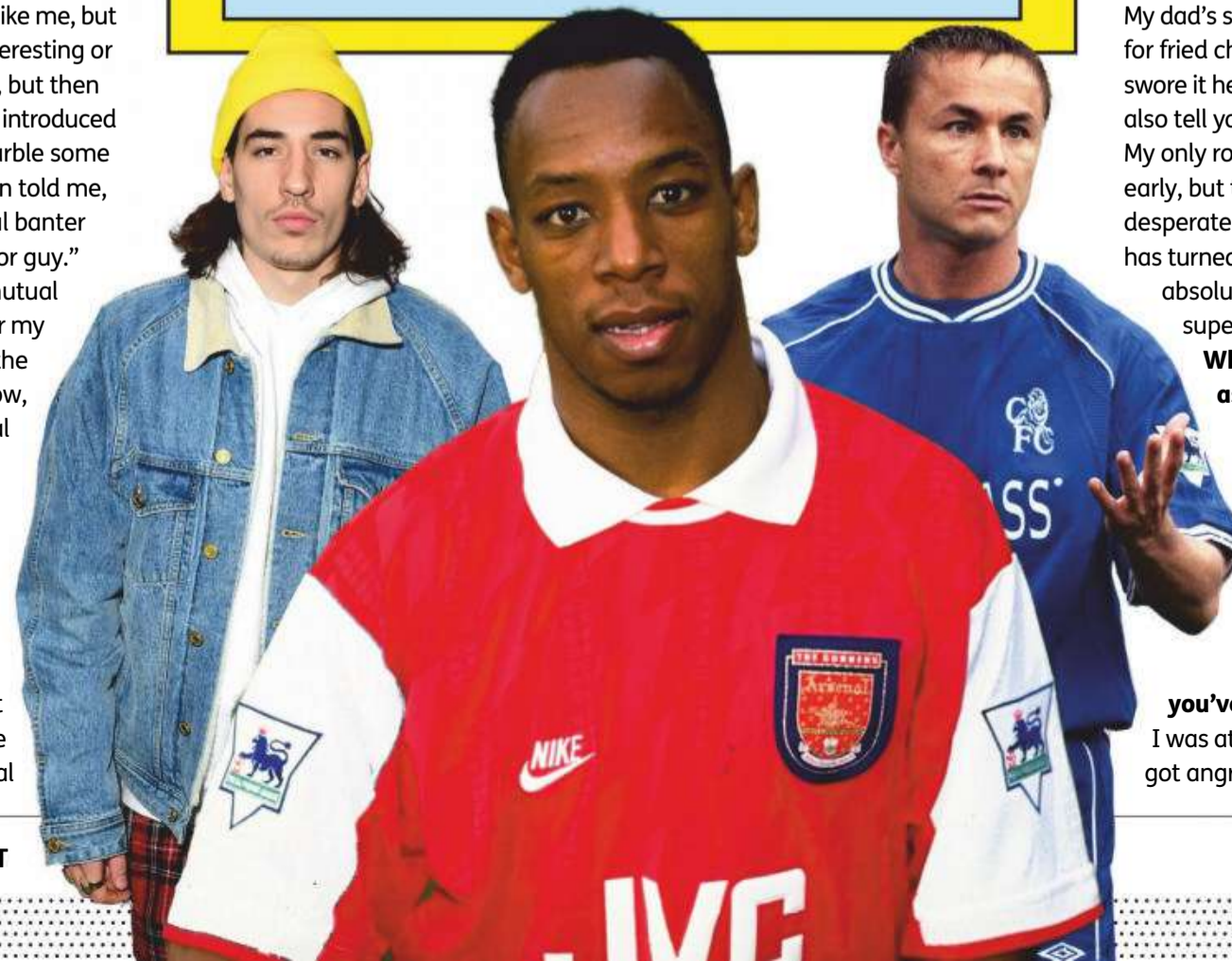
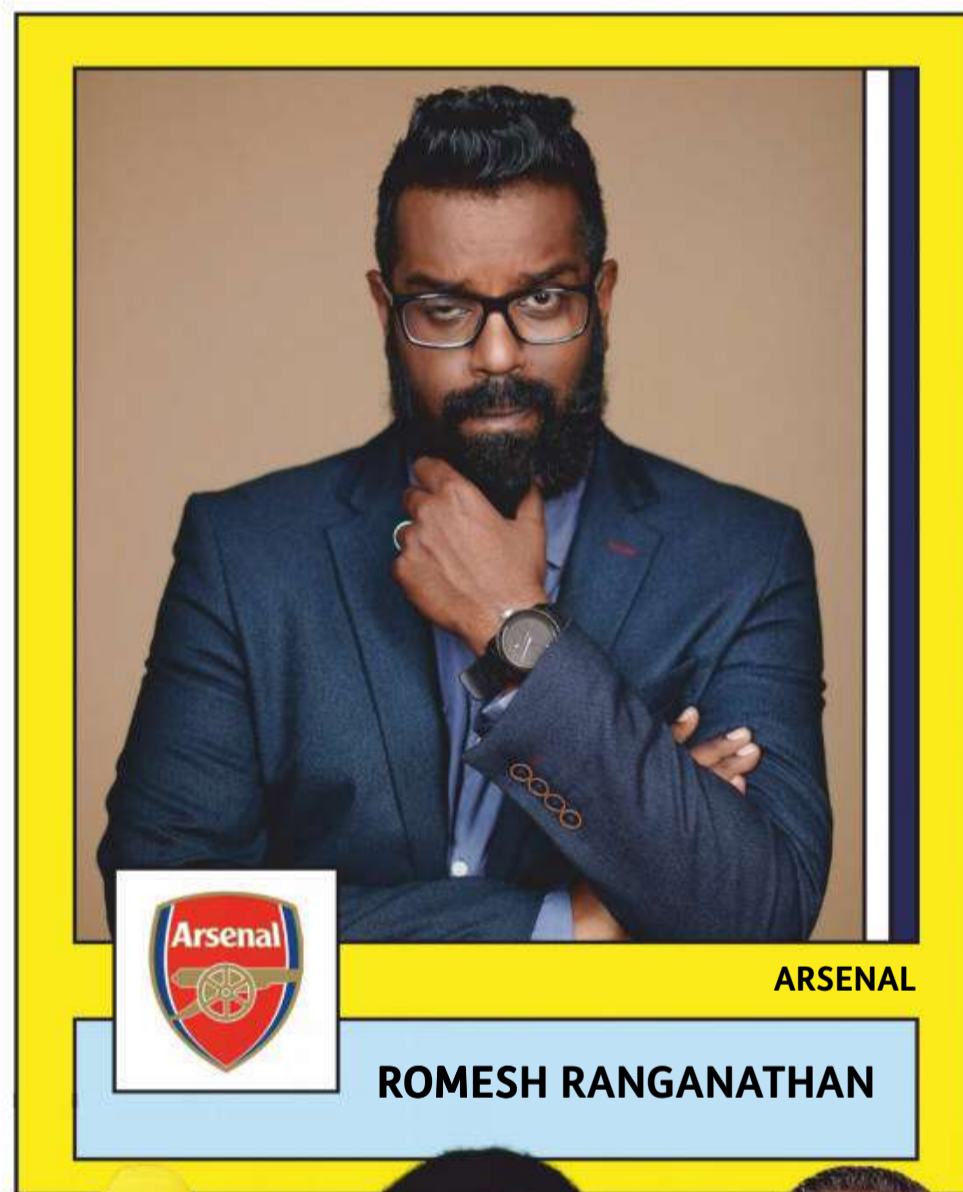
I'm Crawley born and bred, and people are forever having a go at me for not being a Crawley Town fan. It's my dad's fault. When he first came over from Sri Lanka, he stayed in north London and soon became a really militant Gooner. He ended up opening what was just an Arsenal-themed pub in East Grinstead. Punters would come to watch my dad lose his s**t over Arsenal – he'd shout, scream and go mental. This was when we were good, so imagine what he was like when we became rubbish! I went to Crawley when Arsenal played them in the FA Youth Cup [in 2003]. It was the first time I ever saw Cesc Fabregas. The Arsenal kids were all unbelievable, but a 16-year-old Cesc was on another level – he scored from the halfway line... just insane. They won 9-0.

Who was your childhood hero, and did you ever meet them?

I've always loved Ian Wright – both as a player and a personality. But I quickly learned you can make an absolute dick of yourself in front of your heroes. I was once with Kevin Bridges in a hotel bar, the morning after a big night's drinking. We noticed Wrighty in there, but I felt so hungover and didn't want to meet him. I desperately wanted him to like me, but didn't feel equipped to be interesting or amusing. We got up to leave, but then he suddenly walked over and introduced himself. All I could do was garble some gushing nonsense. Even Kevin told me, "Jesus, that was f**king awful banter you were inflicting on the poor guy." I ended up having to ask a mutual acquaintance to apologise for my s**t chat. So I've decided, in the same way I prepare for a show, I'm going to work up material for the next time I see Ian. I'll try it out in the car until I feel ready.

Who's your current favourite player?

Hector Bellerin – I've met him and he genuinely loves Arsenal. I think it's unfair that people expect players to have personalities, too. The physical



proWess they show is so amazing, that to ask them to be eloquent speakers as well is a bit much. We don't have a go at great speakers because they can't kick a ball, do we? But Bellerin is intelligent and a very funny bloke.

What was your finest moment when you played?

I honestly don't have one, because I'm horrendous. When I was a teacher, they roped me into the annual sixth-formers vs staff game. I came on as a reluctant substitute at the end, then shinned an absolute sitter over the bar. Let me tell you, I've never received so much abuse – not even at any of the gigs I've done since. It got so bad that I couldn't enter the staff room or walk around school for a week. I self-isolated for my own good.

Which footballer do you admire that never played for your club?

I remember one game against Chelsea at Highbury, and I couldn't believe – this is a compliment – how much of a prick Dennis Wise was. You'd never see it on TV, but he was constantly in our players' ears, giving them all sorts of s**t on the wind-up. Wise was one of those hateful players you'd love to have in your team.

Do you have any matchday routines or superstitions?

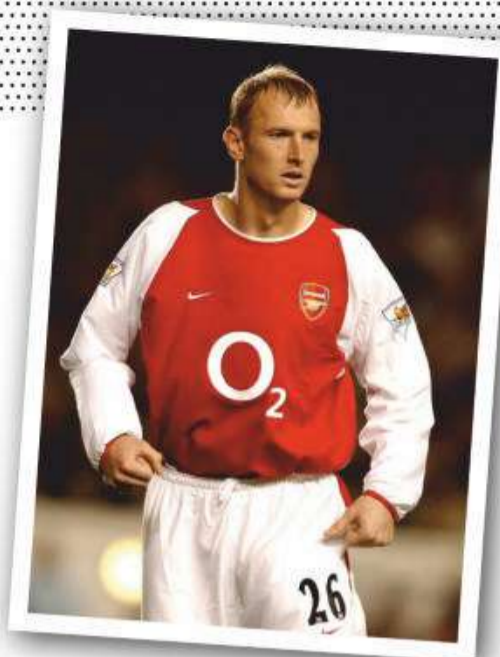
My dad's superstition was to make us go for fried chicken before every game. He swore it helped Arsenal win, but I should also tell you: he died of a heart attack... My only routine is to get to the stadium early, but the problem is it looks like I'm desperate for attention. 'Look, Romesh has turned up early for some selfies, the absolute narcissist'. But it's just my superstition. Honestly.

Which player would you pick as your room-mate?

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang. I'd give him the best night of his life and lay on so much entertainment, to convince him to stay. "You see mate, it wouldn't be like this if you joined Real Madrid..."

What's the strangest thing you've seen or heard at a match?

I was at Highbury, and an Arsenal fan got angry as I wasn't singing enough.



This was before I did any stand-up, so it wasn't because he'd recognised me. But every time a new song started, he'd look around at me as if to say, 'Well, are you going to f**king sing or not?' It became very uncomfortable and I felt obliged to join in. I was singing like a hostage. You could see the quiet terror in my eyes as he growled, "Sing up you tart."

Where's the strangest place you've met a manager or player?

I was in Portugal with my wife and kids a few years ago, on holiday. We were all in the hotel restaurant, when suddenly Calum Chambers turned up and tapped me on the shoulder. I'd recorded a show with him in the past, so he knew me, but it was really weird seeing him there. He was with three of his mates and asked me if I knew anywhere decent to go out. I said, "You're talking to a fat dad on his family holiday, so unless you're keen on a kids' quiz night or going on the flume rides, you've got this all wrong." Mental.

Who's the worst player you've seen at your club?

I'm not one for slagging off players, but Igor Stepanovs [above] was truly awful. There was a 10-minute spell during his Arsenal career when I was definitely as good as him – that's how awful he was.

Who would you play alongside in your fantasy five-a-side team?

I'd have Gianluigi Buffon in goal, simply because he looks so rock 'n' roll. Thierry Henry is up top, obviously. Ronaldinho is in there, because he's the best YouTube compilation player of all time and seems like he'd be a laugh. I'm hardly a natural finisher, as my old school will testify, so I'll stay at the back, shoring things up – or at least trying to – with Martin Keown. He's such a defensive monster that I'd either have absolutely nothing to do, or he'd be continually screaming at me. It could prove to be one of the most torrid afternoons of my life, but it would take some of the edge off that staff game at Hazelwick School.

Graham Wray

'Ranganation' airs in May on the BBC – you'll find details of his tour 'The Cynic's Mixtape' at romeshranganathan.co.uk

THE VIEW FROM THE STANDS

Is there an issue you feel strongly about? Contact us:

✉ fourfourtwo@futurenet.com

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FRANCE 98: THE TRUTH

It's funny how history gets revised over time, isn't it? Last month, I was following your website's rewatch party of the 1998 World Cup Final between France and Brazil (thanks, by the way), and couldn't help but think Ronaldo's part in the Selecao's downfall was massively overblown. In reality, he barely had a kick all game – Brazil's problems were far more down to dodgy individuals in defence and some woeful midfield distribution. Obviously, all of those pre-match theories make for more interesting debate years later – but let's not allow them to get in the way of the truth any more, shall we?

Chris Atkins, via email

EVERY DAY'S A...

As I'm in Year 10, I've been set some schoolwork to fill the days that I'm off. So I've set myself a challenge – to re-read all of my old *FourFourTwo* magazines, dating from March 2018 to the present day! It's a little bit sad reading back, though, especially the 2019-20 Season Preview special. Now that everything has been postponed, it's strange to see many of the fans who contributed writing things like, 'Save the date for April 11 – away to Man United' when it won't possibly be happening any time soon. Fingers crossed football will continue banding together as a community and fight through this most uncertain of periods in the meantime.

Chloe T, via email

[FFT: Amen to that, Chloe! We could not think of a better education...]



STAR LETTER

MET POLICE, BEWARE

A colleague and I have just finished setting up the Emergency Services Football League (ESFL) – bringing together the police, fire, prison services and NHS in a UK-wide, 11-a-side league... the only one of its kind. The main aim is to increase well-being among our hard-working staff, promoting a team-building ethic that's paramount to the roles of emergency service workers. We are often unable to commit to regular leagues due to unsociable hours, so I'm delighted to say that the response so far has been overwhelming!

DC Peter Overton, via email

LOVE ON LOCKDOWN

Like everybody else over the last few weeks, I've had a lot more time to be productive – presuming that watching loads of *Premier League Years* counts, that is. [It does – Ed] Watching those from the turn of the century onwards was a timely reminder of how stupidly good Thierry Henry was – personally, I'm not sure there's anyone in the top flight today who could hold a candle to him. He just made everything look so

easy, despite being football's most complete pre-Messi forward. In the five seasons between 2001-06, his lowest goal tally was 24. In 2002-03, he assisted 20 league goals. He even looked like he enjoyed himself, too. We weren't worthy.

Christian Tudor, via email



WIN! Adidas Copa 17 FG boots for Star Letter and Trusox for Spine Line, both courtesy of PRO:DIRECT

THE ULTIMATE QUIZ

Put your football know-how to the test, then challenge your friends and family with these eight pages of posers

ROUND ONE

01 Who is the only Swedish footballer to hit a Premier League hat-trick, against Sunderland in May 2003?

02 Will Grigg, Andre Gray and James Tarkowski all appeared for which Football League club during 2014?

03 David Beckham played alongside which current Premier League boss on loan at Preston in 1995?

04 In August 2000, Robbie Keane left Coventry and joined which European giant for £13 million?

05 Which Oscar-winning actor plays the lead role of Paul Ashworth in 1997's adaptation of *Fever Pitch*?

06 Only three men have scooped both the Premier League Player of the Month and Manager of the Month awards – name two of them.

07 Which former Premier League gaffer entered the 2018 Dakar Rally and ended up in hospital?

08 Name either of the two Juventus men sent off in their 4-1 Europa League loss at Fulham in 2010.

09 From which club did Arsenal sign the Netherlands' goal-machine Vivianne Miedema in May 2017?



11 Carlo Ancelotti left which Italian club shortly before being named Everton boss in December 2019?

12 Which Inter player's late penalty was enough for West Germany to win their third World Cup, beating nine-man Argentina in the 1990 final?

13 Fill in the list of managers who preceded current coach Quique Setien in the Barcelona dugout.

2017-20 Ernesto Valverde

2014-17

2013-14 Gerardo Martino

2012-13

2008-12 Pep Guardiola

2003-08 Frank Rijkaard

2003

2002-03

14 Former Manchester United striker Manucho is the only man from his nation to play in a Premier League game – which country was he born in?

15 Can you name the current Finland captain who progressed through the youth ranks at Southampton?

16 Which League Two side have been based at Glanford Park since 1988, after leaving the Old Showground?

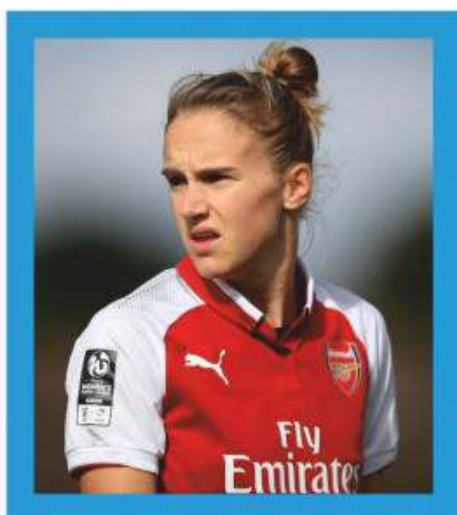
17 Ex-Norwich, Blackburn and Celtic goal-getter Chris Sutton managed a team in 2009-10 – who was it?

18 Leicester defeated Tranmere 2-1 in the 2000 League Cup Final – who headed both of the Foxes' goals?



10

Name these four stadiums, which have all hosted Champions League games since the competition's inception in 1992-93.



VISIT THE HOME OF THE FOOTBALL QUIZ

fourfourtwo.com/quiz

19

Which English club plays their home matches at this ground?



20 Manchester United brought in centre-back Jaap Stam from which European team in 1998?

21 Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink has managed three Football League clubs – identify two of them.

22 Who was managing Newcastle for Lee Bowyer and Kieron Dyer's on-pitch dust-up of April 2005?

23 Which player scored their only two goals at international level in the 1998 World Cup semi-final between France and Croatia in Paris?



25 Which Italian legend qualified for the Aspria Tennis Cup with his doubles partner in 2017, playing on the ATP Challenger Tour?

26 Which team lifted the 1936–37 First Division title, then suffered relegation the very next season despite being the league's top scorers?

27 Chelsea's 2000 FA Cup Final hero Roberto Di Matteo played for Italy, but was actually born in which other European country?

28 At which club did future England and Tottenham talisman Jimmy Greaves begin his senior career?

29 Which Colombian, who joined the Premier League from River Plate in 2001, is his country's highest scorer in the English top tier?

30 Former Millwall manager Neil Harris is now in charge of which rival Championship team, after his exit from The Den in October 2019?

32 Samir Nasri moved to which club in July 2019 after making a mere five appearances for West Ham?

33 Michael Owen joined Real Madrid from Liverpool in the summer of 2005 as part of a deal which saw which player go in the other direction?

34 Which National League outfit – top of the table in early March – are nicknamed 'the Bluebirds'?

35 Sheffield United brought which ex-Sunderland midfielder back to the Premier League in January?

36 Hull midfielder Jackson Irvine has made 34 outings and scored five goals for his country – which one?

37 Who succeeded Scottish gaffer Paul Sturrock as Southampton's boss back in December 2004?

38 Brazil beat Italy on penalties in the 1994 World Cup Final – what was the score after extra time?

24

Can you name the Champions League winner?

These four players have all turned out for which European club?

31



1. Freddie Ljungberg 2. Brentford 3. David Moyes 4. Inter Milan 5. Collin Firth 6. Frank Lampard, Stuart Pearce, Gareth Southgate 7. Andre Villas-Boas 8. Fabio Cannavaro, Jonathan Zebina 9. Bayern Munich 10. Mestalla, Ewood Park, Stade Velodrome, Veltins-Arena 11. Napoli 12. Andreas Brehme 13. Luis Enrique, Tito Vilanova, Raddy Antic, Louis van Gaal 14. Angola 15. Tim Sparv 16. Scunthorpe 17. Lincoln 18. Matt Elliott 19. Preston 20. PSV Eindhoven 21. Burton, QPR, Northampton 22. Greame Souness 23. Lillian Thuram 24. Stefan Effenberg 25. Paolo Maldini 26. Manchester City 27. Switzerland 28. Chelsea 29. Juan Pablo Angel 30. Cardiff 31. Schalke 32. Anderlecht 33. Antonio Nunez 34. Barrow 35. Jack Rodwell 36. Australia 37. Harry Redknapp 38. 0-0

ROUND TWO

WHO ARE YA?

Can you figure out whose faces have been blanked out in these famous team photographs?



1 West Germany 1-1 **ENGLAND**, 1990



2 Bayern Munich 1-1 **CHELSEA**, 2012



3 **BARCELONA** 2-1 Arsenal, 2006



4 Milan 3-3 **LIVERPOOL**, 2005



5 **MAN UNITED** 2-1 Bayern Munich, 1999



6 Brazil 0-3 **FRANCE**, 1998

1 GK Peter Schilton RB Paul Parker CB Mark Wright CB Des Walker CB Terry Butcher LB Stuart Pearce CM Chris Waddie CM David Platt CM Paul Gascoigne CF Peter Beardsley CF Gary Lineker
 2 GK Petr Cech RB Jose Bosingwa CB David Luiz CB Gary Cahill LB Ashley Cole DM John Obi Mikel RM Salomon Kalou CM Frank Lampard LM Ryan Bertrand AM Juan Mata CF Didier Drogba
 3 GK Victor Valdes RB Lleykeke Ferguson RB Steve Finnan CB Jamie Carragher CB Sami Hyypia LB Djimi Traore DM Xabi Alonso RM Luis Garcia CM Steven Gerrard LM John Arne Riise AM Harry Kewell CF Milan Boros
 4 GK Jerzy Dudek RB Steve Finnan CB Jamie Carragher CB Sami Hyypia LB Djimi Traore DM Xabi Alonso RM Luis Garcia CM Steven Gerrard LM John Arne Riise AM Harry Kewell CF Milan Boros
 5 GK Peter Schmeichel RB Gary Neville CB Jaap Stam CB Ronny Johnsen LB Dennis Irwin RM Ryan Giggs CM David Beckham CM Nicky Butt LM Jesper Blomqvist CF Andy Cole CF Dwight Yorke
 6 GK Fabien Barthez RB Lilian Thuram RB Frank Leboeuf CB Marcel Desailly LB Bixente Lizarazu DM Didier Deschamps CM Christian Karembeu CM Emmanuel Petit AM Youn Djourkaff AM Zinedine Zidane CF Stephane Guivarch

ROUND THREE

TRANSFER TRAIL

We're looking for the stars based on their career path of club badges below. Can you identify all seven?



ROUND FOUR

JERSEY BOYS

Some iconic names have donned these digits in the Premier League. How many of the blanks can you fill in?



7

10

2

1

9

9

- 2017-
- 2015-17
- 2014-15
- 2012-13
- 2009-12
- 2003-09
- 1997-2003
- 1993-97

- 2018-
- 2012-18
- 2010-12
- 2006-10
- 1995-2006
- 1993-95

- 2017-19
- 2013-17
- 2012-13
- 2008-11
- 2006-08
- 2004-06
- 1998-2004
- 1993-98

- 2016-
- 2012-16
- 2009-11
- 2008-09
- 2006-08
- 2004-06
- 2003-04
- 2002-03
- 2000-01
- 1993-96

- 2019-
- 2019
- 2017-18
- 2015-16
- 2011-14
- 2008-09
- 2007-08
- 2006-07
- 2005-06
- 2004-05
- 2000-04
- 1999-00

- 2017-
- 2015-16
- 2014-15
- 2013-14
- 2011-12
- 2007-11
- 2006-07
- 2004-06
- 2002-04
- 2001-02
- 1996-2001
- 1993-96

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MANCHESTER UNITED 2017-Alexis Sanchez 2015-17 Memphis Depay 2014-15 Angel Di Maria 2012-13 Antonio Valencia 2009-12 Michael Owen 2003-09 Cristiano Ronaldo 1997-2003 David Beckham 1993-97 Eric Cantona
ARSENAL 2018-Mesut Ozil 2012-18 Jack Wilshere 2010-12 Robin van Persie 2006-10 William Gallias 1995-2006 Dennis Bergkamp 1993-95 Paul Merson SPURS 2017-19 Kieran Trippier 2013-17 Kyle Walker 2012-13 Clint Dempsey
2008-11 Alan Hutton 2006-08 Pascal Chimbonda 2004-06 Noureddine Naybet 1998-2004 Stephen Carr 1993-98 Dean Austin MANCHESTER CITY 2016-Claudio Bravo 2012-16 Joe Hart 2009-11 Shay Given 2008-09 Joe Hart
2006-08 Andreas Isaksson 2004-06 David James 2003-04 David Seaman 2002-03 Peter Schmeichel 2000-01 Nicky Weaver 1993-96 Tony Cotton CHELSEA 2019-Tammy Abraham 2019 Gonzalo Higuain 2017-18 Alvaro Morata
2015-16 Radamel Falcao 2011-14 Fernando Torres 2008-09 Franco Di Santo 2007-08 Steve Sidwell 2006-07 Khalid Boulahrouz 2005-06 Hernan Crespo 2004-05 Mateja Kezman 2000-04 Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink 1999-00 Chris Sutton
LIVERPOOL 2017-Roberto Firmino 2015-16 Christian Benteke 2014-15 Rickie Lambert 2013-14 Iago Aspas 2011-12 Andy Carroll 2007-11 Fernando Torres 2006-07 Robbie Fowler 2004-06 Djibril Cisse 2002-04 El-Hadji Diouf
2001-02 Nicolas Anelka 1996-2001 Robbie Fowler 1993-96 Ian Rush

ROUND FIVE

BOSSING IT

You'll learn plenty as you delve into our top 100 – but what's your knowledge like before you get started?

- 01** Who was in charge of Rangers when they reached the 2008 UEFA Cup Final in Manchester?
- 02** Which club did Marcelo Bielsa manage most recently before joining Leeds in June 2018?
- 03** How many different managers have won the Premier League since its inception in 1992-93?
- 04** Who famously said, "I didn't rate you as a player, I don't rate you as a manager, and I don't rate you as a person" before a World Cup?
- 05** Who was the manager of Brazil when they were smashed 7-1 by Germany at the 2014 World Cup?
- 06** Which boss brought Dwight Yorke to the Premier League after first seeing him play in the Caribbean?
- 07** Arsene Wenger took charge of his first club in the 1984-85 season – what was the name of the team?
- 08** Which French coach celebrated his final trophy with an English club by winning the 2003 League Cup Final against Manchester United?
- 09** Ron Atkinson 'helped' which boss at Peterborough United for 2006 television series *Big Ron Manager*?



11 Roy Hodgson has managed four national teams during his 44-year coaching career. England are one of them, but who are the other three?

12 Which manager is currently the longest-serving in England's top five divisions, after initially being named caretaker-boss back in 2012?

13 There are a few missing Real Madrid managers from the list below. Can you fill them all in?

- 2019-** Zinedine Zidane
- 2018-19**
- 2018**
- 2016-18** Zinedine Zidane
- 2015-16**
- 2013-15**
- 2010-13** Jose Mourinho
- 2009-10** Manuel Pellegrini

14 I played for one club and coached one team (in 2015-16), although not in my own country. Who am I?

15 Legendary England shot-stopper Peter Shilton managed one team, from 1992-95. Which side was it?

16 Who was Germany's coach when they overcame England en route to Euro 96 success at Wembley?

17 Dave Bassett was briefly the boss of which Premier League team in 2001-02, and suffered relegation?

18 Who was the last English manager to achieve a first or second-placed finish in the Premier League table?



10

These four men have all guided a club to UEFA Cup or Europa League glory – but what are their names?

ROUND SIX

GROUNDS FOR CONCERN

Stadium lovers, rejoice: do you recognise this selection of footballing homes from their snapshots?



1. Estadio do Dragao, Porto 2. Mané Garrincha Stadium, Brasilia 3. Rodney Parade, Newport 4. Amex Stadium, Brighton 5. Bescot Stadium, Walsall 6. Brunton Park, Carlisle 7. Stadio San Paolo, Naples 8. Olympiastadion, Berlin 9. Donbass Arena, Donetsk 10. Amsterdam Arena 11. Signal Iduna Park, Dortmund 12. Sapporo Dome 13. Santiago Bernabeu, Madrid 14. Celtic Park, Glasgow 15. La Bombonera, Buenos Aires 16. Aviva Stadium, Dublin 17. Soccer City, Johannesburg 18. Memorial Stadium, Bristol

ROUND SEVEN

TROPHY HAULS

We've given you the honours list from their careers – now all you have to do is tell us whose they are...

1



2

Premier League titles



1

La Liga title



8

Bundesliga titles



1

Eredivisie title



1

European Cup or Champions League



1

UEFA Super Cup



1

FA Cup



5

German Cups

2



1

La Liga title



3

Bundesliga titles



2

European Cups or Champions Leagues



1

UEFA Super Cup



1

FA Cup



2

Copas del Rey



1

German Cup

3



3

Premier League titles



1

Eredivisie title



1

European Cup or Champions League



1

FA Cup



1

Coppa Italia



2

Dutch Cups

4



3

Premier League titles



1

Eredivisie title



2

UEFA Cups or Europa Leagues



1

UEFA Cup Winners' Cup



4

FA Cups



2

Dutch Cups

5



1

Serie A title



1

UEFA Cup or Europa League



1

UEFA Cup Winners' Cup



2

UEFA Super Cups



2

FA Cups

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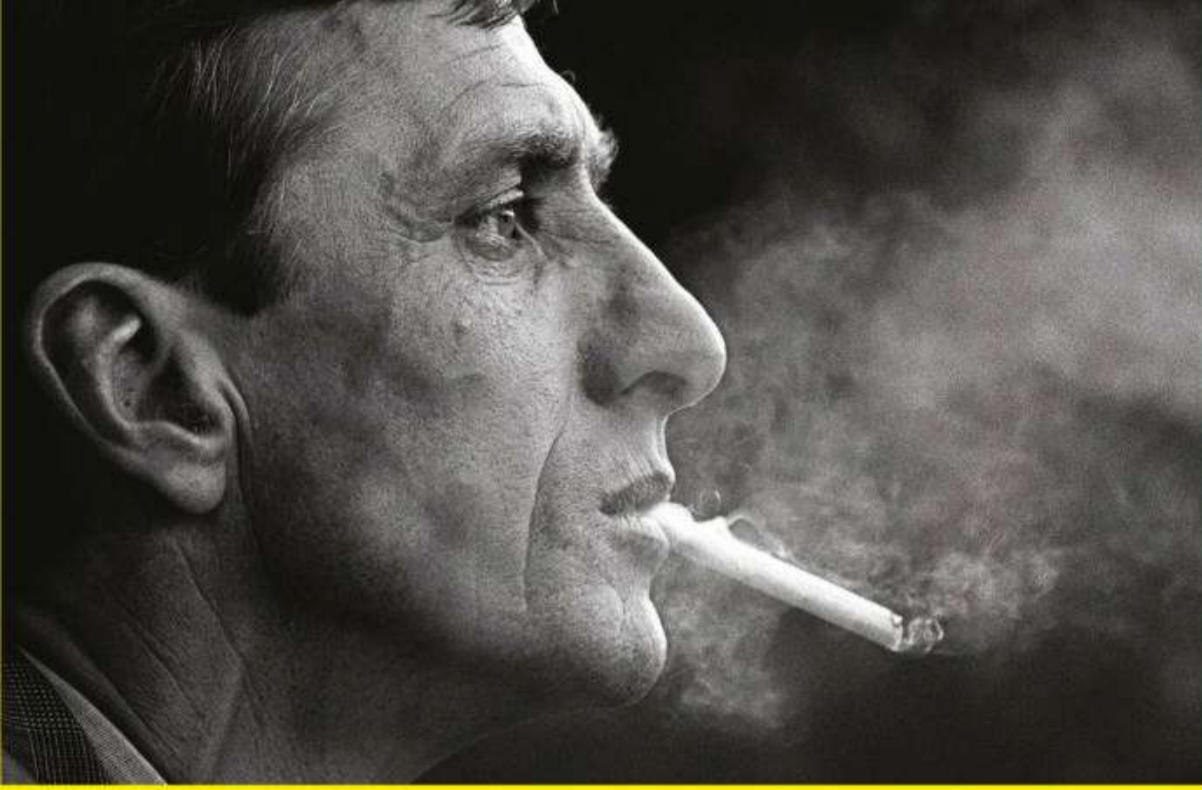
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100 GREATEST MANAGERS EVER!

They've tweaked, tinkered, engineered and evolved football for decades – often, with its shiniest prizes awaiting them at the end. Now, it's time to honour these trailblazers. Presenting *FFT's* list of the finest in history...

Words James Andrew, Joe Brewin, Chris Flanagan, Ed McCambridge, Andrew Murray, Mark White



100 ROY HODGSON

To this day, a section of the Eleda Stadion in southern Sweden is lovingly referred to as Roy's Corner. It's a tribute to an Englishman who not only changed football in the coastal city of Malmo, but whose ideas left a lasting impression across Scandinavia.

At a glance, you'd be forgiven for mistaking Hodgson's career as an epic save on *Football Manager*. His journey has taken in everything from the Swedish second division to European finals, stopping off in eight different countries and 20 different outposts, as varied as Viking, Grasshoppers and the England national team.

It all started back in 1976 with a telephone call between Halmstad and English coach Bob Houghton, then managing Malmo. Halmstad needed a coach with some fresh ideas to help them avoid relegation from the top flight, so Houghton suggested an old colleague from his time at Maidstone United. Hodgson was soon appointed, just shy of his 29th birthday, and duly kept the relegation favourites afloat. After that followed two of the unlikeliest league title wins in Sweden's history.

"He changed the culture of Swedish football," said former Halmstad defender Bengt Sjöholm. "He was so competent that his philosophies gradually became the way the national team played as well."

Hodgson's innovations were centred around zonal marking and deploying an offside trap, and they were quickly accepted by his players. Former charges have admitted they became so well-drilled in a Hodgson system that they could comfortably play any position in it.

While this approach would later prove to be a stumbling block at more ambitious teams – most notably Liverpool – Hodgson performed more than one miracle with underdog sides.

His achievements include taking Switzerland to USA 94 (their first World Cup for 28 years), overseeing Copenhagen's first league title win in more than a decade, and restoring direction to an Inter Milan side in decay. But it was with Malmo that he achieved iconic status, bagging five consecutive league titles and two Swedish Cups between 1985 and 1989.

"There aren't many English managers who have had the sort of career I've had outside of England," claimed the Croydon-born gaffer in 2011. "People don't talk about what I've done outside the country."

Arguably Roy's greatest hour came back in his homeland, however, following a surprise appointment at relegation-threatened Fulham in late 2007. His calm and organised approach – plus some shrewd signings – helped to seal the club's miraculous survival on the final day of the season. From then, life in west London improved markedly.

A superb 7th-placed finish the next year set up a miraculous run to the Europa League final, beginning in Lithuania in July 2009 and ending in Hamburg in May 2010. En route, German champions Wolfsburg and Italian behemoths Juventus were defeated – the latter, from 4-1 down on aggregate – and although Bobby Zamora & Co. lost the showpiece to an Atletico Madrid side with Sergio Aguero, Diego Forlan and David de Gea, Fulham's feat in getting to that stage earned Hodgson the Liverpool job.

"I assisted Bobby Houghton at Halmstad and we were both just under 30," remembered Roy in 2018. "We'd say, 'Wouldn't it be great to do this for 10 years, save a little money, then start a little business together?' Some sort of travel agency. We had no football thoughts beyond that." From little acorns...



99 FATIH TERIM

As a player, Terim was a wily defender, and as a manager his teams have been largely the same. 'The Emperor' has coached Turkey on three occasions – guiding them to the semi-finals of Euro 2008 – and Galatasaray on four, instilling a hard-running, hard-tackling style best on show in his Gala sides that won four consecutive league titles from 1997-2000, as well as the UEFA Cup final against Arsenal. "He's extraordinary," former charge Gheorghe Hagi once gushed. "He could coach any side."

98 VACLAV JEZEK

Taking charge of Sparta Prague back in 1964, Jezek introduced an aesthetic style of play that swept all before it in Czechoslovakia, then took on the national team. He moulded the Czechs into his image and watched as his country shocked the world champions, West Germany, at Euro 76. Antonin Panenka's iconic spot-kick won it, but the blend of brawn and grace, woven from the fabric of great Eastern European sides gone by, was all Jezek's doing.



97 ROBERTO MANCINI

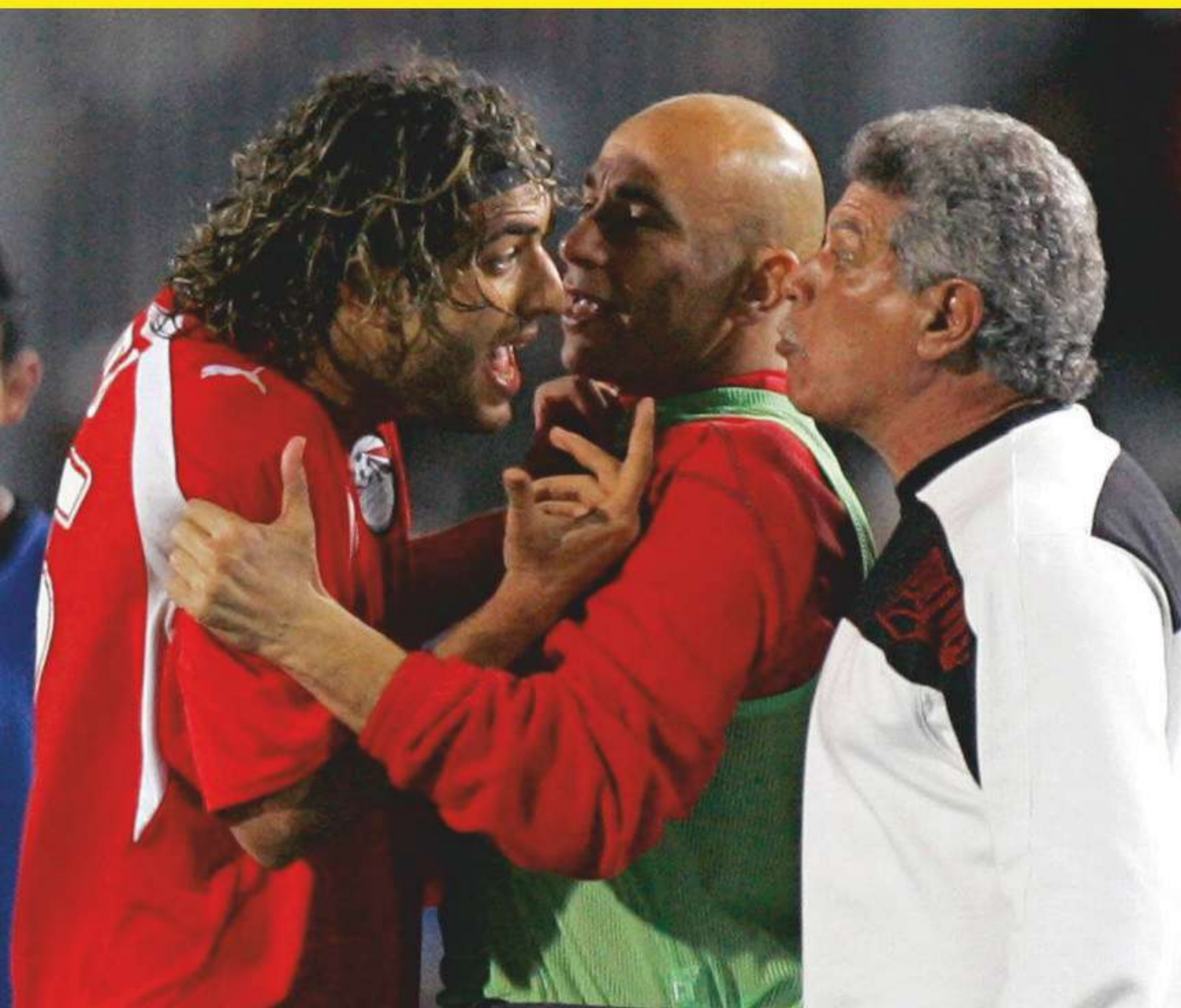
As a youngster at Bologna, Mancini demanded to take every corner, free-kick and penalty. If coaches resisted, he'd walk off. A similarly uncompromising approach in management, ever since cutting short a 2001 loan spell at Leicester to take his first job with Fiorentina, has earned Mancini six domestic cups and four league titles, including Manchester City's first in 44 years. He's now overseeing the longest winning streak in Italian national team history.



96 GERARD HOULLIER

"When I go to Liverpool, I'm surprised people are so nice to me," said Houllier in 2019. Why the Frenchman thinks any Red would dishonour the man who delivered a cup treble in 2001 is a head-scratcher; although Houllier couldn't land a league title on Merseyside, he restored silverware at Anfield after a six-year hiatus. Before that, he had won PSG their first league crown in 1986, and while his 1992-93 tenure as France boss was disastrous, he was later a two-time Ligue 1 champion with Lyon.





95 HASSAN SHEHATA

There were only 12 minutes to go in Egypt's 2006 Africa Cup of Nations semi-final with Senegal, and a blazing row had just erupted.

Hassan Shehata had taken the risky decision to substitute his star striker. Now he and Mido (above) were screaming at each other on the touchline, in front of the world's cameras and a crowd of more than 74,000 in Cairo. Only the intervention of 39-year-old forward Hossam Hassan stopped the remarkable confrontation from becoming physical.

It could have been Shehata's Maurizio Sarri moment. Like goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga in the 2019 League Cup Final, one of his players was in open revolt. It could have signalled the beginning of the end for Shehata as Pharaohs boss. Instead, it was the end of the beginning.

Shehata, a one-time Asian Player of the Year despite not being Asian, had been under a lot of pressure as Egypt's manager going into that Africa Cup of Nations. The moustachioed boss was given the job after helping the under-20s secure the African Youth Championship, before steering Al Mokawloon of the second division to victory in the Egyptian Cup. But results had not been great prior to his first tournament as Egypt coach, and rumours were growing that a replacement was being lined up.

In that semi-final against Senegal, Shehata did what could have been compared to taking off Gary Lineker and introducing Alan Smith.

In place of Spurs' Mido, he brought on a young Amr Zaki, still plying his trade in the Egyptian Premier League. Within two minutes, Zaki had headed the winner. The manager, still wound up by his altercation, celebrated with enraged gesticulations. He'd been right. Mido was soon banned for six months and Egypt would go on to win the Africa Cup of Nations on home soil, to rapturous scenes in the capital.

Shehata followed that up two years later by helping the Pharaohs lift the trophy again – this time in Ghana, in sub-Saharan Africa, where Egypt's Africa Cup of Nations record had been notoriously poor. Ivory Coast, featuring Didier Drogba and the Toure brothers, were thrashed 4-1 in the final four.

No country had ever won three Africa Cup of Nations tournaments in succession. In 2010, Egypt's side were said to be too old, and there was surprise when Shehata drafted unfancied forward Gedo into his squad. Even the player was surprised. However, he would finish as the competition's top scorer, bagging the winner in the final as Egypt made history.

Shehata coached his country at three Africa Cups of Nations, and he won them all. By 2010, Egypt had climbed as high as ninth in the FIFA rankings. After his departure, they plummeted to 75th. Despite Mohamed Salah's emergence, they have not been crowned African kings in five attempts since.

94 FERRUCCIO VALCAREGGI



There's no shame in losing a World Cup final, especially when it's to a certain Brazil 1970 team; even so, Italians felt that Valcareggi's negative tactics had cost them in Mexico City, and he needed a police escort upon touching down in Rome. Yet Valcareggi had reinvigorated the Azzurri after their disastrous group-stage exit at the 1966 World Cup – via defeat to North Korea – and turned them into European champions in 1968, making some hard decisions en route.

93 ANTONIO CONTE



Conte is a contradiction of a manager. Icy cool in interviews, he's turbo-charged on the touchline. His football is relentless, but intelligent. And while his title triumphs in Italy and England were formed on wing-backs and high-octane attacking moves, securing him a force-of-nature reputation, he's very astute. "He's the best coach I ever worked with," said Andrea Pirlo. "He makes you give your best at all times – so when he loses, he's a demon."

92 JUAN LOPEZ FONTANA



Fontana was the first man ever to make Brazil question their footballing philosophy. In 1950, his disciplined Uruguay side silenced the free-scoring Selecao in one of the World Cup's great upsets, making a mockery of pre-match headlines proclaiming Brazil as champions and sending the hosts into a state of Maracanazo mourning by identifying weaknesses in their defensive setup. Fontana later guided Uruguay to the 1954 semi-finals and also scooped two league titles at Penarol.



91 RAYMOND GOETHALS

With a trademark cigarette drooping from his lips, Goethals was a meticulous coach with the demeanour of a detective. At Marseille the Belgian immediately reached the 1991 European Cup Final, losing on penalties, then triumphed two years later against Milan. Subsequent Ligue 1 match-fixing revelations rocked l'OM – Goethals was not involved – but their manager's work is too easily neglected: a zonal marking pioneer and maestro of the offside trap, he was a mind ahead of his time.

90 CLAUDIO RANIERI

Sometimes, one accomplishment is enough to shape a reputation. For Claudio Ranieri, it came when he was 64, almost 30 years into an eclectic career coaching European giants at curious points in their various histories.

His list of clubs numbers 17, but the list of major honours only three: a pair of domestic cup wins at Fiorentina and Valencia... and the most incredible underdog triumph in modern football history.

No matter what went before or came after, Ranieri will always have 2015-16 at Leicester City: a nonsensical, logic-defying achievement which may never be equalled. Within nine and a half months of being laughed into the Foxes' hotseat, having overseen Greece's humiliating defeat at home to the Faroe Islands, Ranieri had turned the previous year's escapologists into immortals – and by a margin of 10 points.

Trophies don't tell the full Ranieri story. The Italian didn't always succeed before arriving at Leicester, but he never shirked a challenge.

In his first major managerial job, at Napoli in 1991, he took over the Partenopei after the greatest period of the club's history had ended abruptly. Two months earlier, human Hoover Diego Maradona was handed a 15-month ban over cocaine use, making the 4th-placed finish that followed highly creditable. By November 1992, however, Ranieri had been sacked – so he dragged Fiorentina back up to the top flight and then made them Coppa Italia champions two years later.

In his first spell at Valencia, Ranieri revived the mid-tablers to qualify for the Champions League and eliminate Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid en route to winning the 1999 Copa del Rey. But job-hopping eventually caught up with him. That same year, he took over financially-stricken Atleti for his seventh position in just 13 years; eight months on, he was on the lookout for No.8, having resigned from a damaged ship that would sink into the second tier for two seasons.

And so Ranieri headed to Chelsea, where he remained for four seasons and set up the Blues for the most glorious period of their history. He survived for only one campaign of Roman Abramovich's riches, but by then his work was done: bringing Champions League football to Stamford Bridge was enough to convince the Russian oligarch that west London was where his dubiously-acquired billions should reside.

For Ranieri, timing was an issue thereafter. Back at Valencia, following Rafael Benitez was a thankless task that ended in tears, while his trophyless two-year spell at Juventus – which followed a fine stint saving Parma – came after they had just been promoted from Serie B. He improved Roma but committed the cardinal sin of falling out with Francesco Totti, leading to three dissatisfying years at Inter (in decline), Monaco (in Ligue 2) and Greece (in meltdown).

But every good story needs a happy ending, however unbelievable it may be. Leicester is all Claudio Ranieri will ever need.



89 JUPP DERWALL

The 23 consecutive victories delivered by the dashing Derwall is a German national team record which still stands to this day. The former forward managed a brilliant Mannschaft to success at the 1980 European Championship, then reached the World Cup final two years later, where they lost to Italy after a thrilling semi-final comeback against France in Seville. Derwall later took charge at Galatasaray and was credited with bringing modern coaching methods to Turkish football.

88 STAN CULLIS

As a player, Cullis was once dropped by England after refusing to perform a Nazi salute before a 1938 international against Germany. He was a deeply principled man, and vowed never to coach again after being sacked by his beloved Wolves in 1964 (although he did, at neighbouring Birmingham). Cullis had proved a revelation in the dugout, winning Wolves the FA Cup in 1949 when he was 32, followed by three First Division titles and another FA Cup.



87 MIRCEA LUCESCU

"Lucescu is a Shakhtar legend. He was our teacher not only in football, but in life." So said captain Darijo Srna of his departing coach in 2016, and he wasn't exaggerating – Lucescu often encouraged his cosmopolitan squads to study, read, learn languages and take cooking lessons. The Romanian boss also bagged 12 league titles around Europe, including eight – and a UEFA Cup – in the dozen years he spent making Shakhtar Donetsk top dogs in Ukraine.



86 VIC BUCKINGHAM

Before Total Football, the Netherlands' rise can be traced to a Londoner called Vic. It was the trilby-topped Buckingham – an FA Cup winner with West Bromwich Albion and future Barcelona boss – who laid the foundations for Ajax's identity. He handed a 17-year-old Johan Cruyff his debut and, in Cruyff's words, "gave us some professionalism", but he also gave Ajax a possession-based approach and ultimately teed up Rinus Michels for a new Dutch dynasty.





85 RICHARD MOLLER NIELSEN

In 1992, Richard Moller Nielsen engineered one of the greatest upsets in international football. A couple of years earlier, the Danish FA had tried everything to avoid appointing him as national team manager.

Known for his defensive approach, Nielsen had used such tactics as Odense won the first and second league crowns in their history. He managed Denmark's under-21s, and acted as assistant for the senior team. So, when Sepp Piontek resigned in 1990 after failing to book a World Cup place, Nielsen seemed all set to succeed the German boss. But his hopes were dashed by behind-the-scenes manoeuvring.

Members of the Danish FA had concerns and so did some star players, who felt that Nielsen didn't have the experience to step up. Lacking the full respect of the squad was a significant roadblock, and with Danish FA chairman Hans Bjerg-Pedersen saying, "My grandmother could have achieved the same results as Richard Moller Nielsen", a different coach was unveiled: Horst Wohlers, another German.

There was just one problem. The Danish FA hadn't come to an agreement with Wohlers' club, Bayer Uerdingen, and a day later the deal fell through. The new shortlist contained eight names, but seven turned it down. Finally, they went back to Nielsen.

Things started badly. Denmark won just one of their first three Euro 92 qualifiers, prompting Michael and Brian Laudrup to quit in anger at the team's defensive style, after the attacking freedom of their Danish Dynamite generation.

Both went public with their criticisms, hoping that would lead to Nielsen's removal. It didn't.

Denmark won their final five qualifiers even without the Laudrups, triumphing in Belgrade against a Yugoslavia outfit who had been just a penalty shootout away from the semi-finals of Italia 90. "It isn't always the best players who make the best teams," explained Nielsen. "The players ran for each other."

Even so, Yugoslavia pipped Nielsen's men to qualification. Before Denmark hosted Norway in an April 1992 friendly, someone broke into the stadium and painted 'F**k Ricardo' on the pitch, referencing Nielsen's nickname. It was still visible when the match started.

Meanwhile, the Bosnian War had broken out. And so it was that, less than two weeks before the tournament's opening fixture, Yugoslavia were kicked out of Euro 92... and replaced by Denmark. Nielsen, well aware of the situation unfolding in the Balkans, had spent the spring planning for their participation – just in case.

He had a team of players who'd worked with him at under-21 level, including the returning Brian Laudrup. Michael refused to come back, believing Denmark would fail miserably in the competition. Instead, after a 0-0 draw against Graham Taylor's England and a 1-0 defeat to hosts and group winners Sweden, they edged unexpectedly into the semi-finals by beating a French team managed by Michel Platini. For a finale, Nielsen's workmanlike Danes stunned the Dutch (the holders) and then Germany (the favourites) for unlikely glory. Dynamite indeed.

84 ALBERTO SUPPICI



In 1930, a 31-year-old Suppici coached Uruguay to success at the inaugural World Cup – and almost a century later, no younger manager has won it. 'El Profesor' took charge of the Olympic champions and led them to third in the South American Championship of 1929, before lifting the World Cup a year later. Uruguay trailed Argentina at half-time in the final but stormed back to win 4-2, one-armed forward Hector Castro sealing victory late on.

83 GEORGE RAMSAY



Ramsay joined Aston Villa as a player by accident, invited to make up the numbers in an 1876 practice match. So impressive were his skills, he was recruited on the spot. Injury curtailed his playing career but opened a new door in 1884, as the Scot became the first-ever manager in the history of world football. His paid secretary position at Villa – a gig he held for four decades – was the first of its kind, and culminated in six league titles and six FA Cups.

82 FULVIO BERNARDINI



Legend has it that virtuoso midfielder Bernardini was dropped by Italy boss Vittorio Pozzo in 1931 for being too good. "Your team-mates don't have the same grasp of the game," Pozzo is claimed to have told him. Bernardini spun similar gold as a manager. In a league forever dominated by Milan and Turin, he guided Fiorentina to a first Scudetto in 1956, then won Serie A again with Bologna in 1964. Sandwiched in between was Lazio's maiden trophy, the 1958 Coppa Italia.



81 SILVIA NEID

The most triumphant German national team manager since reunification isn't Joachim Löw. In fact, Neid and Tina Theune (stop sniggering) share that record with four women's titles apiece. Theune won Germany's first World Cup in 2003; Neid led them to their second four years on without even conceding. Ruthless, expertly drilled and yet a delight to watch in possession, Neid's side won European Championships in both 2009 and 2013, before she signed off with gold at the 2016 Olympics.

80 SEPP HERBERGER

Leading West Germany to 1954 World Cup glory over overwhelming favourites Hungary remains Herberger's defining success, which came after he had identified that the Mighty Magyars weren't so mighty out wide. It was more than a trophy, however, for a post-war nation looking to reinvent itself. As an ex-Nazi party member himself, Herberger – in charge from 1936-64 – was among those desperate to forget his part in the propaganda machine.



79 ENZO BEARZOT

Few managers have struck a balance between pragmatism and panache like Bearzot achieved during the 1970s and '80s. His Italy side popularised a daring, fluid 4-3-3 that bamboozled defences, yet their ability to stifle opponents was borne from a tight team ethic. As a result, he moved the Azzurri away from catenaccio and won the 1982 World Cup via Paolo Rossi's boots. "He was like a father to me," Rossi said upon Bearzot's death. "Without him, I would never have achieved what I did."

78 LEO BEENHAKKER

Beenhakker was 23 in his first job at SV Epe – and suffered relegation in his debut season. But this brash young boss would go on to manage Real Madrid twice and win three consecutive La Liga titles, and lift the Eredivisie three times with two different clubs (Ajax and Feyenoord). Later, the Dutchman – who took charge of 19 sides over 44 years – led Trinidad and Tobago to their only World Cup in 2006, then guided Poland to their first Euros in 2008.



77 MARCELO BIELSA

Aged 25, Bielsa scouted 3,000 amateurs for his university squad of 20 – it would become the hallmark of El Loco's career. His scientific levels of analysis have astonished, inspired and often bemused players for three decades, leading to many of them – not least Pep Guardiola, Mauricio Pochettino and Diego Simeone – citing him as their biggest influence. Bielsa's attack-minded approach has excited, enthralled and probably changed football. His success should be measured beyond trophies.



76 GUY ROUX

Arsene Wenger: 22 years. Alex Ferguson: 27 years. Guy Roux? A mind-boggling 41 years.

That's how long the Frenchman led Auxerre across three spells – including an astonishing interrupted era at the Stade Abbe-Deschamps between 1964 and 2000.

Auxerre – a town with a population of just 35,000 – were languishing in the fourth tier of French football in 1961, when a friendly with the humble Crewe Alexandra changed their history. A former Auxerre player who'd moved up the leagues with Limoges, 22-year-old Roux stopped by to watch the game; when injuries left Crewe short of players for the second half, he volunteered to line up for the English side. Auxerre asked if he'd be interested in rejoining his old team, and Roux requested that he be player-coach. While initially reluctant to give the job to someone so young, they eventually hired the midfielder – simply because he was the cheapest option.

After an encouraging first season in charge, Roux had to depart for military service. Auxerre nearly got relegated before his return in 1964, when he promptly transformed their fortunes. By 1980, they had been promoted three times and reached the top tier, having already made the Coupe de France final as a second division club in 1979.

If it all sounds very Eddie Howe so far, Roux wasn't done: Auxerre went about establishing themselves as one of the best sides in France – a status they would retain for more than two

decades – and qualified for Europe 15 times under their long-serving boss. They beat Ajax in the quarter-finals of the 1992-93 UEFA Cup, then won the Coupe de France a year later for their first major trophy. In 1996, a stellar side featuring Laurent Blanc remarkably secured the league and cup double.

Roux's role slowly transformed over time. In the early days, he would personally persuade local farmers to give him goat manure for the club's pitches. As Auxerre grew, he enabled the growth of a youth system that produced Eric Cantona and Djibril Cisse. By the time the team had some stars in their midst, he maintained discipline by looking for players at nightclubs, even padlocking Basile Boli's moped to prevent the defender going too far after dark.

Roux initially retired in 2000, but was close to returning with Bayer Leverkusen in 2001 when Auxerre asked him to go back. The Bundesliga side hired Klaus Toppmoller instead.

His final four-year spell with AJA resulted in two more Coupe de France successes, and he bowed out on a high at the Stade de France in 2005, aged 66. He made a brief and ill-judged comeback at Lens in 2007, but lasted just 81 days before resigning after difficulties adapting to life in northern France.

His iconic status remains, though, and will for longer than even his Auxerre career. In France, early versions of *Championship Manager* were rebranded as 'Guy Roux Manager'. He was the example for everyone else to follow.

75 WALTER SMITH

While friend Alex Ferguson turned Manchester red in the '90s, Smith ensured that blue was the colour in Glasgow. The Lanark man made Rangers the dominant force in Scotland mixing homegrown heroes with international idols, enticing the likes of Basile Boli, Gennaro Gattuso, Brian Laudrup and Paul Gascoigne in his first Ibrox spell. Over two stints, Smith won 21 major trophies and is behind only stalwart Bill Struth as Rangers' most successful coach.

**74 TINA THEUNE**

When it comes to the top female coaches in Europe, Tina Theune was simply the best. The first woman in Germany to acquire the DFB's elite coaching licence, she led her nation to three European Championship triumphs on the spin in 1997, 2001 and 2005. The pinnacle came in 2003, however, when her Nationalelf were crowned world champions by defeating hosts USA 3-0, then edging out Sweden with a golden goal in the final. Better than anyone.

**73 DIDIER DESCHAMPS**

Eric Cantona once gave Deschamps the disparaging moniker of 'water carrier', which stuck even after he'd hoisted world and European trophies for France. As a manager, he's upheld that success. Following Coupe de la Ligue joy with Monaco, the Bayonne native led them to the 2004 Champions League Final; then, in 2010, directed Marseille's most recent Ligue 1 triumph. His crowning glory came last: in 2018, becoming only the third man to win the World Cup as both a player and manager.

72 DETTMAR CRAMER

A global ambassador of football, German Cramer coached in more than 90 nations around the world – notably in Japan, where he helped an inexperienced national team secure Olympic bronze in 1968. "I never smiled, I had a foul temper – but they taught me patience," he said of his spell, later honoured by Emperor Hirohito. Nicknamed 'The Professor' by Franz Beckenbauer over his tactical fixation, Cramer returned home to win back-to-back European Cups with Bayern Munich in 1975 and 1976.

**71 HOWARD KENDALL**

Before the league titles, cup runs and many trips to Wembley, Howard Kendall was on the brink of being sacked at Everton. The era of a bright young manager with fresh ideas could have been over when he was just 37.

Had it not been for two Adrian Heath goals in the 1983-84 League Cup run, the Goodison Park history books wouldn't have remembered him as the Toffees' most decorated manager of all time. Two First Division titles – as well as major FA Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup triumphs – inside four famous mid-80s years surpassed the achievements of Everton great Harry Catterick.

But it could have been so different. In 1983, attendances at Goodison were falling, the red rabble across Stanley Park were dominating at home and in Europe, and four wins from the opening 12 games had left Kendall fighting for his job. But then came the week when things started to turn. Having been thumped 3-0 by Liverpool in the Merseyside derby three days earlier, just 9,080 supporters turned up to see Everton's League Cup third round tie at home to Coventry – and watched as the Toffees went in 1-0 down at half-time.

Kendall brought on Peter Reid, though, and two late goals from Heath and Graeme Sharp eventually secured a 2-1 victory. In the same week, Kendall signed Scotland frontman Andy Gray from Wolves, then promoted his former midfield partner Colin Harvey from the reserve

side to be his coach and assistant. From there, Everton's fortunes began to change.

Two months on, with the Toffees trailing to Oxford in the last eight, little-known defender Kevin Brock earned an unwanted place in the Blues' folklore when Heath sped onto his short backpass to force a replay that Kendall's men won 4-1. They made it all the way to the final, losing in a replay to Liverpool, but returned to Wembley in May and clinched the club's fourth FA Cup by beating Watford.

Kendall, with Harvey's assistance, had made his mark at Goodison using a mixture of rising stars and experienced signings who would kick off a period of blue brilliance on Merseyside. In 1984-85, they were on for a remarkable treble, having beaten Liverpool to the league title by 13 points and Rapid Vienna in the European Cup Winners' Cup final. But Everton were tired by the time they returned from Rotterdam to face Manchester United in the FA Cup final and lost to Norman Whiteside's stunner.

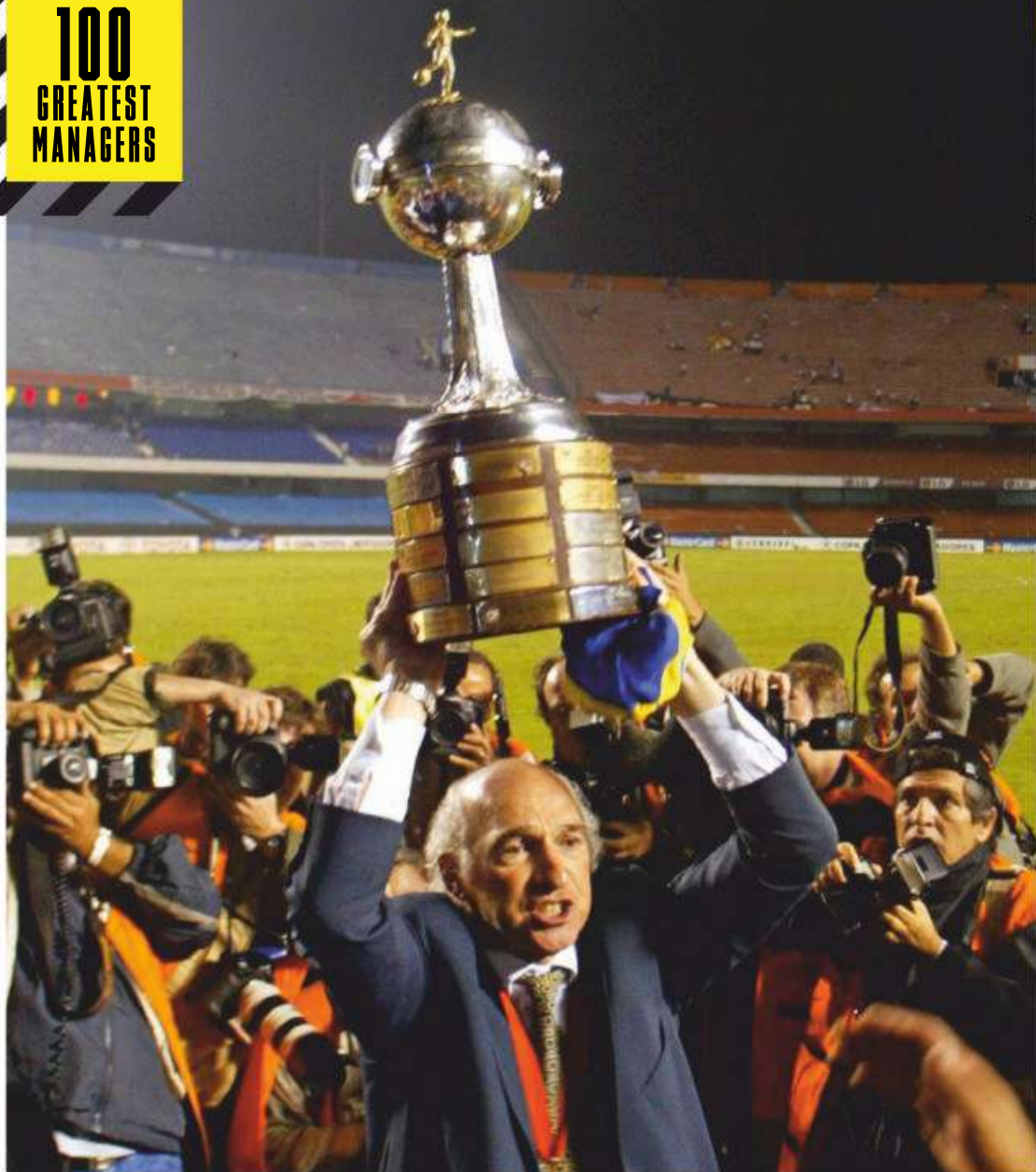
Everton won the First Division again in 1987 before Kendall left for Athletic Bilbao, by then having established a legacy and comfortably upgraded his own status to legendary.

"Howard gave the younger players as much respect as the older ones," said captain Kevin Ratcliffe. "He treated us like adults. There was competition in the squad, but not individuals against individuals."

Together, they created Everton's golden era.



HEATING



70 CARLOS BIANCHI

Carlos Bianchi is so much more than a Larry David lookalike – he’s the most triumphant coach in South American club history.

A prolific goal-getter during his playing days, Bianchi top-scored Argentina’s Primera Division three times for boyhood team Velez Sarsfield. He was also Ligue 1’s main marksman on five separate occasions, for Reims and PSG. Until Lionel Messi came along, no Argentine could match Bianchi’s record of 385 top-flight goals – not even Alfredo Di Stefano.

Early management spells at Reims and Nice didn’t go well, though, so he returned home to Argentina with Velez. The club legend quickly became a deity and was given the nickname ‘El Virrey’ (The Viceroy). With a focus on unity, plus countless hours of work on set-pieces and organisation, Velez won Argentina’s Clausura in 1993 – their first crown for 25 years. In the decisive match against Estudiantes, Bianchi handed penalty duties to goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert, who converted to clinch the title.

One year later, buoyant Velez won the Copa Libertadores for the first time in their history, defeating holders Sao Paulo. Bianchi was sent off for his remonstrations after Raul Cardozo saw red for a brutal tackle, but the Argentines triumphed 5-3 on spot-kicks at their Brazilian rivals’ Morumbi stadium.

They would go on to win the Intercontinental Cup against Milan, who had recently drubbed Barcelona 4-0 in the Champions League final.

“When we got together in January 1993, we never imagined that we would become world champions,” admitted Bianchi, before bagging two more league trophies.

He exited for a disappointing spell at Roma, but was back in Argentina with Boca Juniors by 1998. Boca hadn’t won the league for six years but Bianchi resolved their attacking problems, giving free rein to a 20-year-old Juan Roman Riquelme. The team went 40 games unbeaten as they speedily won three titles.

In 2000, Boca enjoyed their best-ever year: domestic success was followed by a first Copa Libertadores in 22 years, then victory over Real Madrid in the Intercontinental Cup. They won the Copa Libertadores once more in 2001 and Bianchi departed on a high, only to return two years later. Harnessing the talent of emerging superstar Carlos Tevez, he won another title and his fourth Libertadores – a record. When Bianchi claimed a third Intercontinental Cup (Milan the victims once again), he became the first coach ever to be world champion at club level on three occasions. Even today, only Pep Guardiola can match that record.

Bianchi never enjoyed the victories he craved in Europe – a move to Atletico Madrid in 2005 lasted just over six months – but his feats are unrivalled in South America. After his success with Velez and Boca, Bianchi now has a statue at both sides’ stadiums.

All in all, he was pretty good.

69 HENNES WEISWEILER



So great were Weisweiler’s feats, two iconic institutions of the game are named after him: the German Sports Academy... and Hennes the Goat. He created Borussia Monchengladbach’s fine team of the ’70s, taking them from the second tier to three Bundesliga titles and a UEFA Cup. Time abroad (featuring a year at Barça) resulted in trophies at the New York Cosmos and Grasshoppers – and he won a fourth German crown with Köln. It’s no wonder they named a goat after him.

68 CESAR LUIS MENOTTI



“There’s right-wing football and there’s left-wing football.” Open-shirted, long-haired and with a constant curl of cigarette smoke emanating between his fingers, Menotti was rock ‘n’ roll personified. He believed the game belonged to the people, and that his teams must entertain. Such zeal for an attacking, high-pressing strategy swept Argentina to World Cup glory at home in 1978, inspiring disciples like Marcelo Bielsa and Pep Guardiola – who still enjoy his counsel today.

67 GAVRIIL KACHALIN



The Soviet Union stood firm for 69 years, and Kachalin was its most successful football coach. Back in 1956, the Muscovite guided them to maiden Olympic gold in the sport, defeating Yugoslavia in the Melbourne final. Four years on came victory in the inaugural European Championship of 1960 – again Yugoslavia were the victims, this time in Paris. After returning to club level, Kachalin led Georgian side Dinamo Tbilisi to a first Soviet league title in 1964. Even more history made.



66 JOACHIM LÖW

Most bosses would have been booted for overseeing a World Cup as poor as Germany’s in 2018. But most haven’t built up Löw’s level of credit since becoming manager in 2006. His belief in the talented crop of kids coming through in 2009 paid dividends when, five years later, Thomas Muller, Manuel Neuer, Mesut Özil & Co. stormed to success in Brazil. Löw directed the most devastating victory in major tournament history when his charges embarrassed the hosts 7-1 in the semi-finals.



65 CARLOS BILARDO

Bilardo replaced Cesar Luis Menotti as Argentina coach to disgruntlement in 1983, despite recent success with Estudiantes. But style was unimportant. "You have to think about being first," he said. "Because second is no good." Fortunately for La Albiceleste, such a mantra liberated Diego Maradona to cause mayhem at Mexico 86, as Argentina became world champions for the second time in eight years. Under Bilardo, they also reached Italia 90's final showdown, but second was no good.

64 FERNANDO SANTOS



Santos may have played second fiddle to a wounded and wild Cristiano Ronaldo during the Euro 2016 Final, but Portugal's unlikely conquerors were made in their coach's image. His side beat the Netherlands to 2019 Nations League glory too, led by their talismanic skipper whose strengths are expertly catered for. Santos – a champion with Porto, three-time cup winner and Greek Superleague Manager of the Decade 2000-10 – is well-versed in getting a team over the line.

63 EMERICH JENEI



In six previous seasons in the European Cup, Steaua Bucharest had never progressed past the first round. Under Jenei they went all the way, becoming the first Eastern European side to lift the trophy in 1986 after seeing off Barcelona. Jenei enjoyed six spells as Steaua coach, winning five league titles either side of taking Romania to their first World Cup for 20 years in 1990 – then sending England packing at Euro 2000. A fan of Phil Neville, presumably.

62 STEFAN KOVACS



Ajax's glory years began under Rinus Michels – but history often forgets Kovacs, the Romanian who succeeded him. Kovacs offered remarkable levels of freedom to his team full of winners – especially Johan Cruyff and Piet Keizer – and reaped the rewards that followed with consecutive Eredivisie titles and European Cups in 1972 and 1973. Kovacs is still the only foreign coach of the French national side, and helped to set up the Clairefontaine academy.

61 NEVIO SCALA

Parma were football's cult club of the 1990s – and Nevio Scala was their creator.

A former midfielder with Milan and Inter, he had made a promising start to management at Reggina – in two seasons, sealing promotion from the third tier, then only missing out on reaching Serie A for the first time in the club's history after defeat in the play-offs.

His feats impressed ambitious Parma, who were Serie B mid-table in 1988-89 and also eyeing their maiden Serie A adventure thanks to investment from dairy firm Parmalat. Scala was swiftly brought in and led the Gialloblu to promotion in his first campaign.

The astute tactician introduced an innovative wing-back system and signed wisely, landing goalkeeper Claudio Taffarel and forward Tomas Brodin for their debut season in Serie A. "We had a clear target in the first year: *salvezza*, to avoid relegation," Taffarel told *FFT*. "The club had no training ground – we trained in a park."

But Parma exceeded all odds, finishing 6th and qualifying for Europe courtesy of Scala's daring style of football. "A lot of teams played 0-0 football – we wanted to attack," said Brodin. "The whole of Italy found us exciting."

Soon, the whole of Europe did too – Parma beat Juventus to win the Coppa Italia in 1992, then dispatched Antwerp at Wembley to bag the European Cup Winners' Cup a year later.

They did it without key man Faustino Asprilla, who had been recruited from Colombian side Atletico Nacional but didn't feature in the final after injuring himself while arguing with a bus driver, booting the door in anger.

Boosted by the addition of Gianfranco Zola, Parma appeared in three successive European finals: they lost to Arsenal in the Cup Winners' Cup showpiece of 1994, then beat Juventus in the 1995 UEFA Cup finale to capture another trophy. "In a one-off game, we were as good as anyone," proclaimed Scala.

The buccaneering coach gave a 17-year-old Gianluigi Buffon his debut, but the decision to sign Hristo Stoichkov in 1995 – months after the Bulgarian had won the Ballon d'Or – led to tension between Scala and president Calisto Tanzi. The manager was encouraged to tweak his system to incorporate the glamour arrival, but he was reluctant. A below-par campaign ensued, and Scala was gone.

He later won the Intercontinental Cup in an otherwise disappointing 1997-98 at Borussia Dortmund, before steering Shakhtar Donetsk to their first Ukrainian league crown in 2002.

He returned to Parma as president following their bankruptcy in 2015, helping them get out of Serie D to begin their quest back to Serie A.

Without Scala's swashbuckling side, Italian football wouldn't have been the same.





60 TOMISLAV IVIC

Jose Mourinho has won the league in four different countries; as has Carlo Ancelotti. Also on the list is Tomislav Ivic, the man Mourinho himself once described as “the greatest coach of them all”. Here’s why...

HAJDUK SPLIT (1974, '75, '79)

Ivic briefly stepped up from youth-team boss to manage Hajduk Split’s first team in 1972, defeating rivals Dinamo Zagreb in the final of the Yugoslav Cup. When he assumed control for the 1973-74 campaign, he was taking over a side that had just come 9th in the Yugoslav League. That season, though, Ivic led them to a league and cup double, securing only their second league title since 1955. Repeating the feat 12 months on, he quit to join Ajax, but later claimed another league title in 1978-79 after returning to Croatia for a second spell.

AJAX (1977)

Ivic had been hand-picked for the Ajax job by predecessor Rinus Michels, gaining admirers after Hajduk had given PSV an almighty scare in the quarter-finals of the 1975-76 European Cup. As it turned out, he required such kudos. Upon arriving at a club that had bagged three straight European Cups at the start of the '70s – but hadn’t topped the league for three years since Johan Cruyff’s departure – he was met with a player rebellion that had to be resolved by chairman Jaap van Praag. The Ajax chief was very glad he did: Ivic put the Amsterdam side’s winless streak right at the first attempt.

ANDERLECHT (1981)

By the early 1980s, Ivic had moved to Belgium and was tasked with getting another big club back on track – Anderlecht hadn’t celebrated a title for seven seasons. Again, he ended that drought in his maiden campaign, then steered them to the semi-finals of the European Cup in 1981-82. Anderlecht beat Juventus, before succumbing to eventual winners Aston Villa.

PORTO (1988)

When Ivic landed in Portugal, Porto were the reigning European champions but had fallen short to Benfica in the Primeira Liga. Not only did he immediately correct that – losing just one league game in 1987-88 – he also lifted three more trophies: the UEFA Super Cup after victory against Ivic’s former club Ajax, then the Intercontinental and Portuguese cups. His feats impressed a young Mourinho, who had often studied his training sessions in the flesh.

Ivic later won the Copa del Rey with Atletico Madrid, but it would prove to be his last major trophy as a manager. He is often credited with a league crown in a fifth country: the Croatian coached Marseille during 1991-92, but stepped down midway through the season when war in his homeland intensified, to concentrate on moving his family to France.

Following his retirement, Ivic visited Stamford Bridge and met Mourinho, who presented him with a copy of his biography. “To the greatest coach of them all,” Mourinho had inked inside. “I hope one day to win as much as you.”



59 VITTORIO POZZO

The only gaffer to successfully defend a World Cup, Italy’s pioneering Pozzo – a prodigious 400m runner who later studied in England and became pals with Manchester United star Charlie Roberts – also led his nation to gold at the 1936 Olympics. ‘The Old Master’ wanted orderly defences, and his teams were notorious for their win-at-all-costs attitudes; one game against England became known as the ‘Battle of Highbury’. But win they did, with Jules Rimet trophies in both 1934 and 1938.

58 LUIS CARNIGLIA



Carniglia was Real Madrid’s first ego-settling coach: an Argentine who expected graft and collective spirit from his galacticos. He pushed Ferenc Puskas into a renaissance period of his career and wasn’t afraid to drop the Hungarian for the 1959 European Cup Final – which cost him his job, despite Real’s 2-0 win over Reims. Carniglia – a Ligue 1 champion at Nice in 1956 before lifting the Fairs Cup at Roma – had also guided Los Blancos to European glory in 1958.



57 FRANK RIJKAARD

Rijkaard was a strange appointment for Barcelona in 2003 – his only past club gig ended with Sparta Rotterdam’s relegation from the Eredivisie. Barça had finished 6th, 4th and 4th in the three campaigns preceding his arrival and needed a reboot. It didn’t take long: by 2005, Rijkaard had made them champions again. A year later, they went one better and won their first European Cup since 1992, built around the talents of Ronaldinho and Samuel Eto’o. “He always said that he wanted to give joy through football,” Andres Iniesta told FFT.

56 DON REVIE

Perhaps the biggest compliment Don Revie ever received was from his bitterest rival.

On the evening of Brian Clough's sacking by Leeds United after 44 days, the axed boss sat awkwardly opposite his predecessor in an ITV studio. Asked if he'd ever thought he was the right man to continue Revie's legacy, Clough temporarily stopped trading barbs. "That's like saying if religion goes out of our life, who takes over from religion?" he said.

Revie was a religion at Leeds, and one that's still worshipped today. Both he and Clough hailed from Middlesbrough, but in 1974 Revie had achieved far more.

Since their formation in 1919, the Yorkshire giants have finished in the top two eight times – seven under Revie. They've reached the FA Cup final on four occasions – all under Revie. They've won one League Cup – under Revie. Their two European triumphs? You've got it...

FWA Footballer of the Year as a Manchester City player in 1955, Revie had joined Leeds at the end of his career and was captain as they suffered relegation from the top flight. When they meandered in mid-table of the Second Division in 1961, Revie was asked to take over with home crowds dipping below 7,000.

He set about instilling his key values, creating a healthy atmosphere without any egos, and switching the team's shirts from blue to white. His preparation was meticulous: Revie readied detailed dossiers about Leeds' opponents and held lengthy meetings to explain his findings.

Placing focus on a youth system that would soon produce Norman Hunter, Peter Lorimer and Eddie Gray, he also talked Billy Bremner out of returning to Scotland to be closer to his girlfriend – even driving north to speak to her.

Leeds were promoted in 1963-64, then came second to Manchester United on goal average in their first season back in the top flight – their best finish at that point. They also reached the 1965 FA Cup Final with a pragmatic, physical approach that spawned their 'Dirty Leeds' tag. But it was also successful.

Runners-up again a season later, they then made it to the 1967 Fairs Cup Final, losing 2-0 on aggregate to Dinamo Zagreb. Exasperated that a major trophy was eluding them, Revie summoned a gypsy to remove a curse he felt had been placed on Elland Road. It wasn't his only quirk: Revie scrapped the owl from Leeds' badge because he thought birds were unlucky, and had an odd fear of ornamental elephants.

His gypsy trick worked: the next year, Leeds won the League Cup and Fairs Cups, seeing off Ferencvaros 1-0 on aggregate in the latter. In 1968-69, they didn't lose a league game from October, unbeaten in 28 outings to finally land their first top-tier crown.

The Whites advanced to the semi-finals of the European Cup in 1970, then sunk Juventus to win the Fairs Cup again a year later. In 1972 came their first-ever FA Cup triumph; in 1973, the final of the European Cup Winners' Cup. In the league, Leeds enjoyed 10 top-four finishes in a row under Revie, and celebrated a second First Division title in his final season in charge before replacing Alf Ramsey as England coach in the summer of 1974.

He was a popular choice but never made it to a major tournament, failing to qualify for Euro 76. After a defeat in Italy left the Three Lions' hopes of reaching the 1978 World Cup in ruins, Revie started to negotiate a deal with the UAE national team. "Nearly everyone in the country wants me out, so I'm giving them what they want," he said. The FA, furious that he'd gone behind their backs, banned Revie from football for a decade, although the decision was later overturned in court.

His time in charge of the national team hurt his legacy across England, but not in Leeds. It was because of the team's undying loyalty to Revie that they drove out successor Clough so quickly. Despite the early-season turbulence, they still appeared in the European Cup final later that campaign. Jimmy Armfield was the manager – but it was Revie's team.

FRUSTRATED THAT A TROPHY WAS ELUDING LEEDS, REVIE SUMMONED A GYPSY TO REMOVE A CURSE



55 CARLOS ALBERTO PARREIRA



Getting the management bug as a coach watching Brazil's Pele-powered 1970 generation crowned world champions first-hand is a good place to start. Since then, no boss has been to more World Cups than Parreira, who steered the Selecao to USA 94 glory via shootout success against Italy. He has taken a joint-high five nations to the finals – including 2010 hosts South Africa and the rather less adoring Saudi Arabia, who sacked him, er, two matches into France 98.

54 WILLIE MALEY



"This club has been my life – without it my existence would be empty," Maley once said of Celtic, the club he managed for a ludicrous 43 years. An unorthodox boss, he didn't watch training, sit in the dugout during matches nor even speak to his players on the day of games, allowing them to learn their positions from the newspaper. He had an excellent eye for local talent, though, and his youthful Bhoys teams claimed 16 league titles and 14 Scottish Cups.

53 FRANZ BECKENBAUER



The two-time Ballon d'Or winner guided West Germany to consecutive World Cup finals in 1986 and '90; defeated in Mexico City by a mercurial Diego Maradona, only to avenge that loss with a 1-0 victory over Argentina in Rome. He had a spell at Marseille in 1991, then took Bayern Munich to Bundesliga and UEFA Cup success by 1996. "He used his personality," ex-Germany captain Lothar Matthaus told *FFT*. "Football is not only about physicality – it's about psychology, too."



52 SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON

Few coaches have told Alex Ferguson to 'F**k off' and lived to tell the tale. As England manager, however, the level-headed Swede frequently butted heads with the Scot. While Eriksson couldn't prevail as gaffer of the Three Lions' golden gang, he'd fared far better in club management before – as five titles and a UEFA Cup across Italy, Portugal and Sweden attested. His 1999-00 Serie A triumph at Lazio was particularly notable, as the Biancocelesti celebrated a first championship since 1973-74.



"WHEN OUR HISTORY IS TAUGHT, HIS NAME SHOULD BE WRITTEN IN GOLD LETTERS"

51 JIMMY HOGAN

English football has always been about as receptive to change as a firm Yorkshireman. Find something that works, and even when it doesn't, stick to it with such conviction it resembles General Melchett sending over the troops in *Blackadder*. Kick-and-rush had always worked – so why change?

Jimmy Hogan knew there was a better way. Inspired by Fulham manager Jock Hamilton's Scottish passing game, Hogan – who enjoyed a middling playing career in the early 1900s as an inside-forward – took Hamilton's fluid style of football and showcased it around Europe.

"I don't care whether a pass is long or short, forwards or backward," he once stated. "I just care if it is right for the team."

Hogan's loss to the continent remains the biggest in English football history. From 1910, he toured the Netherlands, France, Austria and Switzerland, and was also sent to Budapest to manage MTK when the First World War broke out. There, Hogan taught Hungary the game, introducing 'the Danubian Style' which spread like wildfire across Europe.

Dubbed a traitor upon his post-war return to England, a disenchanted Hogan went back out on the road. Ever the itinerant, he spent time in Switzerland and France, returned to MTK, gave lectures in Germany, and helped Hugo Meisl to create Austria's Wunderteam – which went 14 games unbeaten from April 1931 to December 1932 and reached the semi-finals of the 1934 World Cup in Italy.

That summer, Hogan had one final crack at England with his beloved Fulham – but it was far from the heralded homecoming he craved. Senior players decided they didn't want to be coached, and he was sacked after 31 games. Hogan tried to shake the UK from its Messiah complex, but came up against fusty suits who were wedded to maintaining the status quo.

"I have watched continental football grow from a mere baby to a strapping young man who will go on to full manhood and eventually deprive Britain of her supremacy," he sighed.

In November 1953, he was proved right as Hungary's Magical Magyars – who had taken Hogan's initial possession-based lessons three decades earlier – dismantled England 6-3 at Wembley, becoming the first foreign team to defeat the Three Lions in their own back yard.

"We played football as Jimmy Hogan taught us," revealed coach Gustav Sebes at full-time. "When our football history is told, his name should be written in gold letters."

Hogan should have been a guest of honour for the Match of the Century. Instead, by then 71 years old, the pioneer paid for not only his own ticket, but those of several young Aston Villa players he was coaching.

"You can see how we have learned some of his lessons," Hungarian FA president Sandor Barcs astutely noted afterwards. "If I may say so, England could take some of the hints that Mr Hogan gave us."

If only they'd listened.

50 GEORGE GRAHAM

Among the reasons why George Graham got the Arsenal job in 1986 was because Alex Ferguson – the Gunners’ second choice after Terry Venables – wanted to coach Scotland at the World Cup in Mexico.

What the Scot eventually created at Arsenal transcended Highbury’s hallowed marble halls and made him a byword in football circles for no-nonsense, demanding management.

At the core of his vision was a back four that came to be regarded as a single entity. When Graham arrived, the Gunners were in a 15-year malaise, led in defence by the steadfast David O’Leary and 20-year-old Tony Adams – a raw defender who wore his shorts back to front on debut. Graham set about “building a wall”, as he put it. He would ask his secretary to collect regional newspapers from around the country, then scour match reports to identify targets like Lee Dixon and Steve Bould. This, after all, was a time before video analysis and studying the opposition – in the UK, at least.

Gradually, Graham drilled his defence in the art of offside until actions became instinct.

“That back four doesn’t happen by luck,” said Adams. “We worked on organisation, morning and afternoon. We hated him for it, but were on top of our game and reaped the benefits.”

Fans conjured images of Graham striking fear into his players, but he was shrewd enough to employ leaders in key areas to do his bidding. Even at Arsenal’s bitter rivals Tottenham – with whom he won the 1999 League Cup Final – the Scot leaned heavily on defender Sol Campbell to marshal his backline.

Graham won the league title twice. The first was dramatic, with that famous final kick of the 1988-89 campaign at Anfield; the second emphatic, as Arsenal conceded just 18 goals in 1990-91 and lost once. He managed teams that embodied such chaos and calm, but all of his best sides had heart and fight in common; grit and determination.

In many ways, Graham is the quintessential British boss; one who didn’t demand ultimate ability, but for whom graft was a prerequisite. He spent the late-80s fighting the red tide of Liverpool, then a wave of change from Fergie at Manchester United. And he still succeeded.

A sorry ending to his Highbury career – the sack in 1995, after being found guilty of taking money in a transfer deal – soured his legacy somewhat, while Arsene Wenger’s feats took Arsenal to new heights.

Gunners of a certain vintage, however, will never forget when things were up for grabs.



49 AIMÉ JACQUET

France had triumphed at Euro 84 and finished third in Mexico two years later, then qualified for only one of the following four major tournaments. By 1998 hopes were fairly minimal, yet Jacquet’s rainbow warriors went all the way to unite a country divided by race, hammering favourites Brazil 3-0. “Days before the final, Jacquet emphasised corners,” said two-goal set-piece hero, Zinedine Zidane. “He said, ‘I guarantee if you go in with conviction, you can do something.’” Good pep talk, gaffer.

48 LUIS ARAGONES

Detractors argue Aragonés took on Spain at a perfect time, just as a golden generation was beginning to shine. In truth, there was no one better to lead such a group; talented, but unpolished. With Aragonés’ charisma, Spain added steel – committing more fouls than any team at Euro 2008 – yet their boss also united a fractured dressing room. “He was the most influential person in my career,” revealed Xavi. “He gave me impossible levels of confidence.”



47 OTTO REHHAGEL

The underdog spirit hasn’t been lost on Rehhagel. He took lowly Kaiserslautern back up to the Bundesliga in 1996-97 before winning it a season later, and topped that achievement by coaching a plucky Greek side to Euro 2004 glory – twice beating hosts Portugal en route. He had previously hoisted the DFB-Pokal with Fortuna Dusseldorf, and the Bundesliga trophy twice at Werder Bremen either side of victory in the 1992 European Cup Winners’ Cup Final.



46 BOBBY ROBSON

In February 2003, FFT sat down for the last time with Sir Bobby – then approaching his 70th birthday and final season in club management at Newcastle. Needless to say, he was charming company discussing a glorious 35-year managerial career...

Is it true that you learned of your sacking at Fulham in 1968 from the *Evening Standard*?

I did, yes. I was driving over Putney Bridge and there was a billboard on the pavement saying,

'Robson sacked'. I carried on driving, thinking, 'What Robson is that?' – and then it dawned on me. I left the club at 4.30pm and saw the headline 15 minutes later. What's a nice way of saying, 'cock up'? I was extremely bitter and very angry.

If you'd stayed at Ipswich in 1982, could you have maintained that side and won the title?

We'd come bloody close already. We finished second in 1981 and again the following year,

which was my last. We were two players short of a championship-winning side. I had a great title-winning team at PSV, fantastic players at Barcelona like Figo, Ronaldo, Luis Enrique – but that Ipswich team was phenomenal. En route to winning the UEFA Cup in 1981, we went to Saint-Etienne. They had a brilliant team full of internationals – Platini, Battiston, Larios, Rep – and we still beat them 7-2 on aggregate. They were unbelievable times.

If Gary Lineker had handled in at Mexico 86, would you have said, 'I didn't see it?'

I would have said Gary had conned the referee, it was a terrible error and we should never have won a game like that. We were playing for the semi-finals of the World Cup and were geared up to knock out the favourites. God, I was so angry with that referee and linesman. I didn't speak to them after the game because I was worried what I'd do.

Had England won the semi-final shootout against West Germany at Italia 90, would they have lifted the World Cup?

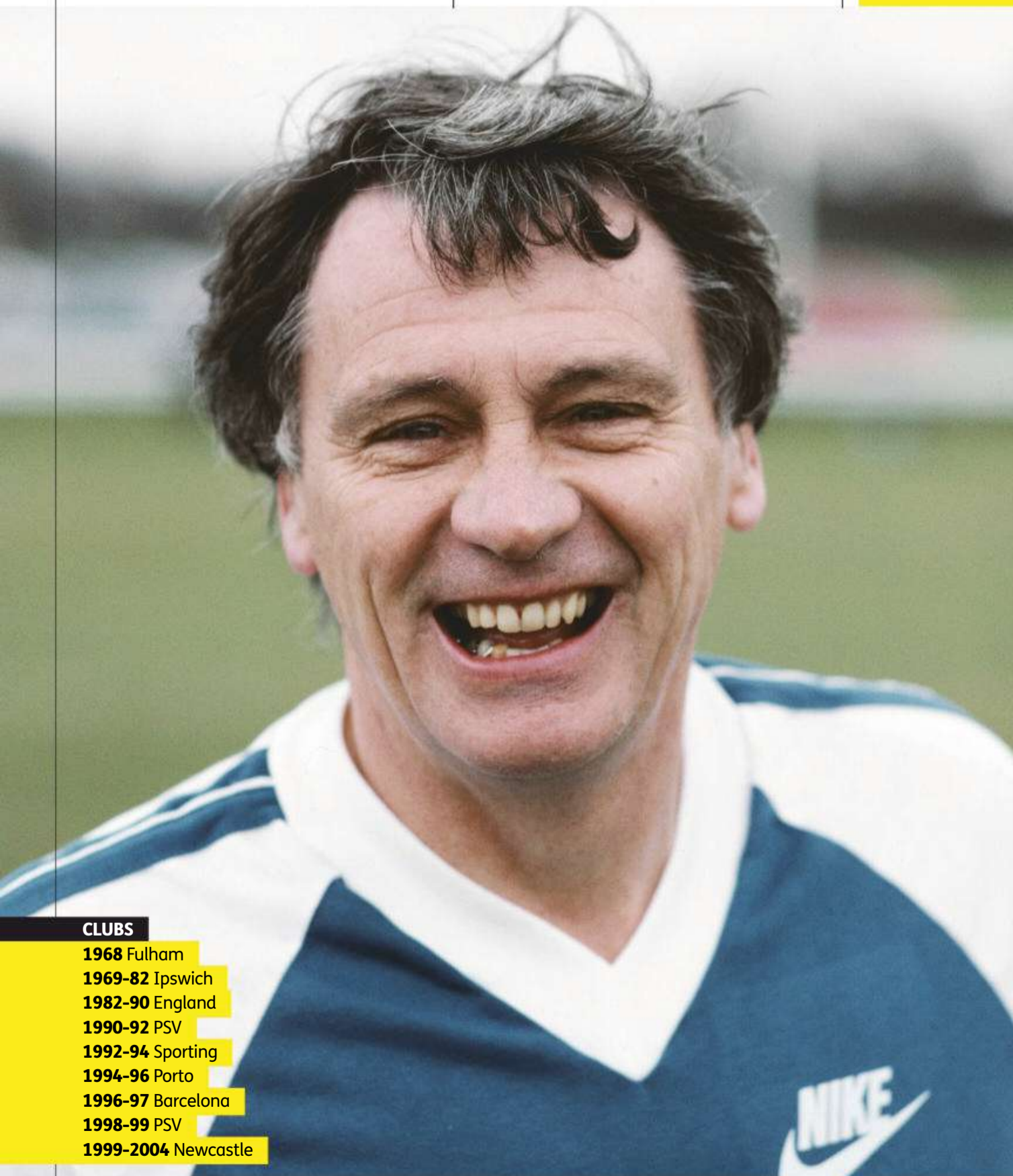
You can never say, but my gut reaction would be to say yes. We had a score to settle after the 'Hand of God' situation. Argentina had several of their best players out for the final, while we were just coming good and very much in the groove. We had exceptional team morale, and had developed into a team that was tough to beat. Well, no one beat us, did they? We were so disappointed to go out, absolutely gutted. Even now talking about it, I still get upset. I'll never forget that feeling, because we would have fancied ourselves in the final. We would have loved every minute of it.

What were the main differences between working on the continent and working at home in England?

There were some differences that I preferred, but in England I got no interference from the board – the team was all down to me. Abroad, I was just a coach. Sometimes it was an issue, but you have to adapt. In all my time abroad, I never bought an English player and never brought in my own staff. Not once. I think it helped me settle. But I won't lie: I very nearly bought Alan Shearer at Barcelona. We needed a striker and I said to our chairman, "I know a cracker". It was after Euro 96 and I called Ray Harford at Blackburn. Ray told me that he wasn't for sale, and could I not disturb him by letting the press know of our interest. I told him that he could trust me... and a week later Alan was sold to Newcastle! We got Ronaldo from PSV instead.

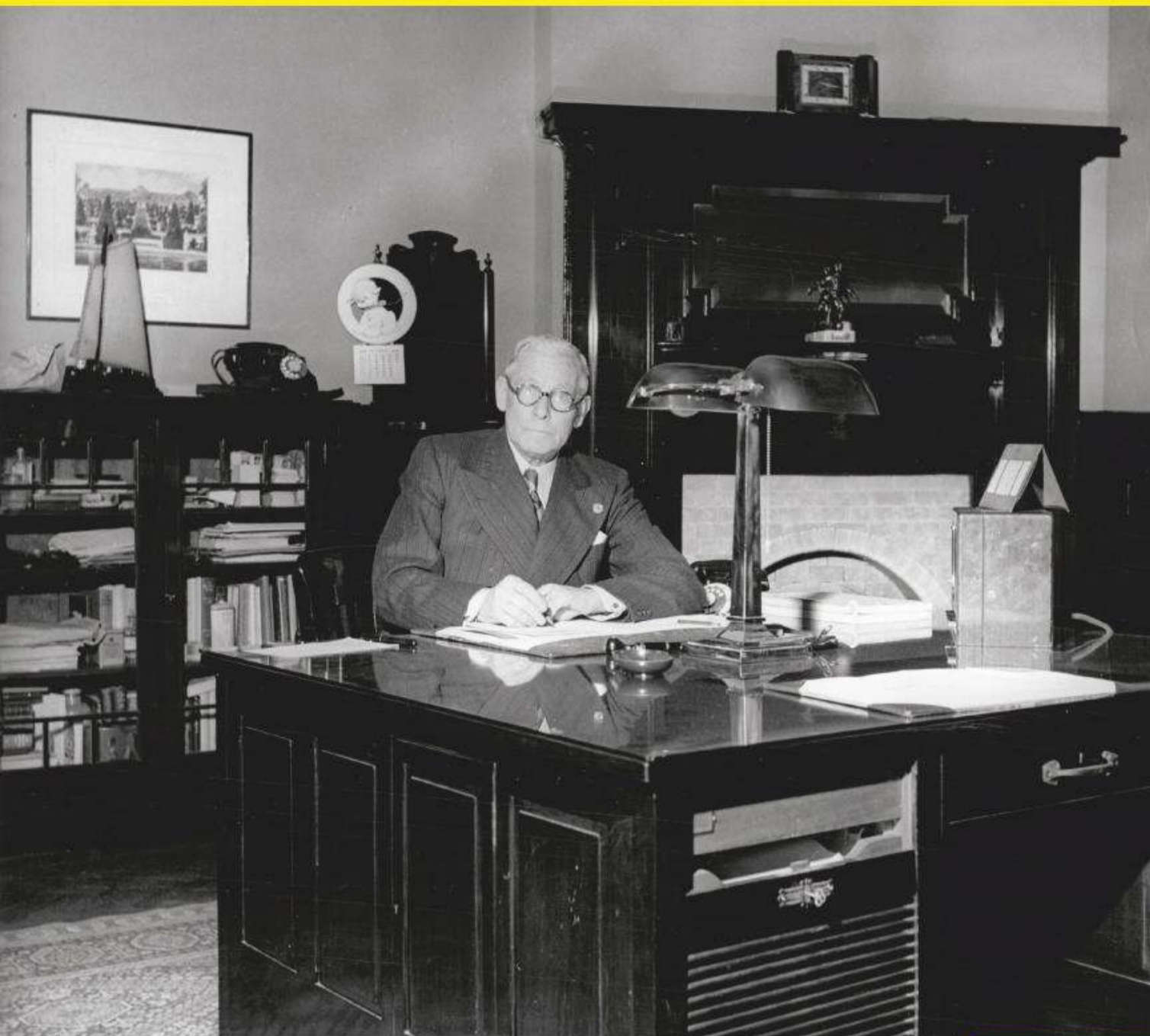
Who was the best signing you ever made in your career?

Ronaldo was marvellous. He had a year with me at Barcelona and he was out of this world; absolutely fantastic... a god. He had amazing ability, was a great young athlete, a very nice character who respected me, and it was sad that he only played eight months for us there. You could see he was going to be phenomenal.



CLUBS

1968 Fulham
1969-82 Ipswich
1982-90 England
1990-92 PSV
1992-94 Sporting
1994-96 Porto
1996-97 Barcelona
1998-99 PSV
1999-2004 Newcastle



45 BILL STRUTH

Not even Alex Ferguson can match the tally of league titles won by Bill Struth – Rangers were crowned champions an astonishing 18 times during his era.

He achieved it all despite having no playing career of any sort. “He didn’t know a great deal about football, but he was a great manager,” said ex-winger Johnny Hubbard.

Hailing from Edinburgh, Struth attempted to become a professional runner in his younger days before moving into football to help train players at Hearts. He then became a trainer at Clyde, during a period in which the club made it to two Scottish Cup finals. He was appointed as Rangers’ assistant in 1914, taking charge in shocking circumstances six years later – boss William Wilton drowned in a boating accident, just 24 hours after his players had rounded off a title-winning season.

Struth helped the Gers cope by retaining their trophy the following season, then set about an era of dominance. In the 19 campaigns before the Second World War stopped Scotland’s top flight, Rangers scooped 14 titles. In 1928, he oversaw their maiden league and cup double, after 25 years without the Scottish Cup.

He largely left the tactics to his coaches, but was clever when it came to recruitment and his big focus was on fitness, diet and discipline.

To him, appearance mattered – he insisted his players wore a collar and tie to training, and bowler hats were mandatory. He’d watch from a window as they arrived at Ibrox early in the morning – if anyone was spotted walking down the street with hands in their pockets, they’d be sent out to do it again with arms by their sides. One time, he even punched a player in the ribs for doing it.

“He was strict,” said midfielder Adam Little, who was once rebuked for knotting his cravat incorrectly. “You had to live by his standards – if you disobeyed certain things, you were just transferred. In psychology, he was a wizard. You have 11 players and no two are alike. He could handle every one of us.”

Struth’s methods undoubtedly worked. He became the first Scottish manager to win the treble in 1949, bagging four league titles after the war – triumphing in 1953 despite having part of his leg amputated due to gangrene.

He retired in 1954, aged 78, having won 18 league titles in 27 seasons. In the same period, Celtic won only five. If you take into account wartime championships and cup competitions, Struth claimed another seven league trophies, and an incredible total of 73 prizes during his time as Rangers manager.

Ibrox’s main stand is named in his honour.

44 TELE SANTANA



“One of my biggest regrets is not winning a trophy for Tele. If anybody deserved one, it was him.” So wailed Zico, reflecting on Brazil’s revered losers of 1982. Santana’s *joga bonito* had taken them to Spain 19 games unbeaten, but defeat to Italy meant they didn’t get past the second group. He had another go in 1986, but Brazil were last-eight losers on penalties. Mercifully, he won consecutive Libertadores and Intercontinental Cups as Sao Paulo boss.

43 DIEGO SIMEONE



When Simeone returned to coach Atletico Madrid in December 2011, they were 10th in La Liga and had been knocked out of the Copa del Rey by third-tier Albacete. By May, they’d qualified for Europe – and ever since, the relationship between club and manager has become so symbiotic that it’s impossible to imagine one without the other. El Cholo’s brand of bastardy broke La Liga’s duopoly in 2014 – and his side are still ruffling feathers.

42 ALBERT BATTEUX



Batteux is Ligue 1’s most successful manager, who oversaw two golden eras. First, he won five titles with local side Reims, steering them to two European Cup finals; later, he led Saint-Etienne to a hat-trick of league triumphs – via his adored brand of ‘champagne football’. “He was very funny,” revealed Just Fontaine, who scored a record-breaking 13 goals under Batteux as France finished third at the 1958 World Cup. “We listened to him with delight.”



41 RAFA BENITEZ

At some point during Benitez’s half-time speech in the 2005 Champions League Final, it was pointed out that he had put 12 players on his tactics board. Unperturbed, the Spaniard simply chalked one off and pressed ahead; the rest went down in history. Benitez had already established himself as one of the game’s wildest operators before that, guiding Valencia to two La Liga crowns and the 2004 UEFA Cup. The title eluded him at Anfield, but ‘Rafa’ – who delivered the Reds’ last FA Cup of 2006 – will forever be on first-name terms.

40 JILL ELLIS

“Even if you’re on the right track – if you sit there, you’ll get run over.”

Jill Ellis wasn’t satisfied when she took over the US Women’s national team in 2014. They were Olympic champions, ranked first in the world and hot favourites to win the World Cup the following summer in Canada – but their new manager was unimpressed.

As Ellis saw it, they’d been favourites to win the past three World Cups, but failed each time since 1999. What difference does such status make if you don’t win? The message behind her pitch had been quite clear several months earlier, when interviewing for the biggest head coach role in women’s football.

On her first day at the training ground, Ellis informed a talented group of players that they wouldn’t win the next tournament. Not if they continued to rest on their laurels, anyway. The hard work was just starting, she said – and if they bought into her ideas, the US would blow their competition away.

Ellis soon proved that she was a woman of her word. The USA bagged back-to-back world titles under her stewardship, winning at France 2019 for the most gruelling of them all. With the quality of women’s football higher and more competitive than ever before, the USA’s semi-final win over England was particularly edgy, as the

Lionesses squandered a spot-kick that would have dragged the game into extra time.

Ellis welcomed the sport’s huge leaps over recent years – even if it made her life harder.

“The better other countries are, the better it forces us to be,” she said. “I want to be in an environment where I’m forced to work hard to be successful. It makes it more rewarding.”

While Portsmouth-born in 1966, Ellis moved to the US with her family at the age of 15. Her father was a commando and an FA-licensed coach, and she would watch from the sidelines as he put the Combined Services team through its paces at training every day.

Ellis was inspired by the manner in which her father communicated with the players, and his dedication to improving the small margins that could have a big impact.

Following a successful career playing college soccer, Ellis dived into management with the drive that later became her trademark. Having worked as an assistant for top university sides, she eventually joined the US national team’s youth divisions, travelling the world compiling scouting dossiers.

Such graft paid dividends when she landed the USA job in 2014, ready to make history as the winner of two Women’s World Cups.

And there ended the journey: Ellis stepped down in October and was succeeded by Reign FC boss Vlatko Andonovski. It’s hard to envy him.



39 LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI

A couple of months before the 2006 World Cup, England targeted Scolari as Sven-Goran Eriksson’s post-tournament replacement. He’d knocked the Three Lions out of the 2002 World Cup (with Brazil) and Euro 2004 (with Portugal), and would do the same again that summer. But the FA didn’t get Big Phil, missing the mastermind of World Cup, Libertadores, league and cup titles at home. In 2018, there was even a comeback as his Palmeiras surged to the Brazilian title.

38 UDO LATTEK

Lattek was the first boss to win all three continental titles – the European Cup, UEFA Cup and sadly discontinued Cup Winners’ Cup – and the only one to do it with three different clubs. The German was remarkably successful almost everywhere, claiming six league titles and the European Cup at Bayern Munich in his first coaching job. Lattek won two more league crowns and a UEFA Cup at Monchengladbach, before completing his hat-trick with Barcelona.



37 GUUS HIDDINK

In Hiddink’s first match as a manager in March 1987, his PSV beat Johan Cruyff’s Ajax 1-0. By May they were celebrating the second of four straight titles – but the best came in 1988, with shock European Cup success. His finest work thereafter came at international level: taking Holland (1998) and South Korea (2002) to World Cup semi-finals; Australia to their first World Cup for 32 years in 2006; and then Russia to the semi-finals of Euro 2008.



36 ZINEDINE ZIDANE

Zidane initially made this management lark look as easy as a Champions League final volley. After taking charge at the Bernabeu in January 2016, Zidane yawned through ending Barcelona’s record 39-game unbeaten league streak by April, then lifted the first of Madrid’s three consecutive Champions League trophies – as the first defending champions since Milan in 1990. But big egos require a big personality to lead them. “Zidane made me feel special,” revealed Cristiano Ronaldo. ‘Nuff said, really.





35 BILL NICHOLSON

Bill Nick was not a man of poetry, according to those who knew him. He lived in a small, terraced house near White Hart Lane and was a one-club man – in both his playing and management career. He only ever got one England cap, but scored with his first touch. Looking at Nicholson, and his modest, kindly, uncle appearance, there was little that gave away his extraordinary life.

The Scarborough-born wing-half had honed his coaching skills as a sergeant PE instructor in the Second World War, which robbed him of a more illustrious career.

When Nicholson – who began at Tottenham on the groundstaff in 1936 – eventually took charge at White Hart Lane in 1958, the north Londoners lay 16th in the First Division. When he left them 16 years later, they had won two European trophies, a league and cup double, two more FA Cups and a pair of League Cups.

“He had a steely way about him,” Tottenham legend Steve Perryman told *FFT*. “We hear a lot of new terminology today, but none of it has taught me anything that Bill didn’t.”

Central to Nicholson’s philosophy was that Spurs should play with simplicity and flair. As a player, he was schooled under Arthur Rowe’s famous ‘push and run’ side of 1950-51 – the Spurs team that popularised using one-twos to keep possession.

While team-mate Vic Buckingham adapted the style abroad into a fluid system that later improved a developing Ajax, Nicholson merely

solidified the key principles at Spurs when he took over, demanding that his teams should entertain. And that they did.

Tottenham beat Everton 10-4 on the day he was unveiled, scored 115 goals in 42 matches as Nicholson guided them to the 1960-61 title, and dispatched Atletico Madrid 5-1 in the 1963 European Cup Winners’ Cup Final.

Amid all the style and success that followed Nicholson’s Tottenham, however, he insisted on keeping his men grounded. He specifically signed Jimmy Greaves for £99,999, so as not to give him the tag of being the first six-figure player. His team talks were similarly humbling: prior to the Atletico clash, he went into such detail about the opposition that his side were desperate to prove to their manager that they could beat them.

“For heaven’s sake,” midfield skipper Danny Blanchflower told his gaffer, “You’re making them sound like world beaters.”

Nicholson transformed his Spurs side several times during the 1960s and early-70s before stepping aside in 1974. He was a revolutionary rather than an evolutionary, building on ideas he learned as a player to win. Such ambition was hardly in short supply.

Blanchflower has credited Nicholson with his most famous quote. “It is better to fail aiming high than succeed aiming low,” he reportedly declared. “And we of Spurs have set our sights very high; so high, in fact, that even failure will have in it an echo of glory.”

34 VIKTOR MASLOV



Maslov is the least-known pioneer in football history.

Who invented pressing? Guilty. In the late-50s, almost every major football team on the planet played a 4-2-4 formation – but the Russian spied an opportunity. He became the first coach to use 4-4-2, handing his Dynamo Kiev side a numerical advantage. It earned Maslov four Soviet league winners’ medals and six cups with three teams – but ultimately, his everlasting imprint on football.

33 KENNY DALGLISH



As a Celtic and Liverpool player, Dalglish won 10 of 15 league titles from 1972-86;

latterly, when he was also managing the Reds. As player-gaffer, King Kenny couldn’t kick his winning habit: he nabbed another two titles at Anfield before his shock exit in February 1991, only to join ambitious Blackburn in October – then mid-table in the second tier. Four years on, Kenny’s rampant Rovers were top-flight champions for the first time in eight decades.

32 JUPP HEYNCKES



Such are his mysterious healing powers, Heynckes’ name is still suggested every time

Bayern Munich hit a rocky patch. He broke his retirement in October 2017 to help deliver the Bundesliga after Bayern’s shaky start, having remained revered as the mastermind behind their unprecedented league, cup and European treble in 2013. Heynckes is a bona fide legend in Bavaria – but also sealed Real Madrid’s first European Cup triumph for 32 years in 1998.



31 HELMUT SCHON

Germany’s consistency at international tournaments can be traced all the way back to Schon. The former forward led West Germany between 1964 and 1978; a sparkling spell stretching six major events. Schon’s sides won two of them – the 1972 Euros and 1974 World Cup – finished runners-up in two more, and came third at Mexico 70. “He only saw the good in players and people in general,” hailed the right-back from their 1974 triumph, Berti Vogts, who’d go on to become a Euros-winning boss himself with Germany in 1996. Obviously.

30 JOCK STEIN

“If you are ever going to win the European Cup, then this is the day and this is the place. But we don’t just want to win this cup – we want to do it playing good football.”

Jock Stein’s words shortly before the 1967 European Cup Final have gone down in Celtic folklore. That day in Lisbon, the Glaswegians became the first British outfit to be crowned kings of Europe, rounding off one of the most remarkable seasons in history.

John ‘Jock’ Stein was a coal miner who spent the final six years of his playing career at Celtic. Placed in charge of the reserve side after his retirement, Stein was told by chairman Robert Kelly that he could never coach the first team because he was a Protestant.

He departed for Dunfermline, saving a club without a win in four months from relegation – then secured their first-ever Scottish Cup the following year, beating Celtic in the 1961 final.

In the two seasons after that, they reached the quarter-finals of the European Cup Winners’ Cup, then ousted Everton from the Fairs Cup.

After moving to Hibernian, Stein boosted the Edinburgh side back up the table and beat Real Madrid in a friendly, before Wolves offered him the chance to replace Stan Cullis in 1965. On the pretext of asking for some advice, Stein called Kelly hoping to be offered the Celtic job instead. Kelly put forward the roles of assistant or joint-manager, before relenting and giving him the top job.

Celtic had been formed 78 years earlier, but Stein was only the fourth boss in their history after a trio of long-servants. The Bhoys were mid-table and hadn’t won the league for 11 years – but Stein needed just a month to bag their first Scottish Cup since 1955, then lifted the league title and reached the Cup Winners’ Cup semis in his first full season.

Stein was a tracksuit manager – a rarity in those days – who told his players before the 1966-67 season, “We could win everything.” He was right. After scooping the Scottish Cup, Scottish League Cup and even the Glasgow Cup, Celtic followed up by clinching the league in a final-day duel with Rangers.

He’d also guided them to the European Cup final against Helenio Herrera’s Inter; victors in two of the previous three seasons. Desperate to overcome Inter’s catenaccio, Stein told the press, “We’re going to attack as we’ve never attacked before.” After Celtic triumphed 2-1, Bill Shankly told him, “You’re immortal now.” Stein’s players were too, as the Lisbon Lions.

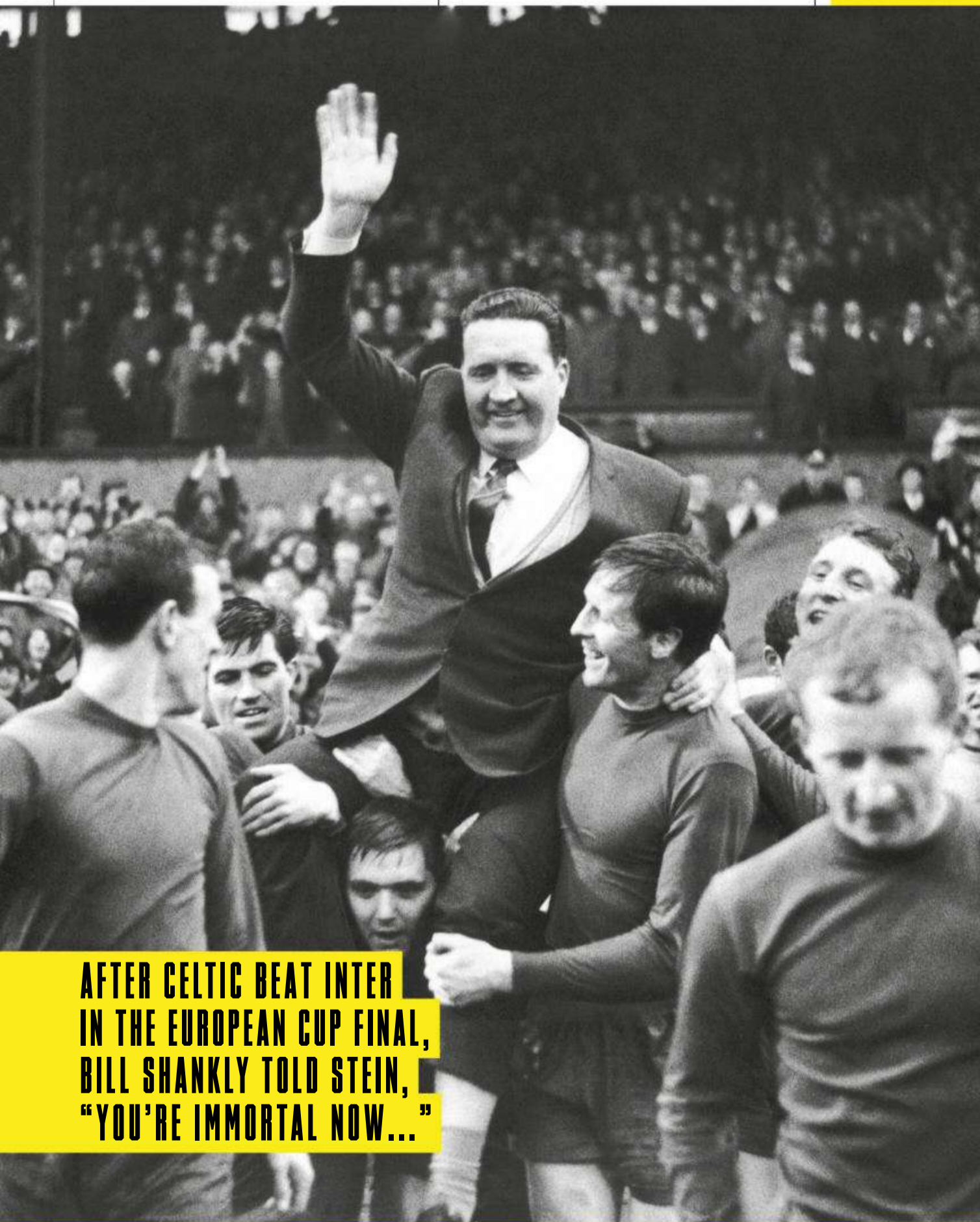
They reached another final in 1970 – beaten by Feyenoord – but Stein oversaw an incredible nine domestic titles in a row, which equalled a European record. Kenny Dalglish also broke through under his management.

Stein landed a 10th league title, then joined Leeds in 1978. He lasted just 44 days at Elland Road – the exact same number as Brian Clough – before being lured to the Scotland post. His country were edged out in the group stage of the 1982 World Cup by Brazil and the Soviet Union, but Stein made Alex Ferguson his new assistant ahead of qualification for 1986.

“I spent a year and a half working with him – and I loved him,” said Ferguson. “I asked why Jock never criticised players and got my most important piece of advice. He asked why he should hurt a player’s family by criticising him in public. All you do is make enemies of their cousins, uncles, aunties, teachers, mothers and milkmen.”

That their partnership didn’t last longer was down to the terrible events of September 10, 1985. Under pressure after a home defeat to Wales, Stein took Scotland to Cardiff knowing they needed a draw to book a play-off against Australia. Lose, and he’d probably be sacked. Having opted not to take his heart medication to avoid any side effects that might distract him from the match, he watched his side grab a late equaliser, only to collapse two minutes from the final whistle.

Stein died inside the stadium’s medical room. He was 62 years old.



AFTER CELTIC BEAT INTER IN THE EUROPEAN CUP FINAL, BILL SHANKLY TOLD STEIN, “YOU’RE IMMORTAL NOW...”



29 JURGEN KLOPP

Klopp's charismatic front doesn't do justice to the tactical mind behind that trademark grin. The German boss has proved his prowess as a master motivator balancing chaos with control, having progressed both Dortmund and Liverpool beyond recognition. Consecutive titles with the former established him as one of football's brightest minds, while steady but spectacular upgrades have taken the Reds to two Champions League finals and – surely – a first league crown since 1989-90.

28 JOSE VILLALONGA

Few have succeeded in crossing a city's divide and winning on both sides. Villalonga did, though, capturing two La Liga titles, two Copas Latina and the first two European Cups with Real Madrid – his first, aged just 36 years. Later he lifted two domestic cups and a Cup Winners' Cup with Atletico, and to cap it all led Spain to Euros glory in 1964 – their first trophy. Not too shabby for someone who never played professionally and only managed for 11 years.



27 MARIO ZAGALLO

Twice a world champion as a player, Zagallo also coached the greatest team of all time as Brazil won their third World Cup in 1970. But doing so wasn't easy; the Selecao had been kicked off the park during the 1966 World Cup and "the scars were still there", as Pele revealed. But Zagallo also managed to fit in the likes of Jairzinho, Rivelino, Tostao and Gerson, leading to Peru, Uruguay and Italy all being torn apart as Brazil scored 19 times en route to victory at Estadio Azteca. "It was all down to Zagallo's work," said Carlos Alberto.



26 ALF RAMSEY

Arguably, winning the 1966 World Cup with England wasn't even Alf Ramsey's greatest achievement as a manager.

The Dagenham native was only 35 and fresh off retiring from an esteemed playing career at Tottenham when he took over Third Division South side Ipswich Town, newly relegated back to the doldrums after 18 years of service from ex-manager Scott Duncan.

Immediately, though, Ramsey knew he had problems. After he'd pitted attackers against defenders during a rain-soaked public practice match, his wife Victoria was so aghast at the low quality on display that she had urged her other half to throw in the towel... at half-time. However, the national hero-in-waiting enjoyed a challenge – and Town supporters were very glad he chose to take it on.

In just six seasons between 1956 and 1962, Ramsey transformed the Tractor Boys from third-tier nobodies to First Division champions on a shoestring budget, finishing four points above Bill Nicholson's legendary Spurs Double winners of 1961 to scoop the title in their first top-flight campaign.

"He was already far ahead of other bosses at that time," said Ray Wilson, an opponent then, but future '66 winner under Sir Alf.

Ramsey was nicknamed 'The General' from his playing days – indeed, Town's success was built on a bedrock of impeccable defensive organisation – but Ramsey's former players all remember a gent who ruled in the right way.

"He was so immaculate, spoke so nicely and quietly," Ray Crawford, Ipswich's top scorer in that 1961-62 campaign, told *FFT* back in 2012. "He'd never try to make you look small in front of other people," added team-mate Jimmy Leadbetter. "If he had anything to say to you, he had a quiet word. There was nothing nasty, and he got tremendous respect for that."

Little wonder, then, that Ramsey was able to lead his country to the finest triumph in their history; England's only World Cup win to date, hoisted aloft on home soil in 1966. Out of duty, he'd taken the gig – described by *The Times* as "a vulnerable position" – in 1962, four months after a quarter-final defeat to Brazil in Chile. Only in 1963 did he officially accept the reins, however, as Ipswich struggled to stay afloat following their shock success.

Ramsey hadn't exactly been knocked by the ordeal. "We will win the World Cup," he said – and under his guidance, the Three Lions did.

After taking charge full-time in May 1963, England lost only two matches in a year – but the second of those defeats was a humbling 5-1 loss to Brazil in 1964's chastening tour to South America, where they also toiled against Argentina. Ramsey conceded a "tremendous gap" between England and their rivals, so set about tinkering his wingless wonders system that would conquer all two years later.

Jack Charlton, Nobby Stiles, Alan Ball and, later, a 24-year-old striker called Geoff Hurst all came in. Home came the World Cup.

25 HERBERT CHAPMAN



Chapman transformed football in England. He was the first manager to pick his own line-ups, decide transfers and deploy a third back in defence, responding to 1925's offside law overhaul. In 1919, he had been banned from football after reportedly making illegal payments as Leeds City boss – but it was reversed, and Chapman won consecutive titles at Huddersfield. He did it at Arsenal as well, and would have had three but for his death from pneumonia in 1934.



24 FABIO CAPELLO

Capello may not have had much luck with England or Russia, but his club record holds up among the best. A seven-time league champion across spells with Milan, Real Madrid and Roma, Don Fabio also pocketed a European Cup medal when his Milan mauled Barcelona 4-0 in 1994. But his style didn't suit everyone. In a second stint at Madrid, Capello won a second title – yet still got sacked. "For me, he was very important," commented the legendary Raul about Capello's original term.

23 ARSENE WENGER



History will recall Wenger's 22 years as Arsenal boss by two Doubles, seven FA Cups, one Invincibles season and a record 49 games unbeaten. But it should also remember how he inspired everyone around him. Le Prof was among the last great idealists; a coach who improved his players by giving them freedom and the belief to soon become world-beaters. Wenger didn't just remodel English football in the 1990s – he ignited it with imagination.

22 BOB PAISLEY



Liverpool's most decorated gaffer didn't even want the job. After all, how could the Reds' long-time assistant follow Bill Shankly's feats? As it turned out: pretty well. Paisley inherited excellence in 1974 but hit new heights – after finishing second in his debut season, Liverpool claimed six of the next eight First Division titles and three European Cups in five years. "People talked about 'Uncle Bob'," said former Red Phil Thompson. "He was as ruthless as they come."



21 BELA GUTTMANN

Bela Guttmann lived on the idea that "the third season is fatal", drifting in a nomadic management career of 40 years, but never spending longer than two seasons at any one team. He won two European Cups and was considered somewhat unpredictable. But to call him 'the original Mourinho', as many have done, is to do a disservice to his extraordinary life.

Guttman's parents were dance instructors; fittingly, his sides were dynamic, mesmerising to watch and sliced through opposition in the final third effortlessly. All were choreographed by a gruff, flat cap-donning great standing on the sidelines: his teams were entertaining, but Guttmann was the real star of any show that he took part in.

A Hungarian Jew, Guttmann was dispatched to a forced labour camp in the Second World War. His father and sister were both murdered at Auschwitz, but he survived the war and then coached Ciocanul of Romania after the conflict ended. There, he asked to be paid in vegetables – food was scarce, after all – but walked away from the role after a board member meddled with his team selections.

During the next decade, disagreements and disputes became semicolons in an otherwise otherworldly management career. Guttmann quit Hungarian team Ujpest after a half-time quarrel over taking off a full-back, observing the second half from the stands after losing his argument. He left Milan following constant

riffs with the board – even though he was top of the league – and ensured he added clauses in subsequent contracts stating he could never be sacked while in first place.

After a successful stint at Sao Paulo, playing the 4-2-4 system that Brazil would later take their inspiration from, Guttmann settled down in Portugal. He quit Porto for Benfica in 1959, sacked 20 players and brought in Eusebio. The 19-year-old became a beacon for the Eagles; the focal point for a lethal side that captured consecutive European Cups in 1961 and 1962.

When he didn't receive a pay rise, however, Guttmann famously cursed the club in Europe for 100 years – black magic that has so far held up through seven major finals, and still has 40 years to run. Not even Eusebio praying at his grave in Vienna could lift the hoodoo.

It's strange that Guttmann left such a legacy without ever settling in one spot long enough to lay roots. The Hungarian is synonymous with half a dozen clubs, yet he is best remembered for what he said as much as what he achieved; for the legacy he left more than the football his teams played.

But Guttmann was more than just a book of stories. He was the first rockstar boss – a canny leader who walked through hell, would come to typify 'method in the madness' and prove himself as one of the most astute tacticians of a generation.

Truly, Guttmann really was one of a kind – and football was all the better for having him.

20 LOUIS VAN GAAL

Louis van Gaal will always be remembered for his great Ajax team of the '90s, winning the Champions League, four Dutch crowns, a Bundesliga title with Bayern Munich and two La Liga triumphs at Barcelona.

No doubt, he was one of the finest coaches of the modern era. But he will also be recalled fondly for... well, being a bit mad. In 25 years as a manager, King Louis had plenty to say for himself – for our amusement...

“Congratulations on signing the best coach in the world” – *on his very first day as a manager, after being appointed by Ajax in 1991*

“It’s only 12 o’clock. At 2 o’clock, Jesus has to walk with the cross. OK, Happy Easter, but it’s a little bit early”

“I’ve signed a contract with the Dutch national team until 2006, so I can win the World Cup not once but twice” – *er, before failing to qualify for the 2002 World Cup finals, then leaving his post afterwards*

“I once dropped my pants in front of the entire [Bayern] squad. I wanted to make clear: when I make a substitution, I don’t do so for my own ego, but for the sake of the team”

“It is unique that someone who is still alive writes an autobiography” – *unveiling his new book, while very much alive*

“I’ve never worn leggings like [Arjen] Robben. I’m never cold, as I’m so warm-blooded. My wife says so, too. We always sleep spooning”

“I have the body of a God. Lederhosen suits me” – *getting ready for Oktoberfest*

“The first captain is Wayne Rooney, the second captain is Michael Carrick and last season the third captain was Mr Mike Smalling – sorry, I mean Chris Smalling”

“Every human being who is grabbed with their hair would react. Only with sex masochism, then it is allowed, but not in other situations” – *after Manchester United midfielder Marouane Fellaini has his hair pulled by Leicester defender Robert Huth in 2016*

“I said to my players that I was squeezing my ass, but it was the wrong expression. I have twitched my ass”

“This man is not normal” – *responding to Paul Merson’s punditry*



19 NEREO ROCCO



Rocco won two European Cups with Milan in the '60s, but he is often forgotten among Italy's coaching greats. His love of catenaccio is often maligned, but Rocco's teams scored freely. The Italian was a ferocious winner who shaped attitudes of countless countrymen to follow, and also conquered some of the most celebrated sides of all time; namely, Eusebio's Benfica in 1963, Johan Cruyff's Ajax in 1969, and Argentina's infamous Estudiantes outfit.



18 CARLO ANCELOTTI

Ancelotti is one of just five managers to have won the Champions League at two different clubs – first at Milan in 2003, before ending Real Madrid's quest for La Decima in 2014. He began his managerial adventure with three years alongside Italy boss Arrigo Sacchi in the early-90s, then instantly took Reggiana up from Serie B. Later, he breathed some life into former club Milan and turned a struggling side into continental kings, while titles at PSG, Chelsea and Bayern Munich add to his haul.

17 OTTMAR HITZFELD

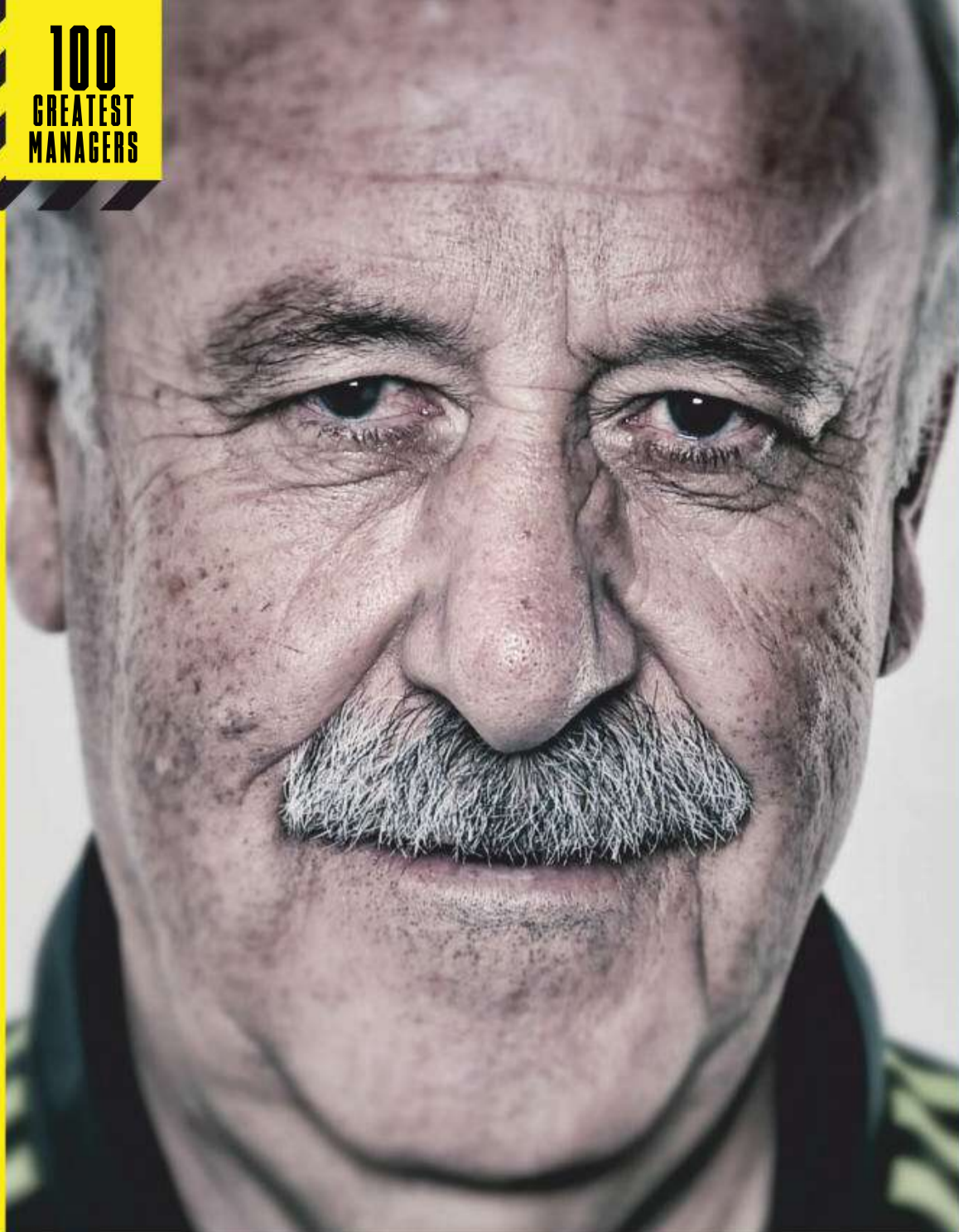


Hitzfeld has felt the highs and lows of Champions League finals more than anyone. In 1997, his gutsy Dortmund beat Juventus to lift their only such trophy to date. Two years on, he watched in horror as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer toe-poked Manchester United's late winner against his stunned Bayern Munich. 'Gottmar' soon made amends in 2001, taking his major trophy tally to 18 over spells in Germany and Switzerland – including seven Bundesliga titles.

16 MIGUEL MUNOZ



Munoz is Real Madrid's most successful manager. He is also the man who once told icon Alfredo Di Stefano to 'f**k off'. The city native is Real's longest-serving gaffer, having spent more than 14 years at the Bernabeu and won 14 honours including two European Cups and nine La Liga titles. In that time Munoz became immune to egos, as shown in his team's 1964 European Cup Final defeat to Inter when he gave a critical Di Stefano short shrift. The Blond Arrow never put a Los Blancos shirt on again.



15 VICENTE DEL BOSQUE

“A leader is admired – a boss is feared.”

In Vicente del Bosque’s case, he chose the path that didn’t require burning everything in sight. As a player, the Spaniard had spent the entirety of his playing days at the Bernabeu (loans aside) as a midfielder during the ’70s, acting as a humble screen for his defence.

It was Del Bosque’s way to serve – first to his club, before taking the reins internationally and dominating the world game with Spain. The Salamanca man was in charge for two golden ages: the first, Real Madrid’s galactico marketing project; a Hollywood era for the club that aimed to repeat their glorious ’50s. The second was leading the most talented group of players that Spain has ever produced; a split of Barça and Madrid celebrities that the manager melded into a monstrous machine.

Del Bosque was loved as a manager. Having helped bring through the likes of Guti and Raul into the first team at Madrid, he stepped back from all the transfer madness that ushered in Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo from Juventus and Inter respectively. He simply worked with whichever stars he was granted, winning two league titles and two Champions Leagues in the space of four seasons.

Del Bosque’s mindset was to seek balance, even among egos. For every Luis Figo or Zizou, a Fernando Redondo or Claude Makelele; for every Xavi or David Villa, a Sergio Busquets or Xabi Alonso. Although far from negative, Del Bosque covered for the attacking talents in his side with a stable base; he opted for a back three to beat Valencia in the 2000 Champions League Final, and selected a double-pivot of holders when Spain won the 2010 World Cup.

Critics who called it easy have since eaten their words. Barcelona have eclipsed Madrid in La Liga since Del Bosque’s days; Spain, too, suffered a decline after winning their third straight tournament at Euro 2012, although Del Bosque was at the helm in 2014 and 2016.

At the Bernabeu, it took Zidane to replicate the same kind of success. He copied the old master’s penchant for balance – Casemiro as the forwards’ foil – and dealt with any egos in a way that few others could. The Frenchman is a Champions League trophy up on his old manager, but Del Bosque has the World Cup.

What’s more, he was respected almost unanimously throughout the journey. That’s remarkable in society – let alone football. Admired, but never feared. Just as he’d wish.



14 GIOVANNI TRAPATTONI

Seven men have won the European Cup as a player and manager. Miguel Munoz was first, followed in 1985 by Serie A’s most successful coach in history. Trapattoni’s seven titles with Juventus and Inter are unrivalled, and he delivered European success to both. With Juve he also lifted the Cup Winners’ Cup and two UEFA trinkets, while his Inter charges won the latter in 1991. Ultimately, a 39-year legacy – including titles in Germany, Portugal and Austria – will be judged on all that glitters.

13 MARCELO LIPPI

After Fabio Grosso netted the winning penalty for Italy against France in the 2006 World Cup Final, Lippi didn’t jump for joy. “I turned to the bench, took off my glasses, picked up the pouch, undid the zip, put the glasses in... and then started celebrating,” he said. He’d learned a lesson: in 1996, the Tuscan was a Champions League winner with Juventus – but his specs suffered. Lippi landed five league titles in Turin, and another three at Guangzhou Evergrande.



12 JOSE MOURINHO

Love him or loathe him, Jose’s impact on football has been outstanding since he burst onto the scene as Porto boss in 2003. His pair of Champions League successes were achieved with the Portuguese dark horses and Inter; both absolute masterclasses in coaching and man-management. He revamped Chelsea in his image, turning the Blues into a dominant force that won the title leaking only 15 goals in 2004-05. Charismatic, petulant, demanding and ambitious, Mourinho has sealed 20 major titles in as many years as a manager. Winner.

11 BRIAN CLOUGH

Twice during his management days, Brian Clough took a club from the second tier and turned them into First Division champions.

If his feats with Derby weren't impressive enough, he went on to lift two European Cups with Nottingham Forest in 1979 and 1980.

In the years before his death in 2004, Old Big 'Ead penned a monthly column in these pages. Typically opinionated, Clough railed against everything from the FA to Victoria Beckham, even tipping Rushden & Diamonds to reach the top flight one day. There were also some revealing insights into how he became the greatest English boss on our list...

BE HONEST WITH YOUR SQUAD

"Football management isn't about using swear words every two seconds. It's about a deep conviction that what you're doing is right; about taking responsibility and carrying the team with you. One of my biggest tests came in 1979 when I had to tell Martin O'Neill and Archie Gemmill they wouldn't be playing in the European Cup final. They were almost like sons to me, but I couldn't take a chance on Martin's hamstring or Archie's ankle. Both had to be faced and told the truth. The hurt in their faces was obvious, but the justification came when we won the European Cup."

DEALING WITH THE PRESS

"I had my run-ins over the years with certain journalists, because there are s**ts in every profession. The way to sidetrack inquisitive journalists is to throw them a different bone than the one they want to chew on, and make them laugh with a throwaway line. By the time they've finished laughing, you're gone!"

BOOSTING AN OUT-OF-FORM STRIKER IN NEED

"I'd tell him it only takes a second to score; that he needs to be in the penalty area twice as much as normal, looking for scraps, hoping one will go in off his arse. It's like being lucky enough to have a beautiful wife and watching her get dressed in all her finery to go out to dinner. You don't say, 'That boil on your face looks terrible'. You tell her it's gone down and nobody can see it. With your striker struggling for goals you tell him, 'I fancy you to get a few today, son' and build up his confidence."

PUTTING MEN IN THEIR PLACE

"I punched Mark Crossley in the stomach after we lost 1-0 at Portsmouth in the FA Cup. Not because his blunder led to the only goal, but because he had spent a night in police cells earlier that week, after some daft incident in

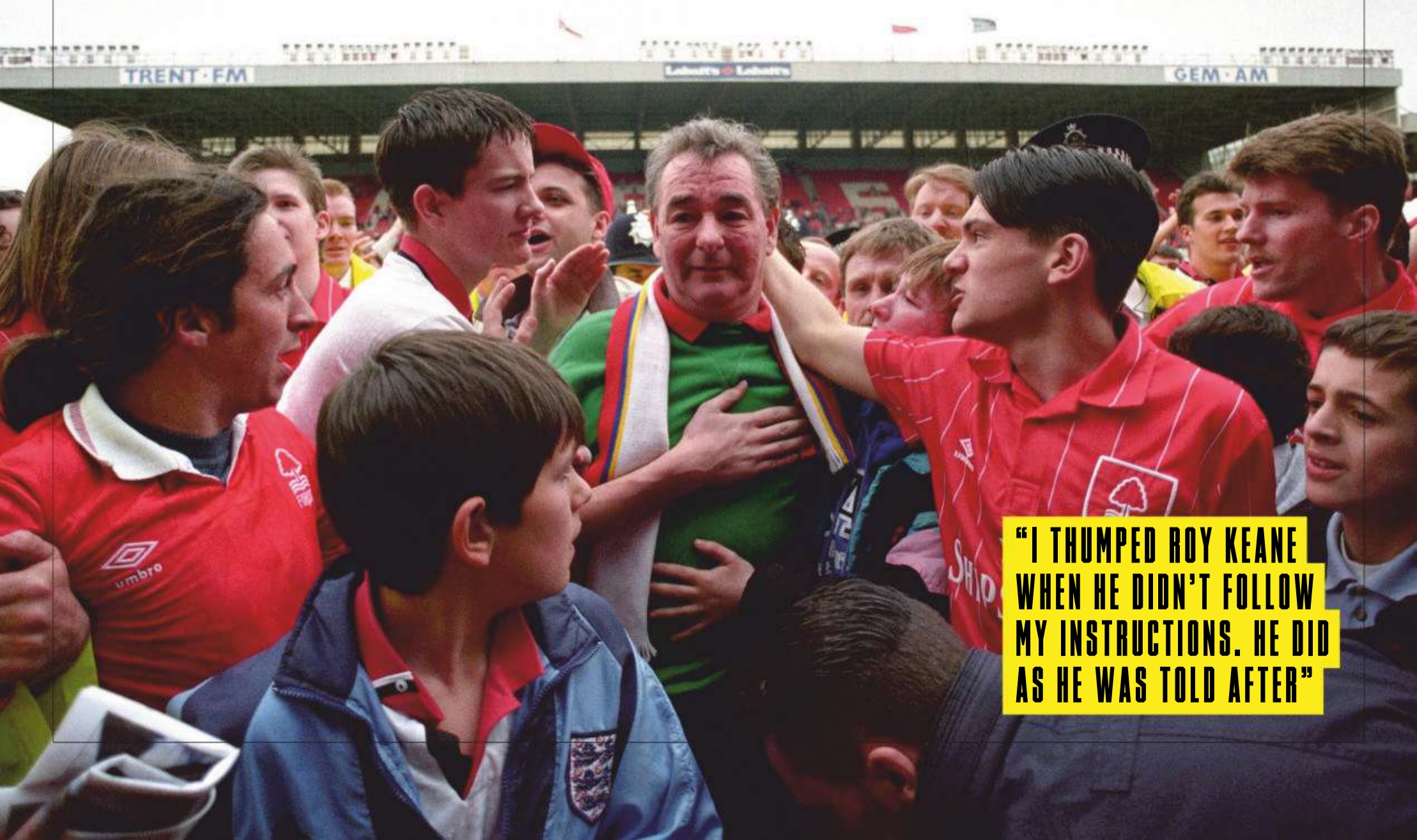
Barnsley that led to a smashed window. He knew the rules and I thumped him – probably not hard enough. I did the same to Roy Keane when he hadn't followed my instructions in a game. He did what he was told after that."

GETTING INFO ON TARGETS

"I'd use my international players to find out what the form was with a player I fancied. Does he fag it or booze it? Does he get to bed early and alone? Is he married, with bairns? I'd say, 'By heck, he can play. See if he's happy when you meet up next week'. Stuart Pearce would sometimes say to me, 'You won't fancy him, gaffer – I whacked him in training and he didn't like it'. I wanted to know as much as possible before I committed my club's money. For the rest of my transfer dealings, I'd speak openly to the press about a player that I liked. Peter Taylor was brilliant at spotting players, then I would move in for the kill."

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

"I used to encourage players to get married young – a settled family life and fatherhood can really help a player improve in his career. Sometimes, I would take them away for a few days. Their wives weren't very happy about that, so I sent them flowers and chocolates. I once fell out with Roy McFarland at Derby. He barged into my office, and I thought he was going to clock me. Just in time, I opened my desk drawer and pulled out a pair of airline tickets. 'Take you and Linda off to Spain for a few days,' I said. 'You deserve it after what you've given me for years'. He was speechless. That's management."



"I THUMPED ROY KEANE WHEN HE DIDN'T FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS. HE DID AS HE WAS TOLD AFTER"

10 VALERIY LOBANOVSKYI

In the unlikely event that you've ever won an argument with Big Dave down the pub by reeling off an Opta stat, or explained the relative merits of 'expected goals' to your dad, then there's only one man to thank.

Valeriy Lobanovskyi, a liberated left-winger in his playing days, always sought perfection. As a coach, the former maths prodigy found in Professor Anatoliy Zelentsov a kindred spirit whose desire to apply collective statistical analysis to football was met with lukewarm approval before the pair first united at Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk in 1972, two years before arriving in Kiev.

"You know, if not for you," Lobanovskyi once declared to Zelentsov at a party, "I might not have come off as a coach. I owe you my skills, formation, knowledge, understanding and realisation of football."

When the taciturn tactician explained that "a team that commits errors in no more than 15 to 18 per cent of its acts is unbeatable" or "if a midfielder has fulfilled 60 technical and tactical actions in the course of the match, then he hasn't pulled his weight", the figures weren't plucked from the crisp Kiev air.

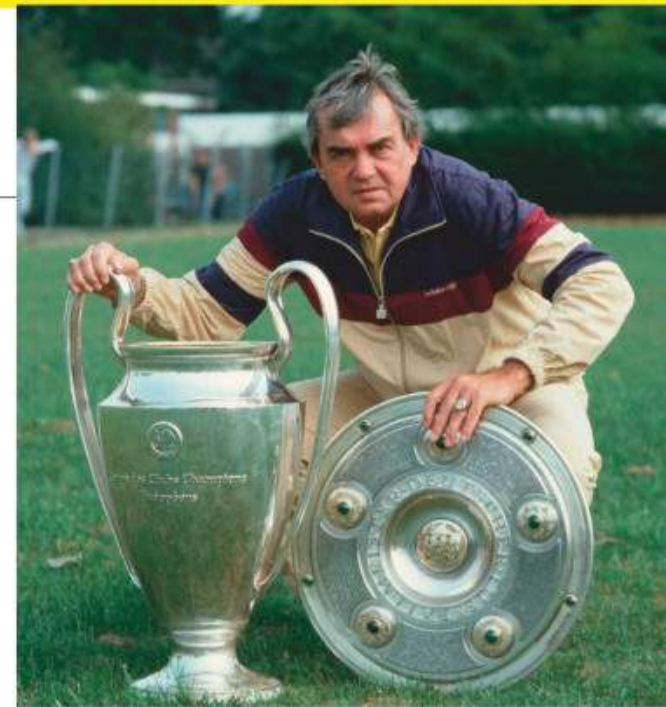
In Zelentsov's lab, the pair would pore over endless statistical streams. "All life," conceded Lobanovskyi, "is a number."

The Ukrainian demanded 'universality' from players, producing Oleg Blokhin, Igor Belanov and Andriy Shevchenko. Across a combined 21 years as Kiev coach – plus a spell leading the USSR, with whom he reached the final of Euro 88 – Lobanovskyi won just the 30 major honours, including the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1975 and 1986. It makes him the 20th century's most decorated manager.

The second of those, a 3-0 final demolition of Atletico Madrid, offered Lobanovskyi's high mark. The Soviets' second goal that evening – finished by former Ballon d'Or winner Blokhin – featured no-look passes from players who instinctively knew all their team-mates' runs. It proved the perfect symbiosis between the manager's chess-like system and his side's outrageous collective talent.

"I think..." Oleksandr Khapsalys, a Dynamo midfielder from the late 1970s, once began during a team talk. He was immediately cut off by Lobanovskyi.

"Don't think! I do the thinking for you. Play!"



09 ERNST HAPPEL

Happel was one of Rinus Michels' big inspirations. A number of the latter's hallmarks – a fluid 4-3-3 system, teamwork, the midfield domination – were pure Happel, borrowed after the Austrian's Feyenoord led Ajax 3-1 inside 20 minutes of a 1970 Dutch Cup tie between the sides.

The Vienna-born man had always been an idealist. A connoisseur of cards, cognac and cigarettes, Happel used to spend so long in a bar near De Kuip that he had his own seat to discuss tactics with anyone who'd listen.

You would struggle to find a more dominant victory than in Feyenoord's defeat of Celtic in the 1970 European Cup Final, after which Bhoys boss Jock Stein commented, "Celtic haven't lost to Feyenoord. I've lost to Happel."

The Austrian's second great dynasty came at Hamburg (1981-87): successive Bundesliga crowns, and the 1983 European Cup against Juventus. With it, he became the first coach to win the European Cup with different clubs.

In 1992, four days before his Austria played Germany, Happel's chain-smoking caught up. Some have said Austria's game died with him.

08 HELENIO HERRERA



Herrera's ultra-defensive sweeper system which inspired Italian football's decades-long mistrust of fun will be forever synonymous with the Grande Inter side he built from 1960 to 1968; winners of three Serie A titles and the European Cup in 1964 and 1965.

The Argentine saw how psychology and diet could help a team, and broke scoring records in bagging consecutive La Liga titles with both Atletico Madrid and Barça in the '50s. Hardly the stats of a militant pragmatist.

Psychology extended further. Herrera knew that superstitious star Luis Suarez believed he would score if wine were spilt in the pre-game meal – so the manager made sure he knocked over a glass for Suarez to perform his ritual.

Herrera didn't invent catenaccio, but came to embody the system he perfected.

"I've been accused of being tyrannical and completely ruthless," he wrote. "But I merely implemented things that were later copied by every single club: hard work, perfectionism, training, diets. The problem is that most of the ones who copied me, copied me wrongly."

07 MATT BUSBY

There's a story that former Manchester United defender Ronnie Cope tells of the first time Matt Busby walked back into the dressing room after the Munich Air Disaster.

His manager entered with a heavy limp, still in pain. Those present watched in silence as he closed the door, dropped his coat and stood right in the centre of the room. His eyes slowly panned around, searching each player's face with tears in his eyes. "He was looking for the ones who weren't there," recalls Cope.

Sir Matt Busby's career can be split into two eras: before and after February 5, 1958.

He'd arrived at Old Trafford 13 years earlier, fresh off coaching army teams in the Second World War. But United were in drift, without a league title since 1911. Change was needed.

Despite flogging seven players and replacing them with reserves, Busby's new team quickly

challenged for silverware, lifting the FA Cup in 1948 and league title in 1952.

They were at the end of their cycle by the latter, however; Busby was expected to sign big, but instead promoted a clutch of youth players whose story is well known by now: the 'Busby Babes' would celebrate two First Division titles between 1955 and 1957, with an average age of just 22.

They would have won so much more, had eight members of the squad not been killed on that fateful night in Munich.

Bruised and broken-hearted, the Scot took stock of his dressing room and started over. It was far from easy, but his team claimed an FA Cup just five years after the tragedy, two more titles and, most remarkably, the European Cup 10 years later.

It's a story of raw faith, perseverance and emotion. On such pillars, Busby has no equal.

BUSBY WALKED INTO THE DRESSING ROOM – HE WAS LOOKING FOR THE PLAYERS WHO WEREN'T THERE

**06 ARRIGO SACCHI**

For football fans, Sacchi is possibly the most important figure in history. Not because he won trophies and influenced the likes of Pep Guardiola and Jurgen Klopp – but because he was a shoe salesman obsessed with the game. But he had a dream.

"I never realised that to be a jockey you had to be a horse first," he quipped upon joining Milan in 1987, a sleeping giant of Serie A with just one Scudetto in 20 years.

Sacchi set about creating his masterpiece. He leaned heavily on his influences, signing Dutch icons Frank Rijkaard, Ruud Gullit and Marco van Basten. He favoured a 4-4-2 – rigid out of possession, but fluid in full tilt. Sacchi revelled in the mechanics of the offside trap, pushing his teams forward into an incredibly high press. The Italian believed there should never be more than 25 metres between the backline and frontline; his Milan concertinaed as a result, squeezing opponents and hitting them with fast, incisive attacking moves.

This was at a time when Italian football still looked to catenaccio for influence. Yet here was Sacchi, delivering a Serie A title in his first season, before lifting consecutive European Cups with the most scintillating football much of Europe hadn't seen since Rinus Michels.

Sacchi was a couple of poor penalties and a Roberto Baggio miss away from winning the 1994 World Cup, leading the Azzurri to second. He never quite recovered tactically and never replicated his blistering career at Milan – but Fabio Capello lifted his template and carried on the Rossoneri's success.

Winning always helps, but the game should also entertain. Sacchi made Italian football beautiful in a way that no one had ever done or ever has since. That's his biggest legacy.



05 PEP GUARDIOLA

“Please don’t change anything,” pleaded Andres Iniesta. “We’re on the right path and we’re playing well. Don’t change anything.”

After one game of the 2008-09 season, Pep Guardiola was feeling the pressure. Barcelona’s new coach had lost 1-0 to lowly Numancia in the La Liga opener, five days after losing 1-0 to Wisla Krakow in a dead-rubber Champions League qualifier. In their next outing, Barça could only draw 1-1 with Racing Santander.

However, Iniesta and his team-mates knew the Catalans’ weak start was false. Having sold Ronaldinho and Deco, the club were entering a new age – but little did they know quite how glorious it would turn out to be.

Results quickly swung the other way – Barça won 19 of their next 20 league matches – and by the season’s end, Guardiola’s side had won a league, cup and Champions League treble playing some of the finest football ever seen. In four years under their old player, Barça won nine major trophies – including three straight La Liga titles and two European Cup triumphs. And then he was gone.

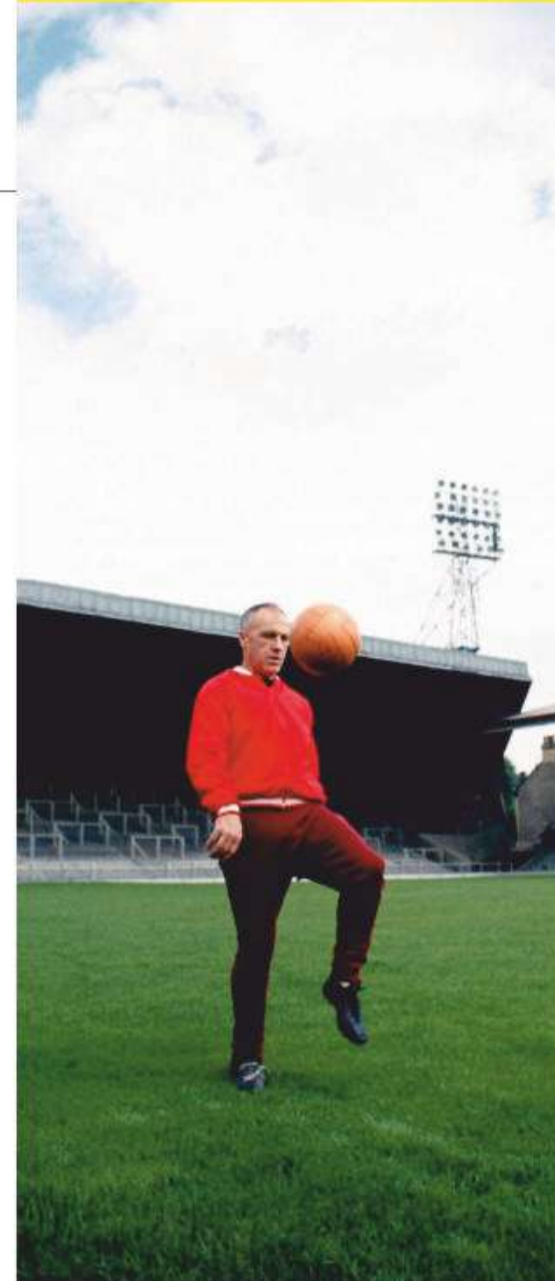
“The reason is simple,” he said. “Four years – that gets everyone tired.”

After a year out, he went to Bayern Munich, moving club legend Philipp Lahm to the base of midfield, dictating play with full-backs, and mulling the possibility of playing goalkeeper Manuel Neuer outfield...

Following three Bundesliga titles, Guardiola’s 2016 move to Manchester City was the most hotly anticipated appointment in Premier League history. City fans had to wait two years for a trophy under his tenure, but it was worth it as they watched their expertly drilled bunch of cyborgs smash the league’s points record in 2017-18. In 2018-19, they topped the table by winning their last 14 games of the season.

“We had an intense competitive spirit, and that came from the manager,” former skipper Vincent Kompany told *FFT*. “While we all know he’s a brilliant football man and an exceptional tactician, what’s just as important is that he is such a competitor. We were so driven by him.”

Now to conquer his biggest hurdle – winning the Champions League without Lionel Messi.



04 BILL SHANKLY

Shankly did more than build Liverpool; he formed a dynasty every bit as lasting as the city’s other great team from that era – John, Paul, George and Ringo.

From his very first day, December 14, 1959, the one-time miner from Glenbuck, Ayrshire, set about transforming a dying, listing, decrepit Second Division outfit. “Liverpool is not only a club, it’s an institution,” said Shankly. “My aim is to bring the people close to the club and the team, and for them to be part of it.”

He wanted football played in the right way.

“After only one match I knew the team as a whole was not good enough,” he said, before signing Ron Yeats and Ian St John. He brought through youngsters he could mould like Roger Hunt and Tommy Lawrence, too.

To improve the team’s technique, he adapted a drill he saw former Preston team-mate Tom Finney perform. Four boards formed a square and players spent two minutes at maximum intensity hitting first-time passes off the walls, or control and pass. The Liverpool Way was born in those sessions. Promotion followed in 1962, and the top-flight title two years later.

He introduced their red shorts, a statement of power designed to throw off Anderlecht in the 1964-65 European Cup. That same year witnessed the installation of the This Is Anfield sign in the tunnel.

His death in 1981 ensured his legacy – the 15ft Shankly Gates, a plinth dedicated to the club’s first famous European night at Anfield (beating defending champions Inter in 1965) and his statue beneath the Kop are all telling reminders of the house Bill built. “He made the people happy,” reads the latter’s base.

That was all Bill Shankly ever wanted.



03 JOHAN CRUYFF

Whatever way you look at it, Jesus was kind of a big deal. You may or may not agree with all the 'son of god' and 'water into wine' stuff, but his birth dictates what year it is: 2020 AD, Anno Domini, the Year of our Lord. Year zero.

So large a debt do Barcelona owe to Hendrik Johannes Cruyff, they should adopt a similar calendar: BC, AC. Before Cruyff, After Cruyff.

When the Dutchman returned to the Camp Nou as coach in 1988, Barcelona had won 36 trophies in 89 years and were yet to lift the European Cup. In just 32 years since, Los Cules have hoisted silverware 52 times, including five European Cup and Champions League titles.

Cruyff always believed in his own divinity, having already changed the world as a player. When Pythagoras in Boots arrived, Barcelona were in a mess. Cruyff was president Josep Lluís Núñez's unity candidate; a club legend who would base his attack-minded principles on Total Football mentor Rinus Michels.

"He got a blackboard and then drew three defenders, four midfielders, two out-and-out

wingers and a centre-forward on it," midfielder Eusebio told *FFT*. "We all looked at each other and said, 'What the hell is this?'"

Cruyff sold 15 players and brought in three young Basques: Txiki Begiristain, Jose Maria Bakero and Julio Salinas. But even they weren't enough to inspire tactical revolution within a more cerebral and possession-hungry side.

So Cruyff resolved to overhaul La Masia, which at the time cast aside any 15-year-old who grew to be less than 5ft 9in tall. Potential physique trumped talent every time (in case you were wondering, neither Lionel Messi, Xavi nor Andres Iniesta are taller than 5ft 9in).

"A good player doesn't need to have strong physique," huffed Cruyff. "I had short lads like Albert Ferrer, Sergi or Guillermo Amor; players without great physiques but who pampered the ball with their touch and could press the opposition like rats. Even Pep Guardiola wasn't all that, physically."

Through a mixture of relentless two-touch training and psychology, Cruyff had developed a winning machine that was playing football

from another galaxy. Cries of, "You play slower than my f**king grandmother!" or, "Two feet... you've got two f**king feet!" were often heard on the training ground.

Cruyff led Barça to 12 top honours, including four successive La Liga crowns from 1990-91; two of them on the final day of the season. But winning the 1992 European Cup was what mattered most. The Dutchman's 'Dream Team' – nicknamed after the dominant US basketball team at that summer's Olympics – conquered Sampdoria with a 1-0 win at Wembley that remains the club's most storied moment; not least because of Cruyff's three-word team talk.

"*Salid y disfrutad.*" Go out there and enjoy it.

The influence on Guardiola's Barça, Bayern Munich and Manchester City outfits, plus the Spain side which ruled international football from 2008-12, is inescapable.

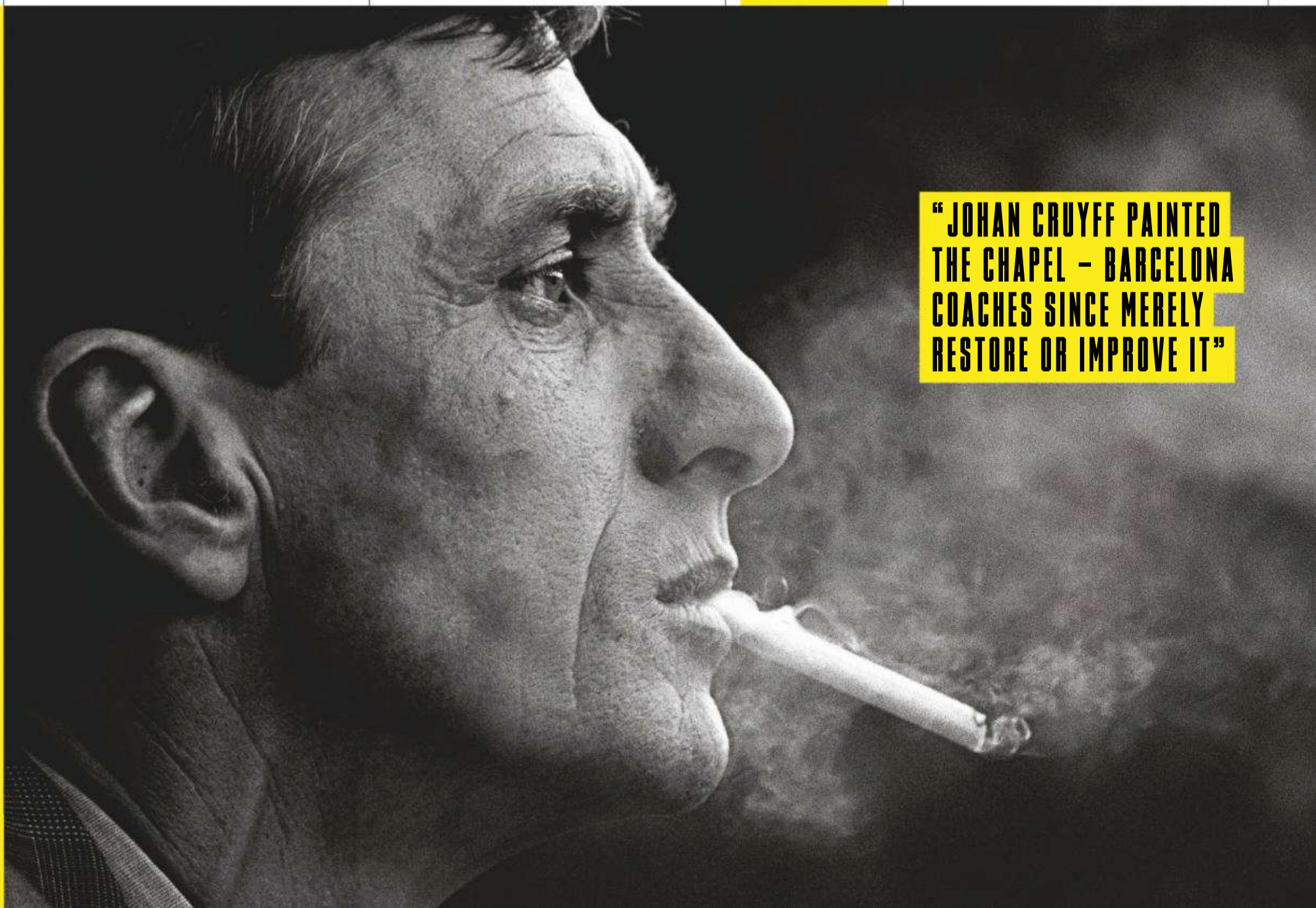
"Cruyff is the main influence in our modern football," says Xavi, vice-captain of that Spain team and frontrunner to be the next Barcelona manager. "He changed the way we play and every other coach merely adapts his ideas."

Which is just how Cruyff wanted it.

"Winning is important," he once said, "but to have your own style, to have people copy you, to admire you – that is the greatest gift."

His greatest disciple certainly thinks so.

"Johan Cruyff painted the chapel," insisted Guardiola. "Barcelona coaches since merely restore or improve it."



"JOHAN CRUYFF PAINTED THE CHAPEL – BARCELONA COACHES SINCE MERELY RESTORE OR IMPROVE IT"

02 RINUS MICHELS

Brazil were facing the Netherlands at the 1974 World Cup, and Jairzinho was trapped.

Years earlier, the tricky winger had toyed with Italy's defence to help set up Carlos Alberto's legendary goal in the 1970 World Cup Final. Now, he was looking around desperately for help, as a swarm of Dutch players hurtled towards him. First, Johnny

Rep. Then Arie Haan. Then Wim Jansen. Then Johan Neeskens.

Failing in an attempt to dribble his way out, the Brazilian panicked – feebly giving the ball away, and allowing the Netherlands to begin another passing masterclass. He may have been part of the greatest side of all time, but Jairzinho had never faced anything like this.

That evening in Dortmund, holders Brazil were beaten 2-0, and Rinus Michels had guided the Netherlands to their first-ever World Cup final. Victory was confirmed with a fine team goal that started deep in their own half, and was finished by Johan Cruyff.

“Until then, no one really knew how good we were,” Cruyff later wrote. “The game against Brazil was the moment you could point to and say, ‘That was Total Football.’”

It's a phrase that first came into existence that summer, created to describe Michels' Netherlands team and the style of play so brilliantly deployed by him. He would win the European Cup and European Championship during his distinguished career, yet arguably

CRUYFF'S MENTOR MADE EVERYONE THINK ABOUT TACTICS IN A WAY THEY NEVER HAD BEFORE



his greatest legacy came from a team that won absolutely nothing at all.

Yes, the Netherlands were beaten by hosts West Germany in the 1974 World Cup Final. But they played some of the most magical football in history, influencing coaching forever. Without Michels, there would have been no Cruyff, Van Gaal nor Guardiola.

A former Ajax striker who had scored five times on his debut as a teenager, Michels became manager of the club in 1965, at a low point in their history. They had won the Dutch title just three times in their previous 25 campaigns, and were scrapping to even survive in the top flight after a 9-4 defeat to rivals Feyenoord. The club needed new ideas.

“I needed to change the team spirit, and change the team tactically,” said Michels. Ball work was prioritised, as was squad discipline. The very next season, spearheaded by the emerging Cruyff, Ajax romped to the league title with ease.

In 1966-67 came the sign that something really special was happening: facing Liverpool in the European Cup, they overwhelmed Bill Shankly's side, racing into a 4-0 lead before half-time. Two seasons later they reached the final, where they were beaten by Milan. In 1971, though, Ajax were ready to succeed.

Having already won four domestic titles, Michels switched from 4-2-4 to a far more flexible 4-3-3, edging closer to what would

become known as Total Football. At Wembley, Ajax defeated Panathinaikos 2-0 to become European champions for the first time. Such was the tactical system that Michels had instilled, they'd win the European Cup twice more in the next two seasons, even after he had departed for Barcelona.

By 1973, Cruyff had followed his mentor to the Camp Nou and soon scored in a fabled 5-0 triumph at the Bernabeu – Michels had used the forward in an unusual withdrawn role, creating space for the Catalans' midfield to terrorise Real Madrid with runs from deep. That season, Barcelona were champions of La Liga for the first time in 14 years.

Michels became Netherlands boss just three months before the start of the 1974 World Cup – the Oranje's first major tournament since 1938 after decades of miserable results. He quickly got to work on his tactical plan, which had two simple aims: create as much space as possible when in possession, and deny opponents space or time when they had the ball. A staggeringly fierce pressing system – often featuring six or seven players charging at the ball – was combined with a ruthless offside trap. Players required high levels of intelligence and the awareness to interchange positions fluidly. Michels' system only worked if every player, no matter how talented, was disciplined enough to buy into it completely. Luckily, their manager had the aura required to instil such discipline – *Totaalvoetbal* was about to be born.

On their way to the final, the Netherlands scored 14 times and conceded only once, thrashing Argentina 4-0 before that famous victory over Brazil. “The only team I've seen that did things differently was Holland at the 1974 World Cup,” Carlos Alberto once said. “Since then, everything looks more or less the same to me.”

Michels wouldn't quite lead the Netherlands to their first major trophy that year, however: they were thwarted by a controversial penalty in the final. But he'd succeed in 1988, coming back for the Euros – again in West Germany.

Beaten by the Soviet Union in their opening game – in their first tournament appearance for eight years – the Netherlands recovered to oust the German hosts in the semi-finals, then got their revenge over the USSR in the final. Marco van Basten, star of the entire show (see *FFT* 312), would later describe Michels as ‘the father of Dutch football’.

“There is nobody who taught me as much as him,” revealed Cruyff, after Michels passed away in 2005. “What Michels brought was the importance of organisation on the field. He was instrumental in my development, and he always gave me the right advice at the right time. From when I was 18, he made me think about tactics.”

Cruyff's mentor made everyone in world football think about tactics, in a way they had never thought about the subject before.

In 1999, FIFA handed out an award for the greatest coach of the 20th century. It went to Rinus Michels.



100
GREATEST
MANAGERS

01



ALEX FERGUSON

THE 6 MATCHES THAT SHAPED FERDIE'S RISE TO GREATNESS

Vengeance, mind games and humiliation at Anfield: they all helped to make Sir Alex the best manager of all time

Words Chris Flanagan

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE 2-0 FALKIRK 1974

Fittingly, Alex Ferguson's first big result as a manager was motivated by revenge.

A year earlier, Ferguson had been a player-coach at Falkirk, in his first venture into coaching. Then John Prentice was appointed as the club's new boss, and he told a young Ferguson that his services were no longer required. "He found it hard to look me in the eye," the future manager later recalled. When the disgruntled Scot joined Ayr, a dispute ensued, as Prentice tried to deny him a payment that he felt he was owed.

In the summer of 1974, Ayr boss Ally MacLeod – later Scotland's manager at the 1978 World Cup – had recommended that East Stirlingshire appoint Ferguson, just 32, as their new manager. He had previously failed a job interview at fellow Second Division side Queen's Park; "I surrendered to nerves," he would admit one day.

East Stirlingshire had struggled at the bottom of the second tier in the previous season. When Ferguson arrived, they had only eight players and no goalkeeper. In his first game, however, he helped them to recover from 3-0 down to draw at Forfar. By early October, they were 3rd in the table, thanks to their manager's unceremonious approach.

"He was a frightening bastard from the start," said forward Bobby McCulley. His team-mate, Jim Meakin, was banished after telling his manager that he wouldn't be able to make training on Monday because he was going to Blackpool for the weekend with a club director. "I don't care if you're going with the Queen," Ferguson retorted.

Then came a match against Prentice's Falkirk, recently relegated. East Stirlingshire, based in the same town, hadn't beaten Falkirk in the league for 70 years. Determined to get one over on Prentice, Ferguson devised a game plan, analysing Falkirk in minute detail. "There's not one thing I don't know about this mob," he told his players. "I can tell you which side of the bed they lie on."

East Stirlingshire won 2-0. Later that month, Ferguson was recruited to be St Mirren's new manager. In just 117 days at East Stirlingshire, he had proven himself as a rising star.

LIVERPOOL 4-0 ABERDEEN 1980

It was defeat at Anfield that drove Ferguson to European success – and gave him the desire to put Liverpool in their place one day.

His European debut as a manager did not go well. Early in his first season, Aberdeen lost the first leg of a European Cup Winners' Cup tie to Marek Stanke Dimitrov, a club playing in only

their second – and last – European campaign, and who have since slumped into Bulgaria's regional leagues. Ferguson had attracted Aberdeen's attention by guiding St Mirren into the top flight, but his new club finished a disappointing 4th in his first campaign.

Only a year later, however, he won just the second league title in Aberdeen's history, and their first in 25 years, getting the best out of emerging talents such as Gordon Strachan and Alex McLeish as the team rose from 6th in mid-March to clinch top spot.

In their debut season in the European Cup, Aberdeen faced Liverpool in the second round.

Before the first leg, Ferguson travelled to Anfield to watch the reigning English champions in action against Middlesbrough. "So, you're down to have a look at our great team," Bill Shankly said as they met in the directors' box. "Aye, they all try that."

Liverpool won 1-0 at Pittodrie. Manager Bob Paisley had lavished praise on Strachan before the match in an attempt to soften him up; according to Strachan, it worked. "They were well armed in the psychological war department," said Ferguson.

At Anfield, Willie Miller's own goal paved the way for a hammering: Phil Neal, Kenny Dalglish and Alan Hansen all found the net in a 4-0 win. Liverpool would go on to beat Real Madrid in the European Cup final, but Ferguson was ►

furious with his team, believing they'd gone into the game with an inferiority complex.

Players were banned from laughing on the journey home. When Steve Cowan was coaxed into a smirk by a team-mate, Ferguson refused to talk to him for months. "You're a bloody disgrace," he told his team the next day. "Every c**t in Scotland is laughing at you."

A more reflective Ferguson would later confess, "We learned from painful exposure to masters of the techniques and discipline required in European competition.

"Those kinds of memories burn deeply."

ABERDEEN 2-1 REAL MADRID 1983

Two seasons after that drubbing at Anfield, Ferguson's Aberdeen had learned how to become a European force.

In the 1981-82 UEFA Cup, they'd knocked out holders Ipswich before losing narrowly to Hamburg. After Ferguson had turned down an offer from Wolves, Aberdeen progressed to the quarter-finals of the 1982-83 Cup Winners' Cup. The opposition was daunting. Real Madrid, Diego Maradona's Barcelona, Inter and PSG all remained in contention for the trophy. Aberdeen would face Bayern Munich.

The night before the first leg, Ferguson made the rare decision to take control of his side's open training session at the Olympiastadion, instead of assistant Archie Knox. He instructed the squad to belt long balls at each other, resulting in a chaotic session in which several players were hit on the head. Ferguson was trying to make Bayern believe Aberdeen were useless, and he told the press that they would settle for a 2-0 defeat. In fact, a superbly disciplined performance bagged a 0-0 draw.

A dramatic second leg saw Aberdeen come from behind to win. Their equaliser came from a deliberately bizarre free-kick routine: takers Strachan and John McMaster both ran off, pretending to leave the ball to one another, before Strachan exploited the confusion by crossing for McLeish to score. Ryan Giggs and Paul Scholes would perform a similar routine at Manchester United many years later.

Waterschei of Belgium were thrashed in the semi-finals to set up a final against Real Madrid, managed by Alfredo Di Stefano. The night before the final in Gothenburg, Ferguson gave Di Stefano a bottle of whisky, trying to lull him into thinking Aberdeen were in awe of the legend and his side. Privately, Fergie was confident of victory. "Usually, you could be playing Inverurie Locos and he would build them up as if they were Brazil," said defender Stuart Kennedy. This time, Ferguson played down the threat of Real Madrid.

After Madrid equalised in the final, Ferguson made subtle tactical changes at half-time. Aberdeen triumphed 2-1 after 120 minutes. "We slaughtered them in the second half and extra time," a proud manager declared. Di Stefano himself admitted, "Aberdeen have what money can't buy - a soul, and team spirit built in a family tradition."



**DI STEFANO ADMITTED,
"ABERDEEN HAVE WHAT
MONEY CAN'T BUY"**

MANCHESTER UNITED 2-1 SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 1993

When Ferguson moved to Manchester United in 1986, a league title was what he wanted most - even after winning three of them with Aberdeen. But, seven years into his time at Old Trafford, he was yet to break his duck.

The season before his arrival, United had looked on course to win the league, starting the campaign with 10 straight wins under Ron Atkinson before faltering badly. In the following campaign, they were fourth from bottom when Ferguson arrived in November 1986, recovering them to 11th. He led the Red Devils to second place in his first full season, which only made finishes of 11th in 1988-89 and 13th in 1989-90 seriously underwhelming. The pressure was relieved by an FA Cup triumph in 1990, then by beating Johan Cruyff's Barcelona in the Cup Winners' Cup final of 1991, but still the league title eluded Ferguson's United: 6th in 1990-91, and 2nd behind Leeds a year later.

By November 1992, Manchester United were 10th, and pundits were wondering whether it was ever going to happen. Ferguson had failed to sign Alan Shearer and David Hirst, and then new boy Dion Dublin broke his leg. United had scored just 14 goals in 15 games. "We may have to do something about it," admitted Ferguson. "There's money available, but the options aren't great."

The options were better than he had ever imagined.

Leeds phoned Manchester United chairman Martin Edwards to discuss full-back Denis Irwin. On the spur of the moment, Ferguson asked his boss to enquire if Eric Cantona might be available for a transfer away from Elland Road. Pundit Emlyn Hughes described



the subsequent signing as Ferguson's "last gamble in charge". And what a gamble it was: Cantona spearheaded Manchester United's charge into title contention.

Third in early April, they climbed above Norwich with victory at Carrow Road, but trailed at home to Sheffield Wednesday days later. Fearing that Atkinson's Aston Villa would win and move four points clear with five games left, Ferguson threw on 36-year-old Bryan Robson, who changed the game.

Defender Steve Bruce headed the equaliser with four minutes left, then repeated the feat for the winner, in the seventh minute of Fergie Time. Typically, Ferguson later insisted, "I watched the video that night and used my stopwatch for injuries and substitutions - there should have been 12 minutes."

Villa had drawn. United were top. As the challengers collapsed, Ferguson claimed his first Premier League title by 10 clear points.

JUVENTUS 2-3 MANCHESTER UNITED 1999

Ferguson had four Premier League titles when the 1998-99 season began, but his team's dominance hadn't been replicated in Europe.

The Champions League had been a constant source of frustration. United had been snuffed out by Galatasaray in a stormy second-round match in 1993-94; eliminated by Barcelona and IFK Gothenburg in the group stage in 1994-95; beaten by Borussia Dortmund in the semi-finals of 1996-97; and knocked out by Monaco in the last eight a season later.

In 1998-99, United didn't actually qualify as English title winners - Arsene Wenger had just won his first with Arsenal - but non-champions had been allowed into the Champions League as of a year earlier. United's route to the final was tough. Having edged past LKS Lodz, they were drawn into a Group of Death

WHAT THEY TOLD *FOURFOURTWO*...



with Bayern Munich, Barcelona and whipping boys Brondby. Despite scoring 20 goals in six games, United finished second behind Bayern, which might not have been enough to qualify: the Champions League had six groups, and only the two best runners-up progressed. On the final matchday, United's draw with Bayern meant their fate depended on Rosenborg or Galatasaray slipping up in Group B. Facing two winless teams, both sides managed to lose.

Defeating Inter in the quarters gave United a semi-final tie with Juventus, who Ferguson regarded as 'a benchmark' for his side – they'd reached each of the three previous finals, even if this campaign had seen them labour in their group and need a late goal to beat Olympiacos in the last eight. In the first leg at Old Trafford, Juve dominated the first half and could have had more than just Antonio Conte's goal. Ryan Giggs rescued a 1-1 draw in stoppage time.

Giggs missed the second leg through injury, days after that FA Cup semi-final goal against Arsenal. Jesper Blomqvist, who'd been part of the IFK Gothenburg team that stunned United in 1994-95, started instead. "Ferguson told us that Juventus were a great team but that they didn't have the players we did," said Blomqvist. "He was talking about Davids, Zidane, Del Piero and Inzaghi! He really believed in us."

United trailed to two Pippo Inzaghi goals, then proceeded to play Juve off the park. Led by Roy Keane, they roared back to win 3-2. Weeks later, the Champions League was theirs – as was the Treble. Football... bloody hell.

**MANCHESTER UNITED 3-2
ASTON VILLA 2009**

"This isn't just a job to me. It's a mission. We'll get there, and believe me: when it happens, life will change for Liverpool. Dramatically."

When Ferguson uttered those words in 1988, even he didn't realise *how* dramatically things

would change. He'd been a contender for the Liverpool job three years earlier, but the Reds chose Kenny Dalglish to succeed Joe Fagan.

By 1990, Liverpool had 18 top-flight titles to Manchester United's seven. Then Ferguson set about shifting the balance of power. When the 2008-09 season arrived, he had won the league 10 times with United; win it again and they'd equal Liverpool's record. Their rivals for the title that season? Liverpool themselves.

Rafael Benitez's side led the league by early January, seven points clear of Manchester United, who were 3rd despite having won the Champions League again just months earlier. Ferguson unleashed the mind games: "There's no doubt that in the second half of the season, Liverpool will get nervous."

That sparked Benitez's infamous 'facts' monologue to the press, days later. "It killed him," chuckled Ferguson. "I didn't need to say anything after that." Liverpool won only two of their next seven games as United went top.

Benitez's side would respond, though, winning 4-1 at Old Trafford. When United played their next home game against Aston Villa in early April, Liverpool were back in first place, albeit having played two games more.

Three minutes after Villa surged into a shock 2-1 lead, Ferguson summoned a 17-year-old Federico Macheda from the bench for his debut. His game plan was simple. "Gamble," said the manager. Cristiano Ronaldo levelled, then Macheda bagged the winner in the third minute of stoppage time.

United won eight of their last nine games to bag their 18th league title. A full 29 years after Aberdeen's thrashing at Anfield, Ferguson had matched Liverpool's record. By retirement, he'd won the league 13 times, taking Manchester United's tally to 20 – two clear of their rivals.

"My greatest challenge was knocking Liverpool right off their f**king perch," said Ferguson once. "And you can print that." ●

GORDON STRACHAN

"The music he chose for the team bus was bad – some pub singer. The players decided the tape had to go, and we threw it out of the window. Fergie wasn't happy – he threatened us all. Everyone laughed when we got off. We weren't laughing in front of him on the bus, mind..."

RYAN GIGGS

"When I first got into the team, someone told me that when you make 25 appearances, you were allowed a club car. Bryan Robson and Steve Bruce said, 'You should ask the gaffer – he'll get it for you, no problem'. When I asked him, I could see his face turning purple. He said, 'Club car? You've got more chance of getting a club bike!' I walked out and the lads were there listening at the door, laughing."

OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER

"He wanted us to express ourselves, and he created an environment with inner justice. Giggsy, Gary Pallister, Keano, Brian McClair, Cantona, Peter Schmeichel – we demanded 100 per cent of ourselves. From 2000, I made notes of our sessions; I realised that I was experiencing something only my team-mates could experience, because he's unique. I've got a picture of us together at the end of the Champions League final, and I'll always remember thinking at that moment, 'You deserve this – you deserve so much to win the Champions League'. We did it for him."

STEVE McCLAREN

"The morning after the Champions League final, the gaffer had all the staff in at The Cliff, planning the following season. That's why Fergie was so successful for 27 years – 99 per cent of people would want to go off on holiday but he got the staff in, medals away, asking, 'How are we going to repeat this?'"

RIO FERDINAND

"Sir Alex didn't really praise me – he was fearful that I would get big-headed. He'd say, 'Cristiano, Rooney, Tevez, Berbatov, Giggs, Scholes – brilliant', but he'd never really name-check me or Nemanja Vidic. We used to think, 'We're keeping clean sheets every other week here – what's going on?!' But it kept us hungry. We wanted to prove ourselves to him, and get the recognition we felt we deserved. It was a great bit of management."

ARSENE WENGER

"I do sometimes get annoyed with Alex Ferguson, just like he gets annoyed with me. I don't believe that you can compete at this level and be friends. But there's no bad feeling. Do I enjoy the mind games? Yes, I do."

ERIC CANTONA

"The philosophy of the club will never change while Ferguson is there. He's so strong and so popular. He can control everything. After he leaves – that's what makes me worry."





THE DEATH OF LA MASIA

Barcelona's 'Mes Que Un Club' motto has been under threat for years – but the struggle to keep Johan Cruyff's academy legacy alive is very real. Is it all Barça's fault, though? *FourFourTwo* investigates a footballing institution

Words Andy Mitten

In December 2012, *FourFourTwo* met Victor Valdes for the very first time at Barcelona's new training ground. A month earlier, the Catalan Masia graduate had featured in an away game at Levante when, in another first, the 11 players on the pitch were products of Barça's fabled academy. The goalkeeper was understandably extremely proud.

"You can't ask for any more than 11 players who have come through the youth system," he beamed. "It's something all the other great teams in the world should aim for. Why not? You don't have to make big signings to have a great club.

"This is the result of work that had been done 15 to 20 years before – it didn't happen overnight. The people they owe this to are not at the club now. I received a lot of messages from old coaches after the game. They were part of the success, too."

The roll call was formidable: Valdes, Montoya, Pique, Puyol, Alba, Busquets, Xavi, Fabregas, Pedro, Iniesta and Messi – and they eased to a 4-0 victory at the Estadi Ciutat de Valencia.

More graduates from La Masia were on the bench. The coach was Tito Vilanova, himself a former Masia student who became the No.2 to Pep Guardiola's first managerial successes. The Catalans' training complex is now named after Vilanova, who died from cancer in 2014.

The training ground, situated five miles from the Camp Nou in the Llobregat river valley, is better equipped than the true Masia: a former farmhouse (the literal translation of 'Masia' in Catalan) which still stands outside Barcelona's famous stadium. As recently as 2007, tourists on buses could see Barça's first team training right outside the ground.

The conditions were cramped, and Barcelona were one of several clubs to upgrade to more modern, spacious facilities. Their new training ground isn't as grand as Real Madrid's, but still houses 84 prospects in a building which looks like an Ibis hotel. Rather than pictures of fruit or lush forests on its walls, however, it features many of the former graduates who have made it into the first team.

In reception, there is a massive group shot of Lionel Messi, Andres Iniesta and Xavi, the triumvirate who headed the 2010 Ballon d'Or voting. When they leave their rooms, starlets see a sign proclaiming: 'Together we're strong'. There are also images of both Johan Cruyff and Laureano Ruiz: heavily influential in the club's youth revolution of the 1970s and '80s, and an inspiration to the Dutchman.

Barça want to produce upstanding people as well as great players. Education is important: respect is taught, with opponents never called enemies. Talk is of creating, not destroying; of recovering the ball, not stealing it. The Wi-Fi is switched off at night.

The players have an attractive view of their new €12 million, 6,000-capacity Estadi Johan Cruyff which opened in 2019. It's 10,000 seats smaller than the mini Estadi it replaced by the



Camp Nou, but 6,000 is a more realistic figure for Barça's B team, who have averaged around 2,900 fans over the last decade. A new ground means the days when supporters could watch the B team and then skip across to the Camp Nou for a first-team match are gone. Barça's women, one of the best teams in Europe and Champions League finalists in 2019, also use the stadium and get similar crowds.

Pictures and quotes of Cruyff are all around to inspire younger players, including, "Football is a game you play with your brain" or "I prefer to win 5-4 than 1-0".

It's a home fit for La Masia's reputation as the world's best academy, but that reputation is not what it was. With good reason.

NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN

Levante in 2012 was the high point for Barça's *cantera*, La Masia's quarry. The first team, who had won only one league title between 1974 and 1991, had metamorphosed into regular La Liga and Champions League winners, with

Clockwise from above Barça want to produce great people as well as players; Pimienta: a new Guardiola?; the swish training facility houses 84 starlets; a tribute to Tito's Masia XI

a mainstay of local players supplemented by international heavyweights drawn to a superb team, club and city. Ferran Soriano, now the chief executive officer at Manchester City and for five years the vice-president of Barcelona, preached that it was a virtuous circle where success fed success.

"In 2010, the stars aligned and three Masia players were the best in the world according to FIFA," says Jaume Llopis, an ex-footballer, close friend of Cruyff and prominent Spanish economist who's part of the Former Barcelona Players group. "This will never happen again in the history of football. La Masia was then the base of the first team, with eight graduates in each game. And of course, there was also the 11 against Levante."

So why won't it ever be the same again, and what have the Catalans done wrong en route?

"Barça lost the original meaning of La Masia," a Catalan youth coach who's worked at Barça and Espanyol tells *FFT* under anonymity. "The original theory came from Johan Cruyff, Rinus Michels, Laureano Ruiz and people like Josep

“BARÇA IS NOT CHELSEA – FANS LIKE THE IDEA BUT WON’T ACCEPT TRYING YOUNGER PLAYERS, REBUILDING AND COMING 4TH. IT’S 1ST OR 1ST”

Lluis Nunez, the former club president. Then Louis van Gaal and Pep Guardiola followed and took care of La Masia.

“They got the best players in Catalonia, Spain and, later, the likes of Messi from Argentina. It was also cost-effective and made sense – the players were prepared to play the same way as the first team and got their chance.”

Jordi Quixano, who covers Barça home and away for daily newspaper *El País*, puts it down to the club getting distracted by the question of independence, while also spending a great deal of money on redeveloping the crumbling Camp Nou. The result was, believes Quixano, that “Barcelona lost the model because those in charge didn’t share the long-term vision of their predecessors.”

So how have the club responded? Quixano is quick to point out in their defence that Barça insist La Masia is now a priority, and there have been some improvements.

“They do intend to return to that philosophy, but I doubt it can get back to where it was,” he explains. “Too many things have changed; too many players now take the big money on offer from the English Premier League, which Barça won’t pay to young players. The recession will likely cut deep at Barcelona.”

The Catalans have the highest wage bill in the world, which made up 70 per cent of their entire turnover in 2018. They needed to cut it. Huge signings like Antoine Griezmann, Philippe

Coutinho and Ousmane Dembele – the game’s fourth-, fifth- and sixth-most expensive players of all time – have, for various reasons, failed to replicate their previous form. Messi’s salary is so colossal that it adds additional imbalance. President Josep Maria Bartomeu quipped to one equivalent that his entire job was bringing in enough money to pay Messi’s wages.

The Argentine is arguably the greatest-ever footballer and progressed through Barcelona’s youth system, but even he admits it isn’t the conveyor belt of brilliance it once was. In 2018 he said, “We have lost a bit of our commitment to the academy. Important youngsters have left, and it is rare that this happens at the best club in the world.”

Manolo Marquez, a Catalan who succeeded current Barcelona coach Quique Setien at Las Palmas in 2017, thinks the club’s fans should share some of the blame.

“Barcelona is not Chelsea,” he tells *FFT*. “Too many fans admit they like the idea but won’t accept trying younger players, rebuilding and finishing 4th. It’s 1st or 1st.”

“Ernesto Valverde knew this and was more hesitant to try the youngsters. Setien, a friend who I have so much respect for, has beautiful football ideas – but he needs to win La Liga or the Champions League.”

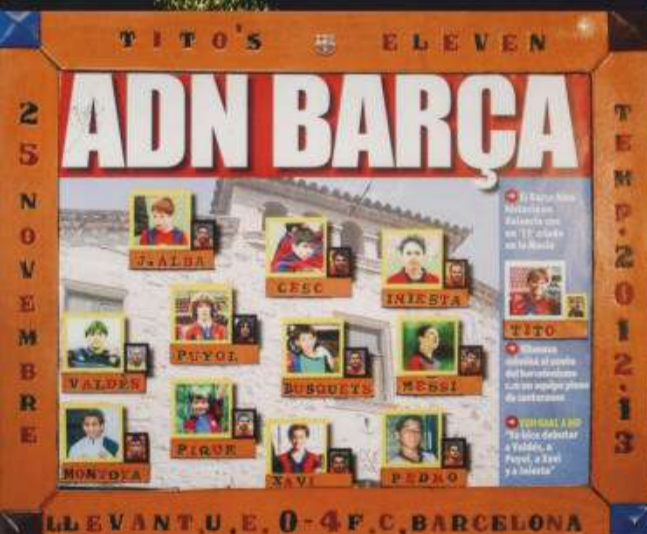
PASS AND MOVE, IT’S THE BARÇA GROOVE

Setien’s last Barça game before Spain entered coronavirus lockdown, a 1-0 victory at home to Real Sociedad, began with four graduates from La Masia: Messi, Gerard Pique, Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba. All are over 30.

Was the bench brimming with talent ready to take over? Not really. Just three of the seven substitutes came from Barcelona’s academy: Riqui Puig, Alex Collado and 17-year-old Ansu Fati, this season’s breakthrough star and the one looking most likely to be a genuine Masia success. Eleven of the matchday 18, therefore, were brought in from the outside.

Barça’s B team have been playing in Spain’s third tier since 2018, which is a decline from past glories. However, Marquez believes they now have a good coach in former winger Xavi Garcia Pimienta (left), who’s being hampered by current policy.

“He has been there a long time and helped many great players come through the ranks,” reveals Marquez. “He coached Barça’s UEFA Youth League-winning team in 2018. I could see him in charge of the first team one day, but for now he’s in the regional third division and the players are 20 or 21 when they used to be 23 or 24. Most of the best young players have been sold.” ▶



Spain's localised Segunda Division B is made up of 80 clubs and has average gates of 1,000. The gulf between that and the senior team is huge. Barça B spent most of the last 10 years in the second tier, at a far higher level.

Former Barça B captain Arnau Riera believes the gulf is too great.

"The intensity is higher in the first team," he tells *FFT*. "When I moved up to train with them, I was surprised by how fast it was. I played in a good B team: Messi, Valdes, Iniesta, Oleguer Thiago Motta and Fernando Navarro made the first team. We had all hoped to do that, but we also knew the odds were against us. It's very hard to make the jump and establish yourself in the senior side, play twice a week and deal with the mental pressure of criticism if you're not playing at your best. Sometimes, it's better if you don't have the intelligence to notice and just focus on your football."

But the philosophy was the same throughout Barça's teams.

"Pass and move," continues Riera, who later featured for Sunderland, Southend and Falkirk. "Recover the ball quickly. Get possession. Fast transitions. We were told that if you have the ball, you'll have more chances to get closer to the goal. There were few 11 vs 11s in training – it was more small-sided games; two touch. You're good if you play for Barcelona, and there is a self-assured arrogance that 'we wear this shirt, we are the best'. But the progression has

"BARÇA INVEST A LOT IN LA MASIA BUT DON'T PAY BIG FEES FOR KIDS. THEY SAY THERE'S A BETTER WAY"



Above and below

Lee Seung-woo, the 'Korean Messi', was unable to live up to the hype; but Ansu Fati is a rare recent Masia success story

stalled compared to when I was there, and the style has changed, too. The B team play more physical football in the third division."

So how has it come to this? Friend of Cruyff, Llopis, points the finger at those looking after grassroots football under ex-president Sandro Rosell and current incumbent Bartomeu.

"They depleted and razed La Masia's ideals," he claims. "They signed 47 players for Barça B and not one made it into the first team – they mortally wounded La Masia."

Rosell's hands were tied and the Catalan was partly complicit: he had been in charge when Barça broke FIFA rules between 2009 and 2013 by recruiting 10 international players under the age of 18. The club were sanctioned and given a 14-month transfer ban.

"That did a lot of damage," concedes Llopis. "No new players arrived and some of the most promising ones left."

One such starlet was South Korean attacker Lee Seung-woo, the so-called 'Korean Messi'. He's now 22 and made four league outings for Belgian side Sint-Truiden in 2019-20. Barcelona sold him to Serie A side Verona for just €1.5m in 2017 and inserted a buy-back clause. Then there are the players who left the first team for

big money: Pedro for €30m, Thiago Alcantara for €25m and Gerard Deulofeu for €13m. They were given time to establish themselves.

Not every world-beater at 15 goes on to be the next Messi, but do the young Barça players get a fair chance in 2020? Another Cruyffista, the Catalan Carles Guardia – also a companion of the Dutch legend – thinks not.

"La Masia is a business now," he says. "If we can learn from the pandemic, it's that La Masia is necessary because players can't be signed at the current rates. But this board didn't believe in it. Too many players were sold and there was too little perseverance with some of the others. Barcelona cashed in."

PAUPERS AMONG ROYAL PRINCES

Barça are not the only ones: Manchester City operate on similar lines.

The Premier League giants bring youngsters to the club hoping some will play for the first team, but the odds are stacked against them and what chance do they have if Jadon Sancho leaves in search of regular football? City cash in, selling guys like Manu Garcia, Douglas Luiz and Aaron Mooy for millions apiece. The theory is that their youth system is profitable.

"It's the Ajax model," says a current La Liga sporting director, in the market for emerging Barça players who won't make the first team. "It's business, and the Masia name was perfect from a marketing perspective. The name is an inspiration for young people around the world, but clubs and agents pick off the players now."

Having Barcelona on your CV certainly helps, as it instantly draws interest from the outside. Barça were stung when Cesc Fabregas chose Arsenal and Gerard Pique left for Manchester United as kids – a trend which hasn't stopped.

"There are vulture-like agents who have done a lot of harm, taking children on contracts via their parents with the promise of making huge amounts of money," laments Llopis.

Far better to get a Messi at 14 than try to buy him at 24, as Barça are doing more and more.

"The best generation was the class of '87," adds Llopis. "Plancheria, Valiente, Pique, Cesc, Songo'o, Claudi, Riera, Giribet, Vazquez, Messi. The one from '91 wasn't too bad, either: Thiago Alcantara, Montoya, Bartra, Rochina, Pacheco, Tello. They had some really good players then, but less so today. FIFA regulations damaged Barça; the high salaries offered by other clubs, too. And they also need first-team managers like Pep, who give kids a chance.

"Barcelona invest a lot in La Masia, but they don't want to pay big transfer fees for kids and that's key. They think there's a better way."

But is there? The big clubs are swooping for each other's youngest stars. Juventus signed Paul Pogba from Manchester United and also wanted Mason Greenwood, offering his family life-changing sums of money in 2019. United, after letting their youth system slip during the post-Alex Ferguson era by failing to keep pace with the cash that Chelsea and Manchester City were sinking in, now spend five times as much on their youth setup as they did five years ago.



The Red Devils don't release overall figures, but in July 2019 they splashed £9.3m on Hannibal Mejbri, a 16-year-old from Monaco... who had paid £1m for him when he was 14.

Barça would not pay these kind of fees under president Bartomeu and ex-general manager Pep Segura. Recently they have lost a string of Spanish youth internationals, including Adrian Bernabe (18) to Manchester City, Sergio Gomez (19) to Borussia Dortmund, Pablo Moreno (17) to Juventus, Jordi Mboula (21) to Monaco, Abel Ruiz (20) to Braga, Carles Perez (22) to Roma, and Robert Navarro (17) to Monaco and then Real Sociedad. The most hurtful exit was surely that of defender Eric Garcia to City in 2017, if only for the fact that his agent was none other than Barça royalty Carles Puyol. Almost all of these players are Catalan. They were 16 years old and on €15,000 per year as part of a first contract. City, for example, can offer €250,000.

Barça may be well off, but they are owned by their members and simply can't compete with the sovereign wealth fund of a whole country.

"Some players are still coming through, but not many," says Quixano of *El Pais*. "Ansu Fati is the most notable from the last few seasons. Carles Perez didn't get enough games; nor did Carles Alena and he was loaned to Real Betis. [Former manager] Ernesto Valverde went with more experienced players."

"THEY TALK A LOT ABOUT LA MASIA, BUT DO THE OPPOSITE – IT HURTS"

Hindsight does not judge some of Barcelona's decisions well. Left-back Marc Cucurella was one the best players on show at the Camp Nou this season – but the Catalan was playing for fourth-placed Getafe, having been allowed to leave for €6m in 2019 (Barça are also entitled to a 40 per cent sell-on fee). Was Dominican Junior Firpo, signed for €18m from Betis with €12m in add-ons, really a step up? He hasn't been a regular, but another example of Barça's transfer profligacy which means they need to sell players to raise money.

Forward Ruiz joined Braga on loan in January, but the Portuguese side can keep him for €8m. Barça's buy-back clause is €40m if they want him within two years.

Winger Perez – who featured in six of Barça's opening seven league games of 2019-20 and scored in a 5-2 win against Betis – was loaned to Roma with an obligation that the Serie A side pay €11m to sign him permanently. After netting a Europa League winner against Gent, he sighed, "I don't know what happened [at Barça]. They didn't give me a good explanation, and said 10 days before the transfer window closed that I was leaving. They no longer have patience with youth – it hurts. My dream was to play and it was taken away. They talk a lot about La Masia, but do the opposite."

Barça run close to the wind financially – as became apparent when temporary wage cuts were enforced a fortnight after La Liga stopped due to the coronavirus pandemic. Ultimately, the sums they are selling their youngsters for are difficult to turn down.

Above Barcelona's spacious complex is among the best in the world, but La Masia is no longer the conveyor belt of brilliance it was

The club's youth coaches are relatively well paid these days, earning €45,000 per year and upwards from age groups 12-19. Their scouts are less so: €8,000 per year to watch players all over Spain at weekends. Older youth coaches cashed their cachet in and accepted jobs in the Gulf, China and Japan, charged with bringing the Barça model to whichever side they joined.

There is also the business of Barça's football schools. Like many of the elite clubs, they run 50 academies worldwide where young players spend \$3,000 per year to train the Barcelona way. Yet some of their greatest names never paid a penny on their rise to the very top. Only Sergi Samper, a middle-class Catalan treated to a soccer school course by his grandfather, was immediately picked out and put into the traditional schools where the players don't pay.

Barça are due presidential elections in 2021. For some, this is too long a wait.

"The new president must make his very first objective to revitalise La Masia and make it an example for the world again," advises Llopis. "With the coronavirus and economic crisis at Barça, the only way out and a future strategy lies in all the good things that still exist in the Barcelona DNA and methodology."

"A lot has been lost. A year ago, it was led by [director of methodology] Joan Vila, who had brought through so many players across four decades. Now he's gone, too [after his contract wasn't renewed in the summer of 2018]. It's time for a 'foc nou' with La Masia."

That's a 'new start' in Catalan. Once Spain eventually returns to normal, there will also be a strong desire to restore Barcelona's values – not just their famed youth academy – back to former glories. As the legendary Cruyff once reflected: "There is no greater medal than to be acclaimed for your style." ❖

MORE ON FOURFOUR TWO.COM

• Barcelona's Generation '87: When Messi, Fabregas and Pique killed the competition at La Masia (by Andrew Murray)

• Quiz: How many of the 49 Barcelona stars to play under Pep Guardiola in La Liga from 2008-12 can you name?

• How Cruyff reinvented modern football at Barcelona (by Andrew Murray)



BETWEEN
THE LINES



Twenty-five years ago, Blackburn Rovers won the Premier League on a dramatic final day. In his own words, defensive rock Colin Hendry tells *FFT* how a Lancashire town rose to the top of English football

“

I WAS IN SUCH DESPAIR WHEN LIVERPOOL SCORED THEIR WINNER.
THEN CHRIS SUTTON STARTED DANCING WITH ALAN SHEARER.

WE WERE CHAMPIONS!

”

Interview Chris Flanagan



B

Blackburn Rovers paid £25,000 to sign me from Dundee back in 1987. To be honest, I wouldn't have been able to tell you where Blackburn was at the time. Don Mackay brought me in to be a centre-back, but sometimes I'd play centre-forward in the early days. Not long after I arrived, I scored the winner in the Full Members' Cup final against Charlton. Not many Scottish players have scored a winner in a Wembley cup final. We were a mid-table side in the Second Division, and never in my wildest dreams did I believe we could be champions of England one day. There were so many bigger clubs than Blackburn.



Soon, though, I became aware of Jack Walker. At first, he had more of a behind-the-scenes role. He had helped the club sign Steve Archibald from Barcelona and Ossie Ardiles from Tottenham – no mean feat for Blackburn back then. We made the play-offs two seasons in a row, but didn't go up. We were competing with top teams – Chelsea beat us in the first year, then Crystal Palace with Ian Wright.

In 1989, I moved to Manchester City for £750,000. Blackburn needed the money and City were a big club. But a couple of years later, Peter Reid signed Keith Curle and wanted to let me go. I still had unfinished business at Blackburn, and they agreed to pay City what they'd spent on me – £750,000.

By then, Walker had officially taken over the club and Kenny Dalglish was the manager. Kenny had left Liverpool after Hillsborough and was available – but bringing him in was a big statement... a masterstroke. He was my idol as well. I think he's Scotland's greatest-ever footballer.

Kenny was always going to attract players to the club, and Jack was spending money. He was developing the club to bring it up to the top level, and had three new stands built at Ewood Park. There were other clubs trying to do it too, like Derby and Wolves – Sir Jack Hayward was throwing money at the latter – but both failed miserably.

We would train on playing fields at Pleasington, dodging the dog s**t and putting the goals up ourselves. Occasionally, a funeral procession drove past on its way to Pleasington Crematorium, so we would stop the session and show our respects. The facilities weren't luxurious, but they never harmed us – and Kenny loved it. He had a great partnership with Ray Harford, who was an outstanding coach.

In Kenny's first season, we beat Leicester in the 1992 Second Division Play-Off Final to get into the new Premier League. From there, I think Jack said there was a five-year plan to play in Europe. Within three, we had won the league.

Alan Shearer arrived after promotion – but to be honest, we didn't know a lot about him at that point. David Speedie joined Southampton as part of the deal, and many people couldn't understand why he had to leave – he'd been the catalyst for Blackburn getting promoted. But without Alan, we wouldn't have won the title.

On Fridays, we played five-a-side and Alan would always be on the same team as Kenny – you can imagine how hard it was to play them, particularly as Harford wouldn't let anybody put a tackle in! He'd say,





“THE TEAM SPIRIT WAS UNBELIEVABLE – WE DIDN’T ALL HAVE TO LIKE EACH OTHER, WE JUST HAD TO RESPECT ONE ANOTHER”

Left and above “They may take our lives, but they’ll never take our title”; Rovers remain the Premier League’s only town champions

‘If anybody f**king tackles, you’re getting sent back in!’ How can you not tackle?! But it made me a better player – it was a test every time.

We came 4th in our first Premier League season, even though Alan did his anterior cruciate ligament against Leeds, and we missed him. In the second season we were runners-up to Manchester United, and in the third season we thought, ‘Right, let’s go again’.

We had a settled side: Tim Flowers in goal, Tim Sherwood in midfield, Graeme Le Saux and Jason Wilcox on the left, and Henning Berg and Stuart Ripley on the right. It was a stereotypical 4-4-2 formation, and everybody knew their job.

Upfront, Chris Sutton arrived from Norwich to partner Shearer. Suttty was a great player – he wasn’t everybody’s cup of tea throughout the game, but he was a good foil for Alan. The two of them played a huge part in what happened that season. The team spirit was unbelievable, too. There were players who didn’t like each other, but we didn’t have to like each other – we simply had to respect one another. Sometimes things would happen – you only need to look at the fight between Le Saux and David Batty in the game at Spartak Moscow the season after to see there was an undercurrent.

Once, I had a scrap with Mike Newell and we were both sent home from training. Ray rang me and said, ‘It’s your fault, Colin’. I said, ‘I’m not f**king taking the blame!’ But a day later, we played a game – and we won. We were professionals.

Players would have banter as well. On the bus, there was a hammer that you’d used to break the glass and escape in an emergency. One day, some of the lads came up with a game where they would tap the

window with the hammer, and each person had to tap it a little harder than the last one. Well, one tap too many and the window smashed. I wasn’t involved myself, but we all got fined.

In the season we won the league, we started really well, but then we lost to Trelleborg in the first round of the UEFA Cup. I think a part-time rat catcher scored and we got slaughtered by the media. We went out 3-2 on aggregate and, looking back, it’s just as well that happened or we’d have had even more games to play.

In the league, we built up an advantage. Some people talked about Manchester United losing Eric Cantona to suspension in January after the kung-fu incident at Selhurst Park, but that was an excuse. Cantona was a great player, but I didn’t mind playing him – he was one of the easier ones to go up against, if I’m honest.

For me, our key game was against Everton in early April. I’d been to Russia with Scotland in midweek, then we had a lunchtime kick-off at Goodison Park on the Saturday. Suttty and Shearer both scored, and we were 2-0 up within six minutes. Then Everton got a goal back, and the second half was a bit like the Alamo. At one point, they won a corner and there was a massive scramble. It went out for another corner, and when that came in, Shearer wellied it – and I mean f**king wellied it – as far away as possible into the top row of the main stand. Boos rang out all the way around the ground. People were shouting, ‘F**king title contenders and you’re doing that with half an hour to go!’ But we won the league by a point. If we had drawn against Everton, we would have finished second. Three days later, Suttty scored at QPR and we won 1-0 – that was the week that did it.

We kept quite a lot of clean sheets that season – that was down to everybody, not just me, but it was a great honour to be named in the PFA Team of the Year. Defending was my job and centre-back is a very important position – if you’re weak there, you leave yourselves open. You need to know your job, push and pull people around and be well organised. Sherwood was the captain, but I would bark orders at him because I was facing the play and you need instructions from behind. The fans called me ‘Braveheart’ and I quite liked that. The film was on about that time and I was Scotland’s captain, 6ft tall with long blond hair – although I don’t know if Mel Gibson was as good looking as me! It was decent banter.

After the win at QPR, we stuttered in the last month of the season – but we had created a points advantage over the course of the year, so could afford to do that. Alex Ferguson tried to throw several different quotes out, mentioning Devon Loch and final hurdle falls. All the mind games were going on, but Kenny could handle it – they’d had run-ins before with the rivalry between Liverpool and Man United.

On the penultimate weekend of the season, United were at home to Sheffield Wednesday on Sunday. If they didn’t win, we would become champions if we beat Newcastle on Monday night. I was friends with Jack Walker’s son, so went over to his house, and Sky asked me if they could bring a camera to show my reaction if United failed to win. You wouldn’t get that these days – United, Liverpool, Chelsea or Man City would say, ‘F**k off, you’re not getting that, no chance!’ But it was OK then. Looking back, I’m glad United won 1-0 because it saved me from going on TV and saying something that would be taken out of context.

We beat Newcastle on the Monday – Shearer scored – then went to Liverpool on the last day. United were at West Ham, two points behind us with a better goal difference. If United got three points, we had to win at Anfield. It was a crazy day. It was win-win for Liverpool, as their idol was back in town. If Blackburn won the title, Kenny Dalglish won it at Anfield. Liverpool didn’t like United either!

The game management thing wasn’t something I’d been involved in before, and I never was again. We went 1-0 up through Shearer and thought, ‘Right, let’s get a second goal’, because 2-0 would have been controllable. But Suttty missed a chance in the second half and John Barnes equalised. You can’t even begin to assess how to go about the rest of the game – f**k knows what was happening in United’s match.

We thought we needed a winner, and probably took chances looking for a goal. Then, in stoppage time, Jamie Redknapp put Liverpool 2-1 up with a direct free-kick. I can’t tell you how much despair I was in – I thought United would be winning, and we needed two goals. ▶

“THE CELEBRATIONS WENT ON FOR A WEEK. EVERY DAY I WAS IN A DIFFERENT PUB”

In the end, things worked out well – in fact, things worked out really well. A few seconds after Redknapp’s goal, Suttty started celebrating on the pitch, dancing around with Shearer. It was surreal – the game was still going on, and at first I was like, ‘F**king hell, we need a goal!’ But they’d heard from the bench that it was all over at Upton Park. United had only drawn 1-1.

We were champions. We were winners. As a kid, I’d grown up in the Highlands kicking a scrunched-up Coke can around the back yard. Now, I was a Premier League winner. Where I was from, it was unheard of.

The celebrations went on for a week – every day I was in a different pub. The following Saturday, Blackburn’s commercial manager called me and asked if I could do an event for charity in Blackpool, on live TV. Me and Judith Chalmers ended up on the front of the Big One – bear in mind I’d had a week of drinking before this! Kids were sat behind us, tapping me on the shoulder saying, ‘Big Braveheart s**tting himself on the Big One!’ It was a crazy time.

Sadly, we never challenged for the Premier League title again. Kenny moved upstairs that summer to become the director of football, which was a big shock for all of us. One minute he was the manager, the next he wasn’t. The balance had been great when Kenny was the manager and Ray Harford was his assistant. Ray had made his relationships with the players as a No.2, and it was hard when he became the manager. We didn’t really sign anyone that summer. We went in for pre-season training, and I think Christophe Dugarry and Zinedine Zidane had been there the day before, but the deals didn’t happen.

Our Champions League campaign was such a disappointment. When we were drawn in the same group as Spartak Moscow, Legia Warsaw and Rosenborg, I thought we’d do pretty well. But we finished bottom



of the group – we had so many chances at home to Spartak and Legia, and just couldn’t score. Then the Batty and Le Saux incident happened in Moscow, and I got sent off for two yellow cards in the same game.

In 1998, I went home to Scotland with Rangers and was part of the team that won the Treble – we won the league at Parkhead. It was so sad to see Blackburn get relegated straight after I left.

In 2012, I went back to the club for a spell as a coach – Steve Kean brought me in and a lot of the fans said, ‘How can you work for him?’ But I wasn’t going back for one man, I was going back because it was Blackburn Rovers. Unfortunately, they were crazy times for the club – Venky’s brought in Shebby Singh as global advisor, and in one season the manager went from Steve, to Eric Black, to Henning Berg, to Gary Bowyer, to Michael Appleton, to Gary Bowyer again. Gary steadied the ship, and now under Tony Mowbray they appear to be on the cusp of something. Hopefully they can get back to the top flight in the future, and do what teams like Wolves or Sheffield United have done.

Can a town team win the Premier League again? You never know, but I’m proud of being involved in the last side to do it. When I go back to Blackburn, everybody tells me the same thing – ‘Until my dying day, I’ll never forget what happened’. In 1995, blokes would say, ‘Even if I don’t see next week, I’ll die a happy man because of what I’ve seen the club achieve’.

There are some similarities with Leicester in 2016 – people said they would hit a bad patch and other teams would catch up, but they never did. People thought the same about us.

Jack Walker’s input was really important, but I’ve always disagreed with those who say Blackburn bought the league. Man United signed Wayne Rooney for £25 million and Rio Ferdinand for £30m – both left on free transfers. We bought Shearer for £3.3m and sold him for £15m. We signed Sutton for £5m and sold him for £10m. Le Saux arrived for £1m and left for £5m. I cost £25,000 and joined Rangers for £4m. So yes, we paid transfer fees, but it was business. We assembled a team, and progressed every season until we won the title.

When I turned up at Blackburn in 1987, I could never have imagined that we’d become champions. But we did it, and nobody can ever take that away from us. 🍷

Above and below
Big Al gets the party started at Anfield; “I joined a mid-table Second Division side – never in my wildest dreams did I believe we’d be champions of England one day”



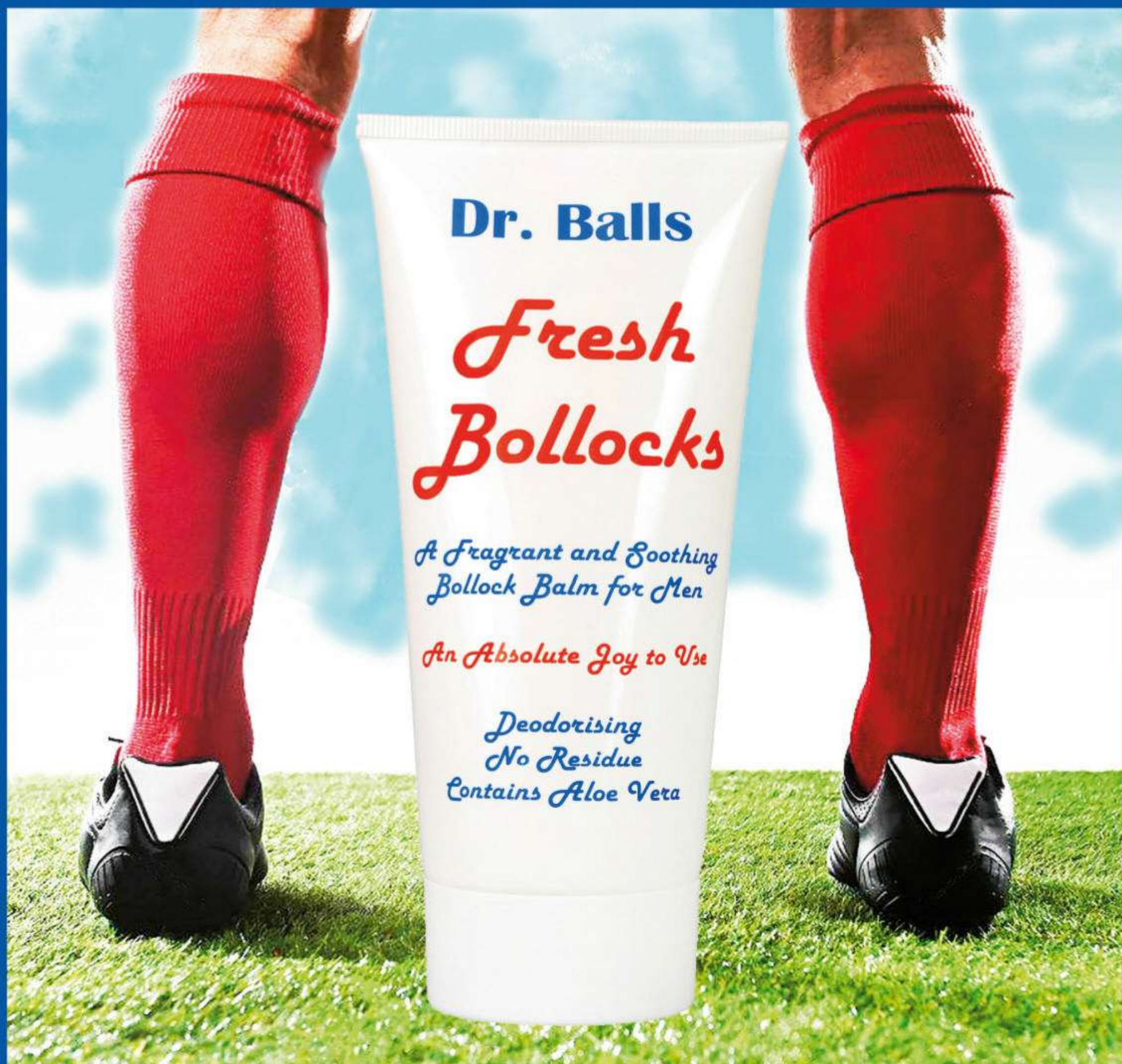
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LIVERPOOL'S GREATEST CUP

... YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

This isn't the first time the Reds' party vibes have been dampened. In 1963-64, Bill Shankly's champions were denied trophy celebrations at Anfield, but it didn't stop them saving the day

Words Ed McCambridge

“When the Kop is roaring, it really is like having a 12th man there on the pitch.” Today's cliché was yesterday's term of endearment for Bill Shankly, whose link to Liverpool and its fans felt almost preordained. The ninth of 10 kids born into a working-class mining family in the poverty-stricken Scottish village of Glenbuck, 'Wullie' – as he was known affectionately at home – toiled down the coal pits himself before signing professional terms at Carlisle United in 1932.

Liverpudlians were Shankly's kind of people: dockers and factory workers; folk with a strong sense of community and enough humour to pull them through the darkest times. Crucially, they adored football. He formed an immediate bond with Reds fans that laid the foundation for 15 remarkable years and beyond at Anfield, long into the reigns of his grateful successors.

It was this bond, too, that would eventually lead to Liverpool lifting one of the least-known, yet most cherished cups in the club's history – not once, but twice. A trophy which would later come to be called the Curlett Cup.

“In my opinion, it's as valuable and important to Liverpool FC as any other trophy we have in our collection,” Stephen Done, senior specialist and curator at the Reds' museum, explains to *FourFourTwo*. “We have league titles on show here and European winners' medals – even the real Champions League trophy from Istanbul in 2005, which isn't a replica but the genuine article. However, for me, the Curlett Cup stands equal among them.”

If you've never heard of it, you're not alone: the majority of Liverpool fans aren't aware of it either. But it means something, and for four decades it looked like Merseysiders may never see it again.

ANTHROPOLOGY ON THE KOP

In 1963-64, Liverpool – a Second Division side when Shankly had taken over five years earlier – were on course to clinch their first top-flight crown for 17 years. A victory in the final home game of the season against Arsenal would be enough to seal the title ahead of Manchester United and Everton, setting the stage for some almighty celebrations at Anfield.

An extraordinary BBC *Panorama* documentary of that April day probed the distinctive nature of the Reds' Kop, 28,000-strong and swaying in motion while singing ditties like *She Loves You*: The Beatles' hit single of 1963.

“I have never seen anything like this Liverpool crowd,” hummed presenter John Morgan. “An anthropologist studying it would be introduced to as rich and mystifying a glimpse into popular culture than any South Seas island.” ▶

But there was a small problem. Unlike now, the trophy wasn't brought to a stadium for the champions' ceremony unless they had already won the league before kick-off. Liverpool would lift the trophy, therefore, at Birmingham City four days later, providing they successfully saw off the Gunners.

For two local brothers in their early twenties, this just wouldn't do. So, they hatched a plan.

"My dad, Terry, and uncle Teddy knew a win over Arsenal would give us the title at Anfield, but that there wouldn't be a trophy to parade," Franny Curlett, Terry's youngest son, says with a broad smile as he begins to tell his family's priceless story.

"They couldn't have that, so got together and made a trophy using an old vase of my nan's. First they painted it red and white, then cut out photographs of the players from a newspaper and stuck them on."

The old vase looked the part, except for one important element.

"It didn't have a lid," laughs Franny. "All cups had a lid at the time, so they decided to make one out of the wooden cap that goes on top of a bannister. It fitted perfectly."

Making a trophy was one thing, but making it useful was another entirely. The Curletts wrote a letter to Liverpool offering the club their cup should they need it – and were astonished to receive a personal reply from Shankly himself.

"Bill invited them along to the Arsenal game as guests and told them to bring the cup with them," Franny – a childhood friend of Robbie Fowler – continues. "Liverpool won 5-0, so the trophy was given to the players straight after the final whistle. They danced with it on the pitch, showing it off to fans like the real thing, and then took both dad and Teddy into the dressing room with all their heroes. They were football mad, the pair of them, so it really was a dream come true."

In pictures from that afternoon, Ron Yeats – a man of such terrifying stature that Shankly urged journalists to walk around him during his unveiling, in order to get a better idea of his size – can be seen prancing down the touchline in front of an elated Kop. In his hand is an old vase painted by two local lads who, pitchside, couldn't believe what was happening.

"No one felt ridiculous as they held it," says Stephen Done at the Liverpool museum, "and no one felt embarrassed. Many managers may



have told their players not to take things from the crowd, but Shankly had it all planned from the start – he understood what football meant to the people of Liverpool.

"Shankly got the spirit of Liverpoolians better than anyone. He answered every single letter he was sent, from his own typewriter. The Scot wasn't a good typist, either; he was famously slow. His responses never sounded very official;

they were personal, and sometimes included little pictures or comments to show he'd read the letter thoroughly. He felt he owed the fans a genuine response if they'd taken the time to write to him."

The Curlett Cup was such a crowd-pleaser, it was brought back out for Liverpool's 1965-66 title triumph after they secured top spot with one match to spare. The brothers had offered

MUSEUMS OF CURIOSITY

The Curlett Cup is ho-hum compared to these oddities among club artifacts

KLOPP'S BROKEN GLASSES

Catch up, Liverpool: Borussia Dortmund's 'Borusseum' has a pair of Klopp's damaged bifocals on display. The German gaffer's glasses were smashed in BVB's 2011 win at Bayern Munich, as scorer Nuri Sahin celebrated with his boss. It sparked an odd wave of compensation claims for broken specs, featuring pictures that looked suspiciously like Jurgen's wrecked eyewear. Nice try...

THE LIMO'S A KEEPER

Serbian goalkeeper Ivan Curkovic is a Saint-Etienne idol from their 1970s heyday, winning four league titles, so they honoured him with, er, a car. Curkovic bought his Mercedes-Benz limousine as a kind of consolation prize after losing the 1976 European Cup Final against Bayern, later donating it to raise money for Les Verts' museum. Instead, president Roland Romeyer put the motor in it.

PELLE'S HAIR GEL

Former Southampton striker Graziano Pelle clearly felt boots, shirts and medals were too dull to contribute, so gave the Feyenoord museum some of his hair slap. The Italian, who scored 55 goals in two seasons at De Kuip, handed over the signed ball he bagged his first hat-trick with, plus a comb and a pot of hair gel. Considering his pristine barnet, we assume there was plenty in reserve.



their mum's vase to the club for a second time, and were once again guests of honour for the 2-1 win at home to Chelsea.

But that was the last time the trophy would be seen for more than 40 years.

"I WAS JUST GOBSMACKED. 'IT COULDN'T BE IT', I THOUGHT. I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT"

"It vanished off the face of the earth," explains Done, who dreamed of tracking it down after being hired by the museum in 1997, more than three decades later. "Soon after taking the job, I put together a list of all the things I'd love to find and put in the museum. That cup was top of the list, but no one had a clue where it went after those celebrations."

The big problem was that its creators' names were never noted. "It was just assumed that it had been lost, broken or taken down the pub somewhere," he continues. "It could have been at the bottom of a skip for the last 30 years as far as we knew. This was before the internet, so there was no way of finding out where it went. I pretty much had to give up."

Above Captain Ron Yeats raises the cup at a jubilant Anfield

"IT'S AS IMPORTANT TO LIVERPOOL AS ANY OTHER TROPHY WE HAVE IN OUR COLLECTION, INCLUDING THE EUROPEAN CUP FROM 2005"

As it later transpired, Terry Curlett had hung around until the conclusion of the celebrations and taken his prized piece of memorabilia back home with him. It was now a cherished family heirloom, and he hated the thought of it being lost or broken. He carefully wrapped it up and stashed it in the attic, daring to bring it out for special occasions only.

"We'd have family round and my dad would say, 'Come on, let's get the cup out and have some pictures with it!'," says Franny, who was born in 1975, nine years after the second title jamboree against Chelsea.

Even by that time, those jubilant events had faded from memory for most Reds supporters, and Franny had no idea quite how sought-after his grandmother's vase had become.

Terry Curlett passed away following a heart attack in 1995, aged just 56. Tragically, Franny's older brother Christopher had died two years earlier, having committed suicide. Franny has a tattoo on his arm in tribute to both.

"I was close to the pair of them," he recalls. "My brother and I used to listen to his stories about those times. Dad was always down the pub with his mates, telling jokes and having a laugh. He was a massive Liverpool fan, and a lovely man all round."

In the summer of 2006, Franny decided to do something with his dad's cup.

"I sat down with my mum, who's still with us now, and said, 'Look, we can't keep this thing up in the attic forever,'" he says. "Not when so many people might love to see it. She agreed, and I phoned the museum the next day."

It was a call curator Done will never forget.

"A colleague of mine said there was a chap on the line who owned something I might be interested in," he remembers. "When she put him through, I soon knew what he was talking about. I was utterly gobsmacked. 'It couldn't be it', I thought. I didn't believe it."

"I thought the line had gone dead," laughs Franny. "I said, 'Hello, are you still there?' and Stephen said, 'I'm still here, Franny. I just can't believe what I'm hearing'. I popped down with the vase that afternoon. Stephen and the rest of his staff were all gathered to see if it really was the one they'd seen in those old pictures."

It was, of course. Understandably, Done lists that day the Curlett Cup fell into his lap as one of the best he's had at the museum.

"It's been out on display ever since," he says proudly. "And as far as I'm aware – and as long as Franny's fine with it being here – it'll never go off display. The red and white paint is a bit faded, several of the players signed it and the ink is slowly disappearing, but it's perfect. I'm so happy we have it here."

KLOPP THE KINDRED SPIRIT

Fast-forward to 2020, and Liverpool are once again the best team in England. Once again, however, they face a party-poopng finale to their first title win for 30 years.

Jurgen Klopp's side have been so dominant this campaign that it's taken a global health emergency to halt their procession, although it hasn't been through lack of effort elsewhere.

In February, 10-year-old Manchester United fan Daragh Curley wrote to Klopp wondering if the Reds could start losing a few games and give everyone else a chance. Like the Curlett brothers, Curley was shocked to get a personal response – only his query was politely rejected.

"Unfortunately, I cannot grant your request," explained the German. "As much as you want Liverpool to lose, it is my job to help them win. There are millions of people around the world who want that to happen, and I really do not want to let them down."

Had Terry Curlett been alive today, would he have been a fan of Klopp – another charismatic Liverpool boss with a love of the locals?

"Oh yes, he would have adored him," insists Franny. "How could you not warm to him? He has the same qualities and values as Shankly. He loves the supporters and knows how much they mean to this club. Klopp is right up there with that great man in terms of character. My dad would have been proud of what the team have achieved this season."

Should Liverpool's title celebrations be culled, we could even see the Curlett Cup dusted off for one last coronation.

"Let's hope it never comes to that, although it would be wonderful," says Franny. "Can you imagine? How bizarre that would be to see my dad's trophy given another run-out. He would have loved that."

This is the story of a club who embraced an old vase, part of a staircase and a collection of newspaper cuttings, then transformed it into the stuff of legend. In that regard, Liverpool walk alone. 🍷

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• Why Shankly and Klopp share so much in common (by Peter Hooton)

• The five key moments that have defined Jurgen's Klopp's time as Liverpool manager (by Matt Ladson)

• Why Liverpool fans sing 'You'll Never Walk Alone' (by Paul Brown)

GORGEOUS JORGE

He's been knocked back and written off, both more than once – but Jorginho never stays down. The pass master and penalty maestro tells *FFT* how two lives in Brazil and Italy, plus his latest chapter with Chelsea, have shaped this unlikely comeback king

Interview Marcus Alves **Pictures** Leon Csernohlavek



“I COULD NEVER FORGET IT, MAN — IT’S JUST SUCH AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR ME.”

Jorginho is reflecting inside a room at Chelsea’s Cobham training ground, with only a table separating him and his thoughts from *FourFourTwo*. It’s been a long journey for him to reach this stage – much longer and more difficult than anyone would be able to tell from the outside.

These days, the 28-year-old is a cheerful, smiling Italy international in the midst of his second season at Stamford Bridge. But he knows exactly when it all started for him. He doesn’t even blink before saying the date: November 27, 2007 – the day he set foot in Europe for the first time. Back then, the Brazil-born youngster was just another 15-year-old chasing his footballing dream, far away from family and friends – more than 10,000 kilometres away, to be precise.

That date may be seared in Jorginho’s conscience, but his story really began in his Brazilian hometown of Imbituba – “a beautiful and amazing place,” he says. From there, he was driven to the biggest nearby airport in Florianopolis, an island city in the southern state of Santa Catarina. He then boarded a flight to Sao Paulo, made a stop in Frankfurt, and finally arrived in Verona, Italy.

“Once we landed, the first reality shock was the cold,” he winces now, remembering the wind lashing his face. “Gee, it was freezing. I can still picture my agent’s wife waiting for us and me there, by myself, incapable of speaking a single word of Italian. We got into a car and headed over to Verona’s downtown area via a famous local *tangenziale* road. None of the trees had leaves on them – they looked so European. I’d never seen anything like it before.”

That was his second attempt to reach Italy, though. The first had not been quite so successful.

A month earlier Jorginho had prepared to make the same trip, only to be denied permission to leave Brazil inside Sao Paulo airport’s immigration office. That time, he wasn’t entirely on his own – there were four other kids from the football academy he was part of travelling alongside him.

But while he sat and waited, stuck at a desk and unable to understand what was going on, Jorginho watched the rest of his party pass him by. Ultimately, as he would soon find out, the wide-eyed boy was forced to stay behind – one of the important documents he needed was missing a signature from his dad.

For a moment, Jorginho figured his European football dream was over. His voice was reduced to a broken whimper as he called his parents from the airport, sobbing in despair. His worst nightmare had come true.

“I couldn’t believe it,” he says. “I cried so much, because obviously your first thought when something like this happens is, ‘Will I make it?’ I was afraid they’d change their mind and not take me with them any more. It wasn’t easy to see my mates travelling while I sat there, powerless to do anything. Lord, it was difficult... very difficult.”

Despite his age, Jorginho had already endured his share of frustrations with football – and wasn’t prepared to suffer another.

“Before going to Italy, I underwent trials with a few clubs back home,” he says. “I trained at Sao Paulo, Palmeiras and Internacional, but didn’t make the cut at any of them.”

Regardless of the efforts made by his father, who drove him to each of the trials with Brazil’s big clubs, a career on home soil didn’t seem to be on the cards at that point. Jorginho was unwilling to let the same happen to his chances abroad, and knew the opportunity to join Hellas Verona’s academy was too good to miss. So finally, in late 2007, he embarked on what would become the adventure of his life – one that has allowed him to meet his wife, start a family, embrace a new country and represent them at international level.



Jorginho was first selected for Italy Under-21s in 2012, under his full name of Jorge Luiz Frello Filho, but didn't feature for his adopted nation until receiving a senior call-up from Antonio Conte in 2016. He qualified for citizenship through his great-great-grandfather, Giacomo Frello, who left Italy for Brazil in 1896.

The coronavirus outbreak means his hopes of playing for the Azzurri at a major tournament will have to wait another year at least, but Jorginho is used to emerging stronger from setbacks.

"Unfortunately, it was a shock to miss the last World Cup – something that really affected me," he says, reflecting on Italy's limp play-off loss to Sweden in November 2017. "It's a situation that I'll always carry with me. I still think, 'I could have played at that World Cup'."

Things have changed since then, though, and for that he's particularly grateful to one man: Roberto Mancini. The former Manchester City boss has shaken up the team after taking over as coach in May 2018, leading to a record streak of 11 wins and counting – surpassing the run of nine set by double World Cup winner Vittorio Pozzo between 1938 and 1939.

"What changed inside the team was the mentality," reveals Jorginho. "I think Mancini was very intelligent in understanding the characteristics of the players and how to use them in his favour. He didn't come in and say [taps the table], 'This is my playing style, you will have to adapt to it'."

"He's an exceptional person who understands us all – he knows when to say the right things, when to be tougher, when to calm us down and when to give us a day off if we're tired."

"For example, when you go and represent your country, many coaches don't bear in mind that you've been training hard with your club. I think national team training should be more personalised. Some players have played more games; others fewer. If you've been playing regularly, how can you be subjected to the same work? That's the reason why so many injuries happen during international breaks. But Mancini? No, he's clever and has put different ideas into action."

Such thoughtful analysis from the playmaker doesn't come as a surprise. Throughout his career, Jorginho has often been hailed as something of a player-coach on the pitch, giving pep talks to everyone around him and controlling matches from deep midfield. He just sees things differently.

But there's one memory that springs to his mind when we discuss the early challenges in his life that have helped to shape him. It's not of his parents splitting up when he was six; nor his mother's myriad sacrifices to raise him alone while still finding time to play football on the beach; nor of his father hitching rides on the back of trucks to see him in action while out of work.

It's of himself leaving home for the first time, aged 13, to join a football academy a couple of hours from Imbituba, launched by Italian agents in the countryside town of Guabiruba.

"That was the most difficult moment of my career so far, and the most complicated one," remembers Jorginho. "We had an Italian coach, who

taught us all the basics of European football and tactics, then picked out the players he thought could potentially have a future abroad. Back then, I shared a dorm with 50 other boys from different parts of the country – everything you can imagine happened there!

"We used to eat the same meal, stewed meat, three times a day," he adds. "For years after getting out of that place, I wouldn't even smell it. It wasn't like I'd been traumatised for life, but whenever I got close to it I immediately felt my stomach churn."

Life didn't become a lot smoother, however, once Jorginho crossed the Atlantic to achieve his dream and sign for Verona. In fact, it's safe to say that after moving to northern Italy, the teenager promptly appreciated the value of money – or more specifically, how far €20 would stretch in a week. That was how much he was given to get by living in a seminary building half occupied by priests, with the other half shared by students and young players.

Besides receiving breakfast, lunch and dinner, he had a cleaning lady who took care of his room and laundry. But anything beyond that had to come out of his weekly allowance.

"I'll never forget what I was able to do with €20, because I had to live like that for a year and a half," chuckles the 28-year-old now. "I usually bought an international call card, which you scratched and then found a code. It meant I could make a one-hour phone call to Brazil and talk to

"I SHARED A DORM WITH 50 BOYS AND WE ATE STEWED MEAT THREE TIMES A DAY. YEARS LATER, THE SMELL MADE MY STOMACH CHURN"

my parents, but that cost me €6 each week. I also put €5 of credit on my phone – never €10. Are you out of your mind? Putting €10 on would have been showing off! I'd spend €3, sometimes €4, on toiletries like shampoo and toothpaste as well.

"I always tried to save as much money as possible, so that I could get to the weekend with some cash left and head to an internet cafe. It cost €1 an hour, and I'd often go online for two hours on Saturday and two more on Sunday."

Later, with the help of fellow Brazilian Rafael Pinheiro – an ex-Verona goalkeeper who made more than 300 appearances for the Gialloblu and now plays for Cagliari – Jorginho learned that the agent who took him to the club earned €30,000 for his troubles. He was so outraged about the situation that he threatened to quit football and go home. Eventually, his family convinced him otherwise.

From there, with a proper contract in his hand, Jorginho never looked back. Not even when he was loaned to fourth-tier Sambonifacese for his first taste of senior football, only to be told that the manager had already bought another player for the same role. Or when he returned to Verona after they had won promotion to Serie B and was given just six months to prove he could compete at that level. Not even when he joined Napoli and initially struggled to break into Rafael Benitez's line-up.

Jorginho prefers to look on the bright side of his experiences in Italy. Ultimately, they helped him to develop a thick skin that has been key to his success. As it turned out, he would need it again at Stamford Bridge.

Rising above it all is how he managed to turn mistrust into appreciation at Chelsea, having been suspiciously viewed as the unofficial offspring of Maurizio Sarri in a difficult debut season under the Blues' Italian coach. The pair had worked together successfully at Napoli – achieving a trio of top-three finishes in Serie A from 2015-18 – but the pass master quickly became a Sarri-ball scapegoat after following his manager to London for £50 million, rather than joining Pep Guardiola at Manchester City. ▶

Left Jorginho cut his teeth in Serie A at Hellas Verona... **Bottom** ...and then showed he could compete with the very best at Napoli **Top** The midfielder lauds boss Roberto Mancini for Italy's record winning run





Having dealt with far bigger challenges in the past, Jorginho wasn't going to let such opprobrium affect his future in the Premier League. Before the untimely suspension of football worldwide, the midfielder was a leader in Frank Lampard's youthful team that had maintained a top-four spot since mid-October. It was around then that Lampard officially named the Brazilian as the Blues' new vice-captain, behind Spanish defender Cesar Azpilicueta.

"It's been great at Chelsea so far," says Jorginho. "Last year, fans were picking on me a lot because I'd arrived with another manager [Sarri] and, in my opinion, I ended up hearing some things that were honestly unfair. But I've never challenged the views of the fans and other people who criticised me. Quite the opposite, actually – it gave me strength, because inside I knew they were wrong.

"Deep in my mind, it was like this: 'I'm going to prove they're wrong and work quietly, like I've always done, because it's never been easy for me'. I've gone through moments like this at every club I've played for – this low moment when doubt can come and make you wonder, 'Should I just leave this place? Maybe there isn't room for me here'.

"But I embrace this kind of challenge and I've never backed down. It gives me more strength to work even harder, to prove to everyone that I can make it. It was like this on loan at Sambonifacese; again when I returned to Verona and the coach didn't want me there; and at Napoli I struggled at some points, too. But I overcame that phase and became loved by the fans.

"My first season with Chelsea was really complicated, although the results showed completely the opposite. We came 3rd in the league, lost the League Cup final against Manchester City on penalties, and then beat Arsenal in the Europa League final. How can such a team and its players be criticised so much?"

Nevertheless, Chelsea's midfield metronome has definitely turned the page on that Sarri chapter, with Stamford Bridge hero Lampard now in charge at his old stamping ground and ushering in a new era. More importantly, Jorginho has shown the character to lead in SW6 following the summer exits of David Luiz and Eden Hazard to Arsenal and Real Madrid respectively.

Jorginho is especially grateful to Lampard for standing by his side when his future didn't seem so clear.

"He's always spoken very highly of me since he returned to Stamford Bridge and we started working together," gushes the Italy international. "Honestly, I thank him for the sincerity he showed towards me in public. He didn't have to do that, and not every manager does it. He's a legend inside the club, so people listen to what he says.

"From that day, I felt everyone began to look at me with different eyes and really pay attention to what I do; how much I've devoted myself to achieving the best I can."

In 2019-20, there have been few players in blue more vocal than their No.5. It's not just because of his outspoken character, but also because of the 28-year-old's rapid learning of English – even though he insists on playing it down. The truth is that he's getting more comfortable by the day. As Lampard underlined earlier in the campaign, "It's easy to come in and stay within your groups and nationalities, but Jorginho doesn't – he's a driver, on and off the pitch."

"My English is still weak – I'm sure all the guys make fun of me when I'm speaking it," says the man himself with a broad smile, as he explains what has changed for him over the course of a season. "Last year, it was quite complicated because the whole coaching staff was Italian – there was an Italian here, there, everywhere.

"Besides that, our physiotherapists were Brazilian and Spanish, and the doctor was Spanish, too. It wasn't any different inside the dressing room – if I didn't want to speak English, there were players from Brazil, Italy, Spain and Argentina. I didn't have much contact with the English guys.

"I took some English lessons, but they weren't enough by themselves. So, instead of having my massages with Marcelo [Ribeiro, the Brazilian physio], I now use one of our English colleagues instead. Getting all the English kids back and adding them to the squad has also helped a lot in that sense. I can't say my English is perfect yet, but it's getting better."

Last July, things didn't look quite so rosy. Concerns were raised about Chelsea's upcoming campaign, with new boss Lampard operating under a transfer embargo while using a string of academy graduates returning from lower-league loans – not to mention coping with the loss of Hazard.

Top left Jorginho has flourished as a leader in Frank Lampard's young side this season

“I’VE NEVER CHALLENGED THE OPINIONS OF PEOPLE WHO CRITICISE ME – IT GIVES ME STRENGTH TO WORK EVEN HARDER AND PROVE THEM ALL WRONG”

However, having been promoted among the elder statesmen, Jorginho says the youngsters – such as Tammy Abraham, Mason Mount, Fikayo Tomori, Reece James, Billy Gilmour and a fit-again Callum Hudson-Odoi – adapted seamlessly to their daunting task.

“At the beginning, it was normal to have a question mark about what would happen with so many teenagers around,” he admits. “But they’re all easy-going and willing to learn – I’ve tried to help them as much as I can. They’ve got the right mentality as well. None of them are arrogant and they listen a lot.”

He was once in their shoes, only thousands of miles from home playing – albeit temporarily – in Italy’s fourth division. No matter what happens in a post-coronavirus world, getting this far is already a dream come true for the boy who left his Brazilian hometown nearly 13 years ago, unsure of what he might find in Europe.

“I can’t describe this feeling,” he concludes. “A few months ago, I was walking in Naples with a couple of friends and we ended up in the Piazza del Plebiscito – a large public square there. I was quickly recognised and couldn’t get to my car, because people didn’t stop asking for selfies and autographs. My friends almost called the police for help! Eventually I was rescued by some ultras who were coincidentally passing by, otherwise I might still be there. This is much more than I could have ever imagined when I left Brazil.”

MORE ON FOURFOURTWO.COM

- Quiz: How many of Chelsea’s 50 biggest transfers can you name?
- Are Italy back? How Roberto Mancini helped the Azzurri to recover from their 2018 World Cup embarrassment (by Sam Blitz)
- Why Hakim Ziyech is the player Chelsea need now (by Mark White)
- You Ask The Questions: Hernan Crespo – “I had fun with Chelsea. I’d run all the way if I had the chance to go back” (by Andy Mitten)

THE PLAYERS LOUNGE

FFT GRABS A WORD WITH...

ROBBIE FOWLER • BOBBY ZAMORA

GARY MABBUTT • ROGERIO CENI



TEAMS

Liverpool

Leeds

Manchester City

Cardiff

Blackburn

North Queensland Fury

Perth Glory

Muangthong United

England

ROBBIE FOWLER

“THAT LINE-SNIFFING CELEBRATION WAS TO WIND UP THE EVERTON FANS FOR ABUSING ME – I DON’T REGRET IT!”

The striker may not have been popular on one half of Merseyside, but he remains a Liverpool legend. Now he wants to become a top coach

Interview Sam Pilger

You were often described as one of the most natural finishers in the game. Would you say scoring goals came easily to you?

People think you’re born with it, but that’s not true – you have to teach yourself and practise all the time. I might have made it look natural, but it was because of the practice. As a kid, I’d take shots with both feet over and over again.

You made such a bright start to your career – when do you think you were at your best?

It was then – at the start, in the first three or four years. I possibly never got any better than that. When I retired I was third in the all-time Premier League goalscorers list, but I’m down to seventh these days. I should be higher and should have scored more goals, but everyone forgets the injuries I had – they take their toll.

Did you fulfil your potential?

I’m not sure. Maybe. I tried. I always wanted to be better, so was never satisfied.

How did you feel when Liverpool supporters called you ‘God’?

Humbled. I was just a skinny kid from a rough area of Liverpool, and then I was called that – the best nickname in football. I still get called it. Liverpool have had so many legends, and yet that’s the name they gave me. Incredible!

Did your connection with the Liverpool fans grow when you wore the T-shirt backing the city’s dockers?

That might have helped, but overall I think the fans saw a bit of themselves in me. I grew up

a mile from Liverpool city centre – I was them. I was fined £1,000 for wearing that T-shirt and showing it, but it proved I was with the people of the city. All the goals probably helped, too!

Do you have any regrets from your career?

Not really, although maybe I regret going into a few tackles I shouldn’t have with defenders and goalkeepers, and picking up injuries. That didn’t help me.

How about when you sniffed the line after scoring against Everton (left)?

No chance! I used to get absolutely mullered by Everton fans, so I was always going to do it. I knew what I was doing. I didn’t care. It was a chance to wind them up after all the abuse they’d given me!

How do you reflect on winning a penalty at Arsenal, then telling the referee not to give it? It won you a UEFA Fair Play award...

I knew David Seaman, so that played a role in it, and it wasn’t a penalty. I’d overrun the ball, but poked it past him and he didn’t touch me. I was a bit unbalanced, so just fell over. It was never a dive. I immediately told the referee, “No contact,” but he’d already given it. My team-mates thought I was mad and were telling me to shut up!

Which manager brought the best out of you?

Roy Evans, without a doubt. I loved his man-management and the way he set us up to go at teams. Gerard

Houllier and Rafa Benitez were both tactically superb and probably knew more than Roy, but he got the best out of me as a player.

How hard was it to leave Liverpool in 2001?

Extremely hard – it killed me to have to leave Liverpool, but I had my pride. I just wanted to play, and I wasn’t doing it at the time. I had to go for my sanity. I would love to have stayed there my whole career, but it wasn’t possible.

Was it a bit weird then playing for Leeds and Manchester City?

I was a professional – I knew I had a job to do. I couldn’t keep thinking I wished I was still at Liverpool and had to show the clubs respect.

How did it feel to return to Anfield in 2006?

Deep down I always wanted to go back. There was speculation, but I was never sure. The day Rafa phoned me and asked me to go back was an amazing moment. The best phone call ever.

Did you deserve more than 26 England caps?

I never really enjoyed playing for England. Of those 26 caps, I think I made 12 starts. I joined up with squads, but didn’t feel part of it. I was desperate to play, but often wouldn’t even get on the pitch, which was horrible. I had to score nearly 100 goals for Liverpool before I won my first cap, but now you get in after a couple of goals. I waited years, which was astonishing.

What appealed to you about management?

It was a chance to prove myself all over again. I’m seen as a joker, so I wanted people to take me seriously. I’ve done my badges, and that’s hard work – it was about seven years between the B and Pro Licence. I’ve moved to Australia to show how keen I am to make it as a coach.

What impact do you feel you’ve made so far at Brisbane Roar?

The team had an awful year before I joined, so I was given carte blanche to do what I thought was needed. Halfway into this season we had more wins than all of last season, and more points. We’ve been going in the right direction.

Describe your managerial approach...

I’m my own person, but I’ve also taken things from managers I’ve worked under like Benitez, Houllier, even Graeme Souness. I’d like to think I’m brave and ready to make tough decisions.

How do you think you would have dealt with yourself as a player?

I would have played me all the time!

What do you miss most about England?

My family. But this is the life of someone in football. I’m willing to do this. I’m really dedicated and passionate to become a great manager. I miss my family, but I’m at the start of a long career and want to develop.

‘Robbie Fowler: My Life in Football’ is published by Blink and out now



BOBBY ZAMORA

“BEFORE FULHAM PLAYED JUVENTUS IN TURIN, HODGSON GOT UP AND BELTED OUT *DOWN UNDER* BY MEN AT WORK”

If you thought the Cottagers' run to the Europa League final was surprising, it got topped by their boss singing '80s hits

Interview Ed McCambridge

As a youngster, you played for Senrab with John Terry, Ledley King, Jloyd Samuel and Paul Konchesky. Did you ever lose a game?

It was a brilliant team. I remember being told maybe one of us had a chance of making it as a professional, but four of us ended up playing

for England, which is absolutely astonishing. If the club had just a one per cent clause on our future transfer fees, they'd have made a killing.

Who was the star of that team?

I wouldn't say there was one star, because we could all play. I can only remember losing one match and that was to a side with Scott Parker in midfield. I still see Konchesky, JT and Ledley sometimes, too.

You made your breakthrough with Brighton, then returned to the south coast at the end of your career. What was it about the club you loved so much?

I joined them on loan when I was still a young player at Bristol Rovers. They were in the fourth tier at the time, but I signed permanently and we secured back-to-back promotions to reach the Championship. I was scoring loads of goals and playing without a care in the world. They'll always hold a special place in my heart.

What was the Withdean Stadium like to play at? It didn't look the most luxurious place...

You could say that! It was a funny place to play football – the athletics track around the pitch; scaffolding holding up the stands. Good teams would turn up and have to get changed inside a portable building near the pitch! For us it was home, though. I have so many fond memories of scoring goals there.

You scored the winner in two Championship play-off finals. What was it about that final which brought the best out of you?

There's so much at stake in the Championship play-off final, and so many emotions. With the

second one, for QPR against Derby, I felt we'd put ourselves under unnecessary pressure by not going up automatically. There was a lot of friction in the squad throughout that season, but we had the quality. We ended up doing it the hard way. It was a huge relief to score that goal in the 90th minute.

Speaking of finals, you weren't 100 per cent fit going into the 2010 Europa League Final with Fulham. Would things have worked out differently had you been injury-free?

There's no telling what might have happened, as I was probably in the best form of my career before the Achilles injury. I was gutted, and to concede so late in extra time against Atletico Madrid was tough to take. There's always that 'what if', but we went on a great run. It's nice to be a small part of Fulham's history.

Tell us about the last-16 second leg against Juventus. You were 3-1 down from the first leg – did you really think you could progress?

We knew it was going to be an uphill struggle, then to concede after two minutes was a kick in the teeth. But that team had such belief and togetherness. Every European night at Craven Cottage, we turned up. We knew we could give anyone a game, and just about got through. It was a fantastic night.

And you got the better of Fabio Cannavaro...

Cannavaro was a fantastic defender, a World Cup winner, but I realised during the first leg that he wasn't particularly comfortable playing against me. He wasn't that quick, or as tall or strong as me. I loved playing centre-backs like him – ones that didn't have any huge physical advantages over me. I managed to put him on his backside and score [left] before he got sent off. It's a very fond memory.

Who was the best central defender you ever came up against?

Ricardo Carvalho was horrible to play against – such a clever player. He'd always know exactly where the referee was and then get in several little fouls when no one was looking. After two or three, you'd start focusing less on the game and more on what he might do.

You and Obafemi Martins are the only two players to score Premier League penalties with both feet. What were you playing at?

[Laughs] Well, I'm both-footed. It doesn't make a difference to me! I always backed myself to score with either foot. I'm naturally left-footed

“I PUT CANNAVARO ON HIS BACKSIDE, SCORED, AND THEN HE GOT SENT OFF – A FOND MEMORY”



TEAMS

Bristol Rovers
Bath (loan)
Brighton
Tottenham
West Ham
Fulham
QPR
England

and used it to place shots, but I could get more power with the right. If I wanted to smash the ball, I'd use that. If we had a penalty late in the game, I'd assume the goalkeeper was going to dive for it and smash it down the middle with my right. In hindsight, I should have used my right more often.

You played under a lot of legendary bosses, from Fabio Capello to Harry Redknapp. Who brought the best out of you?

I think I must have played for every manager! Glenn Hoddle signed me for Spurs, and I also played under Steve Coppell, Ian Holloway, Alan Pardew, Harry Redknapp, Roy Hodgson, Fabio Capello and many more. I'd say Hodgson was probably the best – he had us so regimented that I could have played left-back for Fulham!

Any classic stories from working with Roy?

We always used to have the music blaring in the dressing room. Before that first leg against Juventus in Turin, a huge game, *Down Under* by Men at Work came on. Roy jumped up and belted it out with passion! He was giving it his best moves and even tensed his arms for the 'muscles from Brussels' line, absolutely loving it. It must have brought back some memories from somewhere. It was hilarious.

What was it like to finally earn two England caps? Should you have got more?

You have to remember that England team had Jermain Defoe, Michael Owen, Wayne Rooney and Peter Crouch. I offered something a little different – Fabio Capello recognised that and gave me an opportunity. He came to watch me play for Fulham during our Europa League run, and wanted me in his squad for the World Cup in South Africa. I needed surgery, though, and had to turn him down. It's probably the biggest regret of my career, not going to a World Cup, but I couldn't deny another player a spot when I wasn't fit.

Is it true you had the chance to represent Trinidad and Tobago at the 2006 World Cup?

My dad comes from Trinidad and they got in touch several times. I was playing for England Under-21s when they initially approached me, but Peter Taylor, who was the manager at the time, told me I should consider it carefully as he thought I could go on and play for England. It's true, I could have gone to the 2006 World Cup with Trinidad, but I would have gone with England in 2010 had an injury not prevented it. I made my decision.

Where do you reckon 'That's Zamora' ranks among the great football chants?

[Laughs] Which version are we talking about? There was a good and bad version! The Row Z one always made me chuckle, to be fair... It's lovely when fans come up with a chant for you – some genius down at Brighton started it, and people still remember it now. 🍷

Zamora was a judge at the London Football Awards, in support of the Willow Foundation



TEAMS

Bristol Rovers
Tottenham
England

GARY MABBUTT

“COVENTRY FANS ASK TO KISS MY KNEE – I SAY, ‘OF COURSE YOU CAN’. A LOT OF THEM HAVE DONE IT, TOO”

An FA Cup final own goal made the Spurs centre-back a Sky Blues hero, but he later won the trophy – then a rat ate part of his foot

Interview Chris Flanagan

How did your 1982 move from Bristol Rovers to Spurs come about?

I was in the Third Division, I'd played about 140 matches, and I was out of contract. Back then, you could leave and a tribunal would decide the transfer fee. You could write to anyone and say, "I'm available, do you want me?" I wrote to every First Division club and got two replies. Aston Villa said, "Sorry, we can't even offer you a trial" and the other was Birmingham. I met them, went home, and the next day my phone rang. It was Bill Nicholson saying, "I think you have the potential to play for Spurs." He took me to their training ground to meet manager Keith Burkinshaw, who made it clear he didn't

know who the hell I was! But he also said the recommendation had come from Bill, and he was happy to take it.

How soon did you start playing regularly?

Keith had said, "You're 20 – you'll maybe break through in a couple of years." But we went to Norway for pre-season, a couple of players got injured, and I ended up playing for the next 16 years! I was a midfielder then, and in my first season I joint-top scored with 12 goals. I even started upfront once – I scored twice in a 2-1 win over Birmingham, and was never selected there again! I initially broke into the England team in midfield, then switched to centre-half.

How special was winning the UEFA Cup with Spurs in 1984?

We beat Anderlecht on penalties in the second leg of the final, and the atmosphere at White Hart Lane was incredible. Afterwards, we went to an old building with a balcony on the high street and paraded the cup. It was well past midnight, but about 100,000 Spurs fans were there. It was a very special night.

What did it feel like to score the own goal that won the FA Cup for Coventry in 1987?

I scored and we were 2-1 up at half-time. But Keith Houchen equalised, then the ball broke down the right and I went to block the cross – 99 times out of 100, it'll hit your leg and either go behind for a corner or roll to Ray Clemence. This time, it hit the top of my knee and looped over Ray. It's the only FA Cup final that Spurs have ever lost and it was a horrendous feeling. But you've got to smile about it these days – I'm a legend in Coventry!

Is it true that when you bump into Coventry fans, they ask to kiss your knee?

Yes, they always do. I say, "Of course you can." Quite a lot have done it. I can go anywhere in the world and a Coventry fan turns up! I was in Cape Town once, and someone walked over saying, "You gave me the best moment of my life." I thought they meant the UEFA Cup, but it was the 1987 cup final! Coventry also called a fanzine 'GMK' – 'Gary Mabbutt's Knee' – and we played them in the opening match of the following season. The whole of Highfield Road was singing "There's only one Gary Mabbutt" – Spurs and Coventry fans!

You won the FA Cup in 1991 – it looked like you were about to volley home a corner for the winner, but Des Walker headed the ball into his own net. Would you have scored?

I'd have hoped so, but probably not as well as he did! [Laughs] I spoke to Des after the game, though. I'd been in his situation, and you can't do much about it. This time I was the captain, walking up the Wembley steps to collect the trophy, then turning around and sharing that moment with the Spurs fans. It was magical.

How fired up was Gazza before that game?

Gazza was always fired up. I had no reason to believe he was any different to any other big match, but two reckless challenges early on and his game was finished. That was probably Gazza's best season. In the games leading up to the final, he was outstanding, but the injury set him back. After the final, we went straight to the hospital with the FA Cup, knocked on the door and gave Gazza the cup and his medal.

Any hilarious tales with Gazza (right)?

I'm a diabetic and need an injection before every meal, so I always got on



the team bus early after a match and had my injections. I was on the coach with my needle and insulin out, then Gazza got on and asked, "Mabbsy, what are you doing?" I'd tried to tell him what being diabetic meant, but I think at that stage he thought diabetes was a famous boxer! On the bus I said, "I inject myself four times a day." He said, "Every day? For the rest of your life, or while you're a footballer?" I said, "For the rest of my life." He said, "Every day for the rest of your life. I bet you can't wait to die!"

How hard was it as a player with diabetes? Did it present challenges?

A few... four injections a day, plus blood tests before kick-off, at half-time and after matches. I was having 10 blood tests a day. When I was diagnosed at 17, three top specialists told me I couldn't play football again because my body wouldn't be able to take it, so it was nice to do the things I did in my career. I had a condition and needed to look after myself.

You required surgery to save your leg a few years ago – what happened?

I woke up one night and my left leg was killing me – there was no blood going to it. I needed a seven-hour operation and luckily they saved the leg, but I can't kick a ball again or stand on wet pitches, so I had to give up coaching. Then a week after the last game at White Hart Lane, I was rushed in for a heart bypass.

We read the horrific story that a rat ate part of your foot in South Africa. Tell us about it...

My daughter got an internship with a vet in the Kruger National Park. I stayed with her and we lived 60 miles from the nearest town. I went to bed, and half an hour later she came in saying, "Dad, something bit my thumb!" After a while we went back to bed, but I woke up again and my thumb was bleeding. I went to get up, and the bed was covered in blood. Both of my feet are numb because of poor circulation and my diabetes, and a rat had started chewing on my foot, got no reaction from me and then tucked in – from the middle toe to the bone. There is also a hole underneath my foot. Quite a lot of things have happened in my life, but I've dealt with them and carried on as best I can.

You suffered a serious injury in your career, too, fracturing your skull in a challenge with John Fashanu. Did he apologise?

I don't have any contact with John, no. It was something you should never see in a game of football and a disgrace – the most blatant elbow you've ever seen.

What does Spurs still mean to you?

They've been part of my family for 38 years. I was a player for 16 years, the captain for 11 and made 619 appearances, the second-most in club history. I've been an ambassador at Spurs for several years too, so they'll always be a huge part of my life. ●

ROGERIO CENI

"I WAS SAO PAULO TOP SCORER TWO YEARS IN A ROW – THE STRIKERS WERE PROBABLY A LITTLE BIT EMBARRASSED"

A master of both free-kicks and spot-kicks, no keeper in history has scored more goals than the ex-Sao Paulo and Brazil stopper

Interview Caio Carrieri

You broke many milestones as a player, but what was your best achievement?

I made 1,237 Sao Paulo appearances over 25 years, nearly 1,000 as the captain. I scored 131 goals from free-kicks and penalties. I lifted the Copa Libertadores and won a Club World Cup final against Liverpool. But as a goalkeeper, it was being nominated for the 2007 Ballon d'Or, despite never playing in Europe.

How did you start taking free-kicks?

I used to get to the training ground very early – no one was there, so I practised free-kicks by myself. I'd take about 100 a day. At that point I wasn't starting for Sao Paulo, but the coach saw my dedication, and once I broke into the first team he let me take free-kicks in matches. I scored in just my third or fourth appearance. The penalties came afterwards. There was only ever one coach, Mario Sergio, who forbade me from taking free-kicks. He thought I'd get tired running up the pitch and wanted me to focus on defending. He didn't last too long, though. A year later, I was back taking free-kicks and scoring goals, including one to beat Santos in the 2000 Campeonato Paulista Final.

Any other favourite goals?

Cruzeiro in 2006. They were two points behind us at the top of the table, so would leapfrog us if we lost. We were 2-0 down after 20 minutes, then I saved a penalty and scored a free-kick – my 63rd goal – to make me the top-scoring keeper of all time. In the second half I scored a penalty to earn a draw, and that season we won Sao Paulo's first league title for 15 years.

You broke Jose Luis Chilavert's record – did you ever speak to him about it?

We only spoke at matches – we played against each other three or four times, but I never had the opportunity to take a free-kick against him. I admire him a lot, and we had different styles. He had a powerful shot, whereas my free-kicks were slightly more technical.

Does scoring a goal trump saving a penalty?

Saving a penalty is important, but that feeling of scoring is impossible to describe. I was very privileged to save 51 penalties and score 131 goals in my career. They're different emotions, but scoring a goal is unparalleled.

You were Sao Paulo's top scorer in 2005 and 2006 with 21 and 15 goals respectively. How did the strikers feel?

They're two of the outstanding milestones of my career, and they were triumphant seasons for the club: the Sao Paulo state championship, Copa Libertadores and Club World Cup in 2005, then the Brazilian title a year later. There was a bit of embarrassment among all the strikers, but our collective goal was winning matches.

You're one of Sao Paulo's top 10 goalscorers of all time, too...

Another impressive milestone! Sao Paulo have a beautiful history, with many World Cup stars like Careca, Serginho Chulapa and Rai. I'm very proud to be ahead of those legends.

How did it feel to be dubbed 'The Myth' and Sao Paulo's best player of all time by fans?

It was an affectionate name given to me. The greatest legacy I could leave was to meet fans who say they support the club because of me. That's absolutely priceless.

You've also smashed the record for the most appearances at a single club...

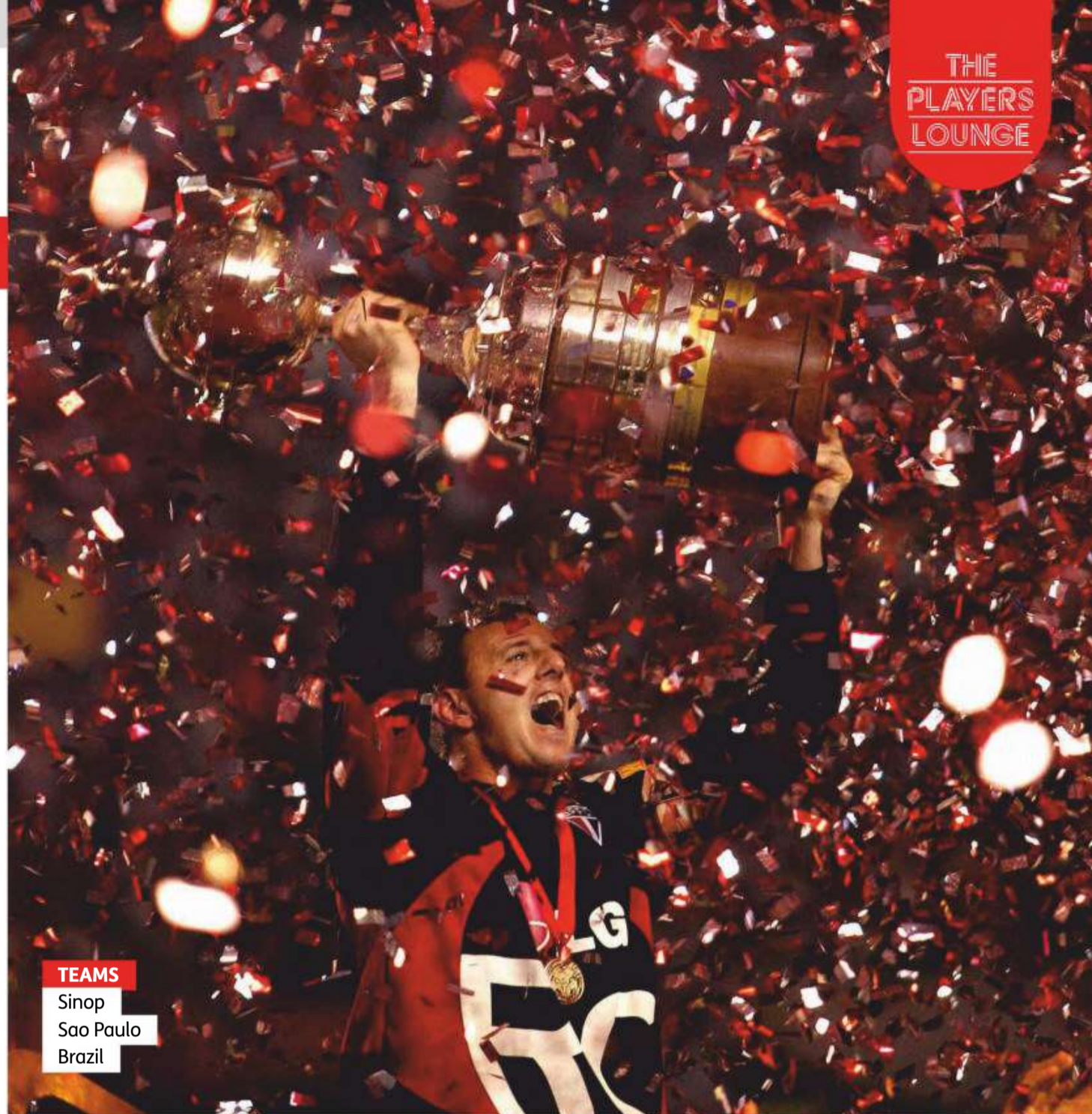
I'm very fortunate that almost my entire career was free of serious injuries – the first happened when I was 36. I wanted to extend my career, so created a recovery room at my house. While others were sleeping, I was training again. As a result, I played until I was 42.

On top of that, you've overtaken Ryan Giggs' record for most wins at a single club (590)...

That was natural, given I also played the most games for a single club. On the flip side, I may have the record for most losses, too! [Laughs] Giggs' numbers are impressive because English clubs don't play as many matches as Brazilian sides. I'm flattered to be compared with Giggs, though. A global legend.

Was the 2005 Club World Cup Final against Liverpool your greatest-ever performance?

I don't think it was my best display, but it was the most important – that's the greatest title



TEAMS

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a club can win. To beat a side like Liverpool was incredible, given the players they had and their financial power. We won 1-0 and kept a clean sheet, with my hardest save a glancing header from Luis Garcia. It's an iconic match and Sao Paulo's supporters remember it fondly, as do I. I had better performances than that, but not in games as important as this.

What are your best memories with Brazil?

I played at the 2006 World Cup against Japan, and was also part of the squad when we won the 2002 World Cup. To go to two World Cups was a great reward for what I did at club level.

Did you ever try to become Brazil's regular free-kick taker?

I practised free-kicks alongside Roberto Carlos, Ronaldinho and Juninho Pernambucano at the 2006 World Cup, but it was never my intention to take them in games. They were all amazing free-kick takers, so it would have been strange to see the keeper take free-kicks and penalties. I was more like a traditional keeper, although I always wanted to play the ball out from the back, which wasn't as common in the national team compared to Sao Paulo.

You did take one free-kick for Brazil, though, in qualifying for the 2002 World Cup. Rivaldo was next to you – how did you convince him to let you take it?

Rivaldo's a very good friend of mine. We were playing at Morumbi, Sao Paulo's stadium and

my home, so I'd asked him about taking one – he agreed straight away. Colombia's keeper, Miguel Calero, knew me and placed a defender just below the crossbar. He was able to head my shot off the line.

Did you ever get close to playing in Europe?

I had some offers from European clubs. At the beginning of my career, a few agents tried to take me to Arsenal, but the negotiations didn't work out. Later, there was more interest from Hannover and Deportivo La Coruna, but back then the Brazilian currency was pretty strong, so it would have been more or less the same salary. I stayed at Sao Paulo and that was the best decision, because now I enjoy what I did for the club and the affection from all the fans.

Before becoming a coach in Brazil, you took some managerial courses in England. Why?

I appreciate the football culture. I spent a few days there in 2016 and 2017 and visited a lot of teams like Watford, Chelsea and Liverpool, where I met Michael Beale. He's a brilliant guy who then became my assistant at Sao Paulo – he now works with Steven Gerrard at Rangers. At West Ham I spoke to Slaven Bilic, who had a deep knowledge of Brazilian football. Claude Puel, Mauricio Pochettino and Claudio Ranieri were welcoming, too. The thing I learned most was the methodology. English sides have short but intense training sessions, and I used them to help Fortaleza, a small club, come 9th in the Brazilian league last season. 🍷

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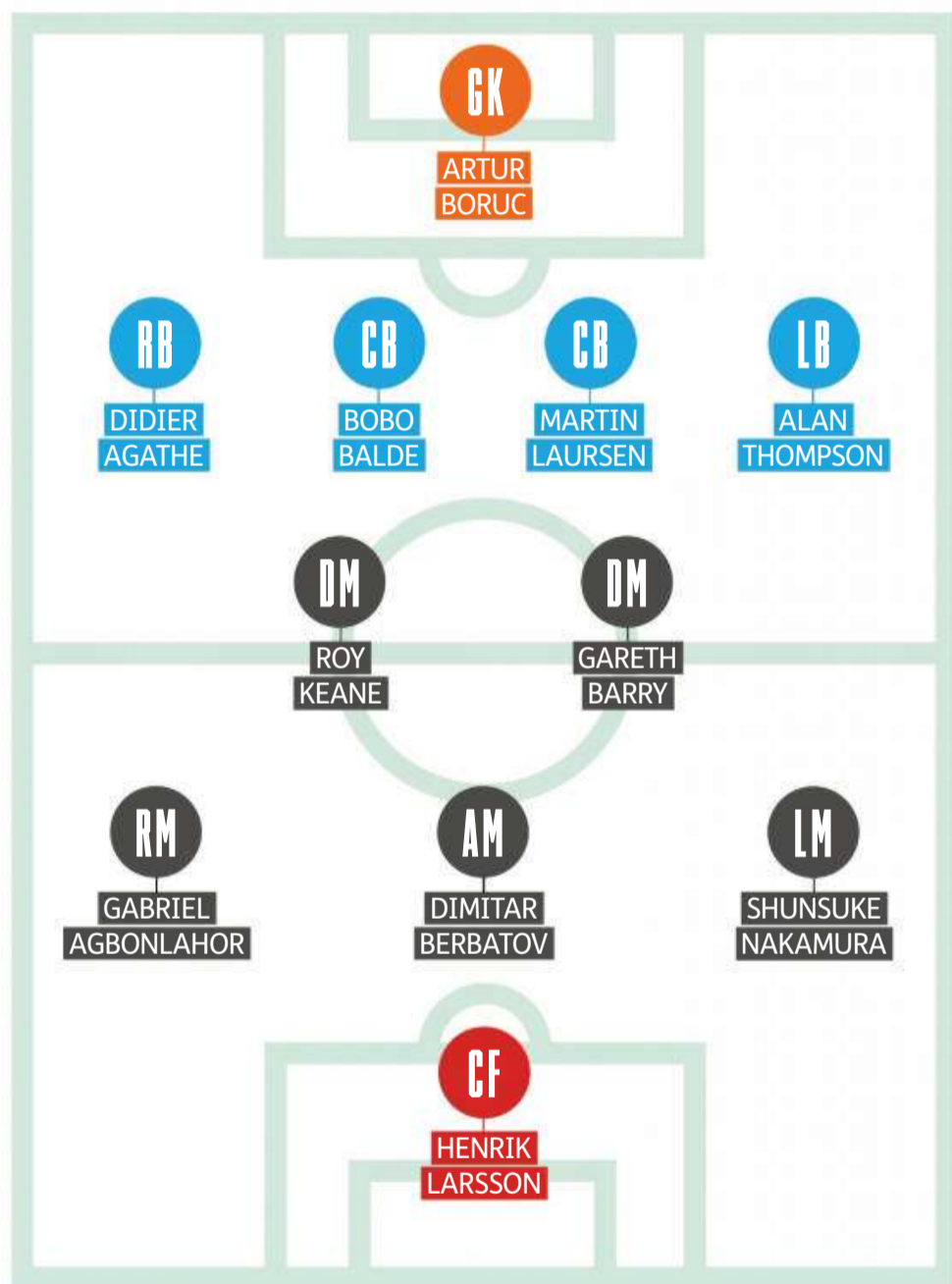
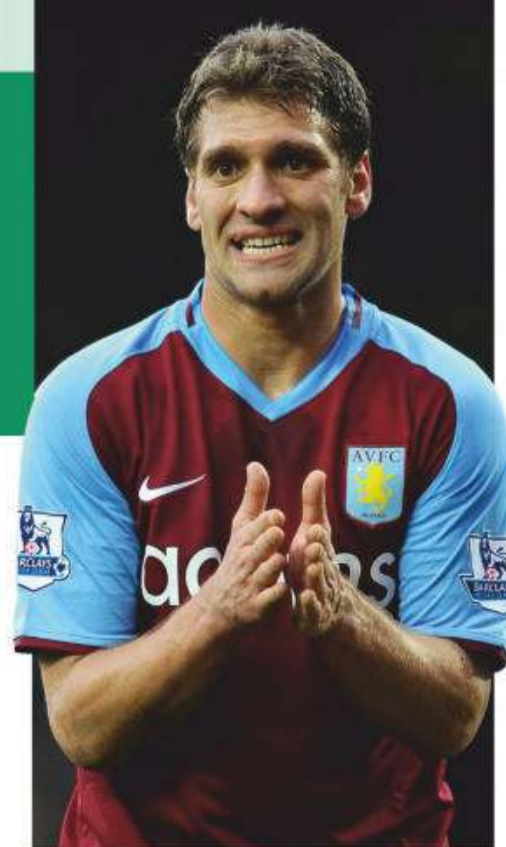
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MY PERFECT XI

STILIYAN PETROV

The ex-Celtic, Aston Villa and Bulgaria midfielder – aka the man known as ‘Stan’ – picks a dream team of players he called colleagues for club and country. Don’t panic, Berba...



ARTUR BORUC

“It’s between him and Shay Given, but I’ll go with Artur. As a goalkeeper, you have to be a little crazy and unique... and he’s both! He reached the top with Celtic and has all the right attributes: his footwork is good, and his shot-stopping and ability from crosses are great.”

DIDIER AGATHE

“Didier possessed pace and awareness, and raced up and down the pitch really well. At Celtic, he always gave the team good options in wide areas and terrified the opposition with his speed.”

BOBO BALDE

“I’m going for two old-fashioned players in central defence – guys who were very strong on set-pieces. Balde had stature as a leader, and you need men like him. He demanded the best from everyone.”

MARTIN LAURSEN

“A leader at Villa and, like Bobo, scary as well! When you stood next to him in the tunnel, you saw a player who was huge, strong and demanding. Martin had a lot of heart, and with two absolute rocks like that at the back, you’d feel safer.”

ALAN THOMPSON

“He had a terrific engine and left foot, plus a great knowledge of football. Alan scored some crucial goals for Celtic, so this team would have deadly full-backs in it.”

ROY KEANE

“I’ve picked two holding midfielders who were superb in possession and good leaders as well. Roy demanded high standards from everyone and drove them on. His ability to play coupled with his knowledge of the game was fantastic.”

GARETH BARRY

“Gareth has so much experience and is great on the ball. He’s captained nearly every club he’s been to, which tells you everything about him. He’s 39 now, but still going! Gareth was a top team-mate too, which makes a big difference. He’s achieved a lot, but is down to earth and works hard. You don’t see many players with his longevity and ability.”

GABRIEL AGBONLAHOR

“This is an interesting one, but I’ll go for Gabby down the right. We’d have a very powerful area in this team, because he and Didier were both quick. Gabby loved to take people on and move the ball up the pitch with pace. He’d create chances and also score goals.”

DIMITAR BERBATOV

“Dimitar was a really clever player who could break lines and always played on the half-turn, so let’s give him the role through the middle. He could see every final pass and make every final touch.”

SHUNSUKE NAKAMURA

“I’ll have Shunsuke on the left wing. He had perfect technical ability and his left foot was unbelievable, meaning he was always a threat from set-pieces.”

HENRIK LARSSON

“A very difficult call between Hristo Stoichkov and Henrik [left], but I’ve got to pick Larsson. His goalscoring record was incredible and he was the finished article. With Berba’s ability to break lines and play the final pass, Nakamura on the left and Gabby on the right, you need a predator in the penalty box – and that’s Henrik.”

Alex Jennings

Stiliyan was speaking at an event for the Football League and Carabao Cup



THE GAFFER

MARTIN O’NEILL

“He wouldn’t have to do anything but motivate, and Martin was very good at that. His man-management was excellent – he knew what to say and when. Players just trusted him.”

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