

“My Transfers Didn’t Work !”

It's got to be the most annoying thing that can happen to a manager in League Soccer. You spend ages between turns arranging to do various transfers, send them in to Necom – only to get your turn back and find out that they didn't go through. There are lots of rules in place to make the game fair, stop people cheating and so on – but some of them are quite complex so here's a (hopefully) useful guide to help you out.

“Price Too Low” – You cannot generally transfer a player for less than he is worth (the value printed on the squad sheet). If you try to do so, the transfer will be blocked by the directors of the club selling the player who won't be happy about losing one of their assets too cheaply.

“Price Too High” – Equally, your own clubs directors won't let you buy a player for massively more than he is worth. Once you go over 1 ½ times the players value, then depending on his rating and age, there is a chance your clubs directors won't think he's worth that much – and will block the deal for this very reason.

“Buyer Is Overdrawn” – If a club is overdrawn by more than £5 million (ie. they have less than minus £5m in their club balance) then they are not allowed to buy ANY players at all the following week. That means no loaned in players either. This is the penalty for overspending!

“Player Is Injured” – You cannot transfer a player who is injured for more than 4 weeks.

“Player Is Almost Out Of Contract” – You cannot transfer any player who has less than 10 weeks remaining on his contract. If the team who owns that player does want to sell him, then they will need to persuade him to sign a new deal first. Obviously if they can't get him to agree a new deal, then they lose him for nothing at the end of his contract and he'll probably appear on the out of contracts list.

“Player Is On The Auction List” – If you put a player up on the auction list, you can't then agree a deal to sell him to somebody else. If you change your mind about selling, you can REMOVE him from the auction list, and then if you want to, you can arrange to sell him the following week.

“Other Team Didn't Write Deal Down” – For a transfer to go through, BOTH teams must write down the same transfer – that means the amount the two sides put down must also be the same.

“Haven't Been Manager For 4 Weeks” – This one only applies to a deal where the same manager runs both teams. If you take over a new side, you cannot SELL any players to other teams that you manage yourself for at least 4 turns. You can buy players in from anybody you like, and you can sell players to other peoples teams, but you cannot sell players off to your own teams.

“Player Is On Weeks” – You cannot sell a player until you've had him at your club for at least 4 weeks. This is indicated on the squad sheet, far right hand side, where it will say WK 4 or WK 3 etc.

Okay, so it's not that complicated, and most of the reasons are pretty self explanatory – but that little list might prove helpful for some people.

A Note About Contracts

Players do get unhappy when they aren't in the first team, and by not playing them clubs do run the risk of them refusing to sign a new deal and leaving on a free. There is nothing at all we can do at Necom to help you make them sign a new deal – it's up to you as the manager to keep your players happy. If an unhappy player gets injured, it's simply your bad luck as manager (you shouldn't have let him get unhappy in the first place!), though you are at least helped by the fact that injured players contracts aren't reduced when they have less than 10 weeks left on them.

Low rated players don't necessarily need to play matches every week – they'll be happy with the odd outing here and there in the first team, but top rated ones expect to play in every single match – and will get unhappy if they aren't selected.

There are other ways to boost morale of players – such as the various training options – but these are no substitute for getting picked in the side.

Also remember that the assistant manager will tie up any happy players on new deals automatically for you, which can be a very useful way to save some of your transfer boxes.

Necom News



It's CHRISTMAS !

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United Are Game 75 Champions !

Just a season after almost getting the Old Trafford side relegated, Si Benn pulled off the tremendous feat of taking Manchester United to the Premiership title in one of the toughest games of all League Soccer – game 75. United finished the previous season in great form, a string of wins taking them clear of the drop zone, and this season saw them continue in much the same vein. From midway onwards, the title race came down to a straight fight between United and Garysean 'Deci' Wilson's Celtic. With nine games to go, the Glasgow side were just a point behind and were many peoples favourites to take the trophy. However, a 0-0 draw at Tottenham followed by a crushing 4-1 reverse at the hands of Southampton left Celtic six points adrift going into week 18. The title was still up for grabs though – as the top two had to play each other twice, the first clash being at Old Trafford on Friday 19th August. In a close contest, United ran out narrow winners by two goals to one. That left Si Benn's side 9 points clear with four games left. The title was confirmed in week 20, when Celtic could only draw 3-3 at Everton – United's 2-2 draw with Arsenal at Highbury proving good enough. Week 21 the two met again at Celtic Park, and again United couldn't be beaten – the game ending 1-1. They did lose the week after though - a 1-0 reverse to Tottenham for United in the final game meant the champions were without a win in three. Celtic meanwhile, always comfortable in second spot, only finished two points clear of Wolves after Jamie Maycroft's side defeated them 2-1 on the final day. Karl Russell's Arsenal were fourth after starting the season really well but only picking up 5 points in the last five matches. Controversy continued even after the end of the season, with Celtic sensationally kicked out of the league for financial irregularities, only to be re-appointed on appeal – but relegated to division 1 for the following season.

The first division saw a great battle between Derby, Norwich and Newcastle for the two automatic promotion spots. Norwich were nowhere to be seen three quarters of the way into

the season but put together a stunning run to go into week 22 third in the table but two points behind top two Newcastle and Derby – who they had to play. A 2-2 draw at Barnsley was enough to secure promotion for James Burchill's Magpies, but it also meant that the winner of the Norwich vs Derby game could win the title. There was never any doubt about it – the Canaries running out 3-1 winners to win the league. Derby were third, with Dominic Phillips' Liverpool fourth. Aston Villa only finished sixth, but Scott Rose's side won through the playoffs and made it into the Premiership.

There was a real battle for division 2 as well – Mark Pinder's Grimsby Town holding off James Young's Hearts side to win that one.

Serie A was won early on by Matthew James's Barcelona – so early in fact that by week 21 Matthew had got bored of it all and resigned. He was soon replaced by Ben Morris who had the tough challenge of continuing Barsa's excellent form. Ryan Doyle's Bayern Munich finished second, 12 points behind Barsa, with Jamie Maycroft's Juventus third and Stuart Robertson's Lazio in fourth spot. Barsa only lost three games all season – and two of these were away to their rivals, Juve beating them 4-2 in week 21 and Lazio doing exactly the same in the last week of the season. The other was at AC Milan, a 1-0 reverse in week 14.

Serie B saw Richard Hyde's Inter comfortably promoted – though that was to be expected given the lack of competition for most of the season, and the quality in the Inter squad. Unmanaged Paris St. Germain were second for most of the season – and just about kept that place to earn promotion – despite a great late challenge from Paul Matthews' Roma. Matthews' side came from 18 points behind at the half way stage of the season, to take on Inter in the San Siro in week 22, knowing that a win would see them promoted if Paris lost. The French side did so – going down 2-1 at home to Benfica – but Roma just couldn't get



that vital goal – the game finished 0-0. Ryan Smithwaite's Lyon finished the season in equally impressive form, and a 1-0 win at Porto in their final game saw the 2nd, 3rd and 4th placed sides all tied on 39 points. Paris were promoted due to their better goal difference. Lyon went up through the playoffs. And Roma missed out – though they were immediately made odds on favourites for Serie B the following season.

Onto the cups – Barcelona won the Champions League, beating Man United 1-0 thanks to a late Ayala goal in an apt Champions final. Celtic took the British FA Cup, a 1-0 win over Preston in the final, whilst AC Milan repeated their win over Barcelona in the European FA Cup final. League Cups were won by Man United (beating Southampton 2-0 in the final) and Valencia (who beat Juve 1-0). The Super Cup went to Bayern Munich with a 1-0 victory over Celtic.

Mark Pinder's France were World Cup winners, with a 3-1 victory over Gareth Edwards' Germany in the final. The French had narrowly beaten Portugal 3-2 in the semi finals, whilst the Germans had an equally close contest, beating the Republic of Ireland 1-0.



Game 59 – Season End August 2005

Mark Buchanan's Newcastle dominate the Premiership, winning it by 16 points from Guy Pearson's Chelsea. Corey Jones' Man United finished third and Jamal Kroll's Arsenal were fourth. The Magpies won the FA Cup, beating Yeovil in the final. In the European league, Steven Lane won Serie A by 5 points from Mark Buchanan's Inter Milan, with Gerard O'Brien's Ajax third and in fourth place Wayne Culverhouse's Atletico Madrid. POAK lifted the FA Cup with a 1-0 win over Inter. The Champions League was won by Newcastle, 1-0 winners over Milan.

Game 32 – Season End September 2005:

An impressive season for Jamie Maycroft's incredibly impressive Arsenal side – they won every game in the Premiership, finishing with 66 points, 22 clear of Edward Frewin's Chelsea. Liverpool were third and Man City fourth. Serie A went to Jamie's Valencia, with Clayton Courtney's teams Barcelona (2nd), AC Milan (3rd) and Juventus (4th) trailing 20 odd points behind. Arsenal beat Man U 3-0 in the FA Cup final, and beat Valencia 2-1 to lift the Champions League. Dundee United won the League Cup in England, that honour in the European league went to Valencia who also won the Euro FA Cup.

The RETRAIN Action

The CP action has been abolished – you now need to use the RETRAIN action in the transfers to change a players position, change a staff members position or speciality, or change a player into a member of staff.

Remember, this needs to be written in the 'TRANSFERS' section of the return sheet, not in either the Extra Actions or the Staff Orders boxes.

The action to change a players position, or change a staff members position, or offer a player the chance to join your backroom staff is simply **RETRAIN**. It can now also be used to change the specialist skill that your coaches use.

To use the action, in the first box write the name of the player, in the second write the number of the player. In the third box, write the action – RETRAIN – and then in box four write the code for the new job, position or speciality. Take that from the list below:

- G or GK – Change to goalkeeper
- D or DEF – Change to a defender
- M or MID – Change to a midfielder
- A or ATT – Change to an attacker
- P or PHYSIO – Change to a physio
- S or SCOUT – Change to a scout
- C11 - Change to coach specialising in youngsters
- C12 – Change to coach specialising in fitness
- C13 – Change to general training coach
- C14 – Change to set pieces coach
- C15 – Change to morale boosting coach
- C16 - Change to positional play coach
- C17 - Change to running coach
- C18 - Change to agility coach
- C19 - Change to ball control coach
- C20 - Change to Passing coach
- C21 - Change to Heading coach
- C22 - Change to Shooting coach
- C23 - Change to Intelligence coach
- C24 – Change to team building coach
- C25 – Change to match practice coach
- C26 – Change to discipline coach
- C27 - Change to training keepers coach
- C28 - Change to defensive training coach
- C29 - Change to training midfielders coach
- C30 - Change to training forwards coach

Please remember that you can only change to one of the options listed above. You cannot change a player to one of the special D/M or M/A positions, nor can you change a player to a specific position, such as RB or CF.

Also note that you MUST write down the code above – we cannot type in your action if you write the words – it must be the code on the return sheet!

Players and staff whose positions are altered will suffer a drop in rating. You should be able to train them back to their previous rating given time however.

Game 67 – Season End December 2005, Written by Inter boss Jamie Flynn

Congratulations go to Paul Cowling who came away with the championship after a long season with the likes of Real Madrid and Inter biting at ajax heels. But all in all a truly outstanding performance from Ajax and a 'well done' is thoroughly deserved. Paul Cowling who was tempted to leave after this season released this statement "The lads were magnificent this year, we are weak compared to the big teams of real and inter , but we were magnificent. How could I leave? I look forward to seeing Inter and Real bounce back and really make my job difficult" The top 3 though was the big story, 3 points separating 1st and 3rd and only 5 goals sperating 2nd and 3rd. There only ever going to be 3 teams to win this League- Ajax, Inter Milan and Real Madrid, the closest rivals-River Plate finished 26points behind them. Finishing in second and third respectively were Inter Milan and Real Madrid. Although Real took 6 points off Inter in the League this year, Inter fought back only losing to Ajax and a day one draw with Antwerp. At the other end of the table, commiserations go to Benfica, Bayern Munchen and Bayer Leverkusen (all unmanaged). Both Bayern and Benfica were close but not close enough, both finishing 3 points behind several teams, including the likes of Antwerp and Roma.

In the Cup competitions Paul Cowling (yet again) overcame an understrength Inter side to win the final 3-0, both King and Materazzi (who played in midfield for the game) were poor, as was 3rd choice keeper Shovkovsky. Inter manager, Jamie Flynn, was disappointed with this, because he has quite a good record in the Champions League, and a defeat here means his team finishes with 2 silver medals, but no gold.

That about wraps up another game 67 season, well, the Euro comps anyway, so hopefully next season will be just as good, and more challengers for the title, (newly promoted and newly managed AC Milan and Barcelona are sure to cause some upsets).

Staff Orders

There is a section on the return sheet for staff orders – it's important that you fill this bit of the sheet in correctly if you want us to type in your staff orders!!

There are three boxes in the staff orders section. In the first box, write the ACTION that you are doing – this will be TRAIN, COACH, PHYSIO, SCOUT, FIND, WATCH, BUILD or RENAME. There should be nothing in the first box other than one of these seven words.

In the second box, write the NUMBER of the member of staff – so that will be the number of a coach, a physio or a scout. Or, if you are doing a build action or rename action on your stadium it will be a stand number (1 to 4).

In the final box, goes either the PLAYER NUMBER – if you are coaching or doing intensive physio – the PLAYER NAME if you are scouting a player not already in game, the POSITION if you are doing a find action, the team name if doing a WATCH action, the number of seats if a BUILD action or the name of the stand if doing a RENAME action.

Please please remember to write down the actions correctly if you want them to be typed in!

Hope everyone has a great Christmas and New Year –from Necom!

Game 29 – Season End October 2005

Kenny Ramsay's Bayern Munich took the Serie A title, as Sir Jim Ferguson's Marseille faltered – in the league at least. Bayern led the way from the off, with David Duncan's Juventus their main challengers. Unfortunately for Juve, their challenge fell away at the end, only one win from the last four games, as Bayern picked up the title easily in the end. Marseille finished second, also winning the Euro FA Cup – a 4-2 win over Juve in the final, and the Champions League in which they again beat Juve, 2-0 the score in that one. Juve were third in the table, with Paul Ritchie's Celta Vigo fourth. Liverpool won the Premiership, a 3-0 final week victory over Arsenal enough to give them the title on goal difference from Derby. Just a point behind those two were Julie McKechnie's Rangers in third and Mark Renwick's Manchester United in fourth – an incredible close finish. Indeed, though Rangers won their last game, beating Birmingham 3-2, United threw away their chance of the title – only able to draw 0-0 at Chelsea when a win would have done it. Ipswich won the FA Cup, beating Spurs 2-1 in the final.

Game 10 – Season End November 2005

Once again this season was a bit of a Joe Hughes show in game 10, his Man United side winning the Premiership and his teams taking first and second place in Serie A. United topped the Prem with 52pts, ahead of Gary Armit's Celtic on 43. Third were David Crosby's Tottenham and fourth Jamie Armit's Everton. The Goodison side lifted the FA Cup, beating Rangers 1-0 in the final, whilst United beat Spurs 2-1 in the League Cup final. In the European league, Lazio were champions, 5 points clear of AC Milan. Kieron Smith's Barcelona were third, 18 points behind the champions, and Roma fourth. The Euro FA Cup was won by AC Milan – beating Brugges 3-0 – and the League Cup by Lazio (a 1-0 win over Ajax). Joe Hughes' two big sides met in the Champions League final – AC Milan beating Lazio 2-1 thanks to goals from Bronkhorst and Veron. Kieron Smith's England beat Argentina 2-1 to win the World Cup.

Christmas Quiz Answers
 1. Aberdeen, 2. Inverness, 3. Hearts, 4. Celtic, 5. Motherwell, 6. Livingston, 7. Hibernian, 8. Rangers, 9. Dundee United, 10. Kilmarnock, 11. Dunfermline, 12. Falkirk, 13. Craig Johnston – the answer is in the question with that one!!!, 14. Mark Bosnich, 15. 111, 16. Reebok, 17. Thirteen, 18. David O'Leary, 19. Socceroos, 20. Sydney FC, 21. Leicester City, 22. Tim Burgess, 23. Atletico Madrid, 24. Pires of Pezoe, 25. 1999, 26. Gary McAllister, 29. Christmas tree formation, 30. There were no home wins!, 31. The Sert Oil, 32. Score a goal, 33. Come on as sud, 34. Score 5 in a match, 35. Polish as top goalscorer, 36. Brazil, 37. Brazil again, 38. Switzerland, 39. Neymarjo (the little orange), 40. Gary Lineker, 41. Oleg Salenko (Russia – 5 vs Cameroon in 1994), 42. North Korea, 43. Bernd Luder (Germany), 44. Ray Wilkins and David Beckham, 45. Pablix

The Exciting Christmas Quiz...

If you're bored over the break – with two whole weeks between turns in League Soccer – try our Christmas Football quiz. See how many you can get without cheating and looking on the Internet! Answers on the inside back page.

Scottish Teams

Each of the following questions is answered by a different Scottish Premier Division team – can you work out which goes where?

1. Who did Sir Alex Ferguson leave to manage Manchester United?
2. Which top flight club was only established in 1994?
3. Who last won the league title in 1960?
4. Who were Manchester United's opponents when the new North Stand was opened for the first time in 1996?
5. Whose manager played 77 times for England (once in a very bloody shirt!)
6. Who are the only team from outside the **Old Firm** to have won any of the three main competitions in Scotland this decade.
7. What was the final club as player – and then manager – of the great Franck Sauzee?
8. Which Scottish side shares its name with the number one team in Andorra?
9. Which side made it to the semi finals of the European Cup in 1984?
10. At which team did Ally McCoist finish his playing career?
11. Which team is nicknamed 'The Parrs'?
12. For which team did Alan Gow sign in June 2005?

Christmas Down Under !

"Christmas in Australia is different to Christmas here. They have sun and lager, we have snow and beer" sang Frank Sidebottom. This section has nothing to do with Christmas, but everything to do with the football and the land down under. Here we go...

13. Who was the first Australian to play in and win the European Cup? Craig Johnston
14. Who was the first Australian to play in the Premiership?
15. Wayne Rooney was 17 years and how many days when he won his first England cap (against the Aussies) in 2003
16. Which sportswear company provides free kit to each of the 8 teams in Australian soccer's A-league?
17. How many goals did Archie Thompson score in the 31-0 demolishing of American Samoa in 2001?
18. Who is the former Leicester, Man City and Luton striker now assistant boss at Oxford?
19. What is the (somewhat predictable it must be said) nickname of the Australian soccer team?
20. Which A-League side is managed by former world cup winner Pierre Littbarski?

Christmas In Football

Questions with tenuous links to Christmas or football (or both!) ...

21. For which team did John Duncan score six goals on Christmas day 1924?
22. Who was guest singer on the St.Etienne song 'I was born on Christmas day'?
23. From which team did Manchester City loan Kiki Musampa?
24. What was the name of the Paul McCartney song about a 1914 footie match between British and German troops in the 1st world war?
25. In which year did the last fixtures to be played on Christmas day in England take place?
26. In 2005, which team broke the Premiership 'Curse of Christmas' (whichever team is bottom of the table on Christmas day will be relegated)
27. Who beat Aston Villa 1-0 on 26 December 2004 to record their first Boxing Day victory in five years?
28. What is the name of the former Scottish international, a treble winner at Liverpool in 2000-01, who had his birthday on Christmas day?
29. What is another way to describe the 4-3-2-1 formation?
30. What was unusual about all the Premiership results on Boxing Day 1994?

Premiership Firsts

What were the following players the first to do in the Premiership?

31. Niall Quinn (Manchester City)
32. Brian Deane (Sheffield United)
33. Eric Thorsvedt (Tottenham)
34. Andy Cole (Man United)
35. Teddy Sheringham (Tottenham)

World Cups

36. Who won the World Cup in 1970?
37. Which team knocked England out of the 2002 World Cup?
38. Where was the 1954 World Cup held?
39. What was the name of the mascot for the 1982 Spanish world cup?
40. Who finished top scorer in Mexico '86?
41. Which player has scored the most goals in one match in the World cup finals?
42. A shock defeat to which country saw Italy knocked out of the 1966 World Cup?
43. Who is the all time World Cup finals top scorer?
44. Who are the only two England players to have been sent off in World Cup finals?
45. What was the name of the dog who discovered the stolen Jules Rimet trophy in 1966?

That's the end – how many did you get right???

Manage A National Team

We've just started a major overhaul of League Soccer national teams – so if you're not managing one at present it's a good time to get in there and take one over. To do that, just write **APPLY (Team name)** in your extra actions (eg. If you want to manage England, and nobody else has them, you would write down **APPLY (England)**

National teams cost just £2.00 every five turns (which averages out at 40p per turn).

The winner of the World Cup receives 5000 loyalty points, enough for £10 credit or £5m for your club and the runner up gets 1000 points.

New features in the World Cup competition starting soon after the Christmas break include...

- Coaches and scouts for national teams
- Squad sheets on next opponents
- Manage the under 21 team in their own tournament

See the league soccer website (suggestions board) at www.necomgames.com for more info on what to look out for in the new year!

Cheque / Credit Card Payments & Loyalty Pts

Please remember that due to the cost of processing them, there will be a 40p banking charge on any cheques you send for less than £10, and on any credit card or paypal payments made for less than £15...

It's also worth reminding everyone about the Loyalty Points scheme. These can be redeemed for cash for your club (£1m per 1000 points saved up) or credit for your account (£2 per 1000 points). You collect points at a rate of 100 points per turn played in League Soccer, but also get bonus points if you make bigger payments into your account – if you pay in £20 we give you 1000 points (split equally between all teams you manage) and if you pay in £50 we give you 3000 points.

Game 11 – Season End November 2005:

The game 11 Premiership title went right to the wire, with Ryan Smethurst's Southampton pipping Ged Carey's Man United by three points. Saints beat Leeds 4-2 at Elland Road in their final match, so United's victory by the same scoreline at Goodison Park made no difference. Oldham finished third and Preston North End fourth. Southampton comfortably completed the league and cup double with a 3-0 victory over Scunthorpe in the FA Cup final. Two goals from Robinho had previously been enough to secure a piece of silverware for Manchester United – they beat Preston 2-1 in the League Cup final. The honours in the European league went mainly to Real Madrid. James Teager' side had already won the Super Cup early in the season – a 2-1 victory over Preston in the final, then they went on to win the Serie A title too. Comfortably in the end – the gap 10 points to second placed Lazio, with Genoa third and Gerard O'Brien's Inter in fourth place. Real also won the League Cup, beating Genoa 2-1 in the final. The Euro FA cup final was a more surprising event – Padova beating Steau Bucharest 1-0 in the final. The two champions met in a fitting Champions League final – and Real just came out on top, a David Beckham strike the only goal as they beat Southampton 1-0. James Teager's England side trounced Brazil 5-1 in the World Cup final.

Game 138 – Season End October 2005:

It was very much a tale of two teams in game 138 – as every competition was dominated by either Arsenal or Lazio. Colm Mahoney's Gunners were clear Premiership champions with a runaway 56 points total, 11 clear of second placed Scott Forster's Newcastle. Matthew Lavery's Millwall were third and Mark Osborne's Fulham fourth. Arsenal pretty much cleaned up when it came down to trophies – battering Inter Milan 4-0 in the Champions League final, beating Watford 2-0 in the FA Cup final, and coming from behind to beat Newcastle 2-1 in the League cup final. It was in every way Colm's season, and an impressive haul of trophies. The European league went to Patrick Lyon's Lazio who were totally unchallenged all season – a maximum 66 points for them. Colm Mahoney's Barcelona were second, with Inter finishing third and Juventus fourth. Lazio beat PSV 4-0 in the FA Cup and Feyenoord 2-1 in the League Cup. The World Cup was won by Wales, beating Portugal 1-0 in the final.

Game 59 – Season End December 2005:

Anthony Brockway's Inter Milan were perhaps the team of the season in game 59 – winning the Champions League (thanks to a 2-1 final victory over Juventus), the league cup (coming from behind to beat Barsa 2-1 thanks to a late Rooney winner) and the Serie A title. Bayern Munich were second in that, Barcelona third and Lee Brockway's AC Milan fourth. Inter also won the Super Cup, beating Chelsea 1-0 in the final. The only trophy they missed out on was the FA Cup, where they surprisingly lost in the quarter finals to Borussia Moenchengladbach. Dortmund won that one, beating AC Milan 1-0 in the final. In the British league, Mark Lawrence's Man United won the league and both cups, beating Arsenal 2-1 in the League Cup final and West Brom 2-0 in the FA Cup. Dean Brockway's Arsenal finished second in the table, Kevin Dedman's Chelsea were third and Thomas Charmer's Liverpool ended up fourth.

Underwood's Roma Take The Title!

Game 35, Season End November 2005

The battle for the Serie A title was a tough one all season, with hardly anything between Phil Barker's Juventus, Paul Underwood's Roma and David Smith's AC Milan sides. By week 15, the three sides were tied on 35 points apiece – separated only by goal difference – where Juve had the edge. Week 16 saw big wins for all three – a 4-0 for Roma at Dortmund amongst them and still all three were tied. Week 17 proved to be key – at least for Milan's challenge. All of the top three had tough away matches – but Roma and Juve came through theirs unscathed, Juve only just though with a 4-3 victory at Valencia. Milan though were well and truly hammered – David Smith's side battered 4-1 by Paul Barker's Inter Milan who were fourth – albeit a distant fourth – in the table. Week 18 saw Roma go top of the table for the first time, as Paul Underwood's side beat La Coruna 3-0. Juve could only manage a 1-1 draw at Lyon whilst Milan moved to within a point of Phil Barker's side with a 4-1 win over Dortmund. Week 19 saw first vs third – as Milan hosted Roma in the San Siro. A 1-1 draw in the end looked to be only a good result for Juve – who went back to the top on

Milan Hold Off Juve Challenge

Game 81, Season End December 2005

A thrilling season in game 81 drew to a close with Jamie Maycroft's AC Milan picking up the European League title after a tight battle with Ross Sharp's Juventus. Daniel Kelly's Inter Milan side looked to be title favourites halfway through the season, but they lost their way soon after losing their manager, and from that point on there were only two sides in it. Juve were five points behind Milan after 12 games, and though they edged closer as they season went on, AC Milan didn't drop enough points for them to get close enough. When Milan were surprisingly held 1-1 at Antwerp in week 19, Juve closed the gap to just two points – which meant it would at least go right to the wire – but three straight wins for both clubs after that meant it was still a two point gap when the season finished. Still, Juve only dropped points once in the last 10 games – a 2-2 draw with Lazio in week 15 – and were definitely the form team going into the new season. They also won the League Cup, beating AC 2-1 in the final, and made it to the final of the Champions League, where dominant British league side Chelsea just beat them 1-0. Ryan Doyle's Bayern Munich won the FA Cup, beating Nantes 3-0 in the final, Munich finishing third in the table as well, with Inter fourth. As mentioned, Wayne Sinclair's Chelsea were the dominant side in the British league – and in Europe as they lifted the Champions League title. They also won the League Cup, blitzing Sheffield Wednesday 4-0 in the final. Chelsea finished 11 points clear of second placed Arsenal in the Premiership, with Rangers third and Tottenham fourth. Tony Bainbridge's Notts County won the FA Cup - beating Dundee United 2-0 in the final - to also qualify for next seasons Champions League, an impressive feat for the second division champions. Yugoslavia beat Portugal 2-0 in the World Cup final.



A Festive Prize Wordsearch ...

We've not had a wordsearch competition in a while – so here's one to get your Christmas teeth into. Hidden in the grid are the names of lots of footballers, past and present. As usual, cross out all the names you find in the grid and you'll have some letters left over. Now – re-arrange those letters and you'll have the name of a football team. All we want to know is – what's that team!

All the correct entries received by 1st February 2006 will be thrown into a big hat and a winner pulled out to receive 5,000 loyalty points!!!

R	I	G	R	E	S	M	I	D	T	R	Z	D
I	R	R	E	K	O	O	R	B	O	E	A	E
A	R	E	R	A	E	H	S	E	D	L	I	B
P	M	A	K	G	R	E	B	V	D	W	D	A
A	P	H	Q	U	I	N	N	A	V	O	E	G
N	E	S	N	E	J	R	R	N	R	F	O	G
S	M	I	T	H	K	Y	A	P	A	T	T	I
S	C	S	O	C	A	M	M	E	D	S	O	O
E	U	H	W	R	A	R	O	R	I	N	A	N
N	B	A	I	A	R	E	E	S	D	O	O	W
R	O	N	A	L	D	O	L	I	S	E	H	I
A	M	S	H	E	L	L	Y	E	V	L	O	L
B	I	E	I	E	Y	A	F	O	E	E	O	S
E	D	N	J	E	L	O	C	B	R	T	D	O
N	O	S	I	R	R	O	M	H	D	O	S	N
T	E	D	A	R	O	M	A	R	I	O	C	I

Hopefully that will while away a few hours for you over the festive period – fill in your answer on the form below and send it back to us...

Name : _____

Necom Account No : _____

I think the mystery team is ...
