

Necom News

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Staff Members – What Do We Know?

A lot of the talk on the Necom web boards seems to be about staff members. How do we get more of them? Why do we pay them so much? And what is going on with their ratings? In next weeks issue of this newsletter we will attempt to lift the lid on the shady goings on of those people who take so much of your clubs money and do so much in return...

Deadline Changes

The deadline in 10 day games, for a number of reasons, will be in the morning from now on. Where possible I will still try to hold a chat night once a week and will let you know about that here in the newsletter and also on the noticeboards.

The Debt and Transfer Request Lists

This suggestion came up on the noticeboards, thanks to Craig Rathey who put it forward. As you should know, if you are more than £5 million overdrawn, you are not permitted to buy any players at all that turn – this includes loans – and are not allowed to agree any contracts. Whilst the financial affairs of clubs has always been kept confidential in League Soccer up until now, we were persuaded by Craig and others that it might be a good thing to list those clubs that were in debt. The big advantage of course is that it then anyone who was thinking of selling a player to that team will know that they can't do so – the deal would fail. Knowing that a club needs to sell players to carry on may also cause other managers to contact that team in an attempt to buy their players,

In another move to try to help facilitate more transfer dealings, we have also listed on the printouts those players who have asked for a transfer. These are not players whose managers have put them up for sale – rather the players who themselves currently want to leave their clubs (the ones with REQ by their contract details on the Squad Sheet). Note that the transfer request list is just for your information. These players do not necessarily have to be sold, they are just players who have asked for a transfer. Look out next week for a bigger feature on players and their transfer requests.

Online Chat Nights

Those who aren't regulars on the Necom noticeboards might not be aware that there's a place to ask any game related questions you might have – our Necom Chat Nights. These are held roughly once every four or five nights (alternating between Monday & Friday or a Wednesday in a week) between 6pm and 10pm on the Necom noticeboards. To get there go to www.necomgmaes.com and click on the link for the noticeboards. There have been 80 such chat nights so far – they're all still up there to look over if you to the 'General LS' section of the noticeboard.

More From Niall Quinn's Disco Pants...

Would you believe it. How many wrong predictions can a person make in the same week. Last week I didn't think Chelsea would beat Barcelona – and they did. I didn't think Man City would beat United – and they did. I even thought Sunderland would beat Bolton, but the team from the Reebok got themselves what could be a very valuable point with a 2-2 draw up here. That was Sunderland's third draw in a row, and we've not won for seven games so possibly the Martin O'Neill honeymoon might be wearing off. Having said that, the only team to beat us over those seven games is Everton (twice), we've drawn with some good teams (Man. City, Spurs) and some not so good ones (Wolves for goodness sake). So really, do you expect us to get anything last match of the season against Man United?

City were brilliant against United on Monday night. Clearly Mancini got his tactics right, and Fergie got his wrong. United's three in the middle of the park were over run by the magnificent Yaya Toure and a brilliant performance from Gareth Barry but it was the initial team selection from Str Alex that had us scratching our heads. To bring in Park Ji Sung at the expense of Young, Valencia, Welbeck and co seemed bizarre and was a team setting up the same way almost every other team has done this season at the Etihad. In all but one of the games I've seen of City's home games, teams set up to stop them playing. It can work for a while, but you won't keep a team that good out for the whole 90 minutes. All you're doing is giving them the initiative. When Sunderland went there, we at least had a go and it paid off, and but for a dodgy penalty we really should have won the game. So what for the title now? Well I've tipped United all season long, even after they lost 6-1 I said they'll bounce back. They've got two easier games, as Mancini said, and if they win them both I still think United will be champions, I just can't see City going to St. James' Park and winning. Mind you, as Wigan showed at weekend, Newcastle really aren't all that good...

Chelsea were equally good in midweek against Barcelona. It looked very likely at one point that Barcelona would steamroller the Stamford Bridge side and had Messi slotted in his penalty, I think they probably would have done. But what about that. Great performance from Chelsea and Bayern Munich but what odds would you have got on all three of Kaka, Cristiano Ronaldo and Messi missing penalties over those two days. Incredible. Now if Chelsea can win the final, all that fighting over 4th place will be academic anyway. Won't that be funny – Newcastle finish 4th but don't get in the Champions League because Chelsea get the place instead! Those two play each other on Wednesday night of this week – an interesting one there.

This weekend also sees the FA Cup final. Call me a traditionalist, but I think this year the FA have been doing their best to kill the FA Cup. Or possibly the Premier League have been. But the FA need to put their foot down and make it special again. There shouldn't be other matches on the same day as the semi finals, it detracts totally from them. I know now they are at Wembley that would mean a whole weekend off but so what. That's how it should be. And as for the final, well that's just crazy. Kick off at quarter past five in the evening. I suppose it's slightly better than last year when United were winning the league whilst City and Stoke kicked off in the cup final – and Sky Sports just pretended there was no cup final going on. Predictions for that. Chelsea to beat Newcastle in midweek, then lose surprisingly to Liverpool 2-1 in the FA Cup final and by the same scoreline to Bayern Munich in the Champions League Final. Defeat to Chelsea will be followed by a draw to Man City for Newcastle and they won't make it into the Champions League. Chelsea will draw with Liverpool next Tuesday and beat Blackburn to get 4th place - Spurs will lose to Bolton but beat Villa and Fulham to miss out on goal difference. City will beat QPR but United will narrowly defeat Sunderland to win the league. At the bottom, Bolton will beat Tottenham and West Brom to stay up, Wigan will beat Wolves on the last day of the season. QPR will beat Stoke but lose at City to go down so even if Aston Villa will lose to Spurs and Norwich they will stay up on goal difference.

Next time I write this we'll probably know how right or (more likely) wrong I've been. Until then – goodbye!