

19/09/2011

United showing City that money can't buy you everything



City's millions cannot buy the confidence coursing through United at present

Can money buy you silverware? Or does the development of a young side give a better chance to win the top honours?

Manchester United, maybe surprisingly, lie fourth in the transfer league tables, but their shrewder approach to spending, compared to their closest Premier League rivals is putting the big spenders to shame.

Manchester United have had an outstanding start to the league. The real difference between them and their noisy neighbours is the approach to the teams. This year, Sir Alex Ferguson has unveiled a youthful side, but has backed up his first team with established title winners from last year.

Experience in balancing campaigns both in Europe and domestically can only work if the base is solid and the team can absorb the turnaround in playing a tough European mid-week draw and having the same challenges at the weekend.

In an interview after Sunday's match against Chelsea, Sir Alex Ferguson credited the success of his youthful side to the pre-season training, and emerging players such as Phil Jones, Chris Smalling and the more established Ashley Young having real enthusiasm and good attacking instincts.

In contrast, Manchester City seemed to wilt a little under the pressure, against Fulham, and crucially, Roberto Mancini cited tiredness after the mid-week Champions' League matches, and a weak midfield pool from which to pick.

The season has a long way to go, but risk and reward will be constant demons more so on the shoulder of Mancini than Sir Alex if the first five matches are anything to go by.

Ros Satar

19 November 2011

<http://www.sharethematch.com/News/46381>

Mr Blatter causes controversy...again!



Is this the end for Sepp?

Despite coming from a country renowned for their neutrality, Swiss-born FIFA President Sepp Blatter once again found himself at the centre of controversy on Wednesday.

In light of the continuing FA investigation into the alleged racial abuse from Chelsea's John Terry and more recently [Liverpool's](#) Luis Suarez, Blatter's comments in a CNN World Sport interview ignited an already tense media swirl of attention.

He suggested that players called by racist names should dismiss the incidents, and remember that after all "it's just a game," and that such incidents could be settled with a handshake.

Blatter has faced a barrage of criticism from numerous British managers and players, and even politicians have lent their weight to the calls for him to resign.

However, despite making an apology for causing any offence, and asserting that the "fight against racism and discrimination" will go on, he categorically stated that he would not resign.

The apology, read on his behalf by anti-apartheid activist Tokyo Sexwale, as well as appearing in a photo with Mr Blatter.

As well as defending the FIFA President, Mr Sexwale also turned his attention to the English FA, suggesting John Terry should relinquish the England captaincy during the investigation against him, and also calling for action against Luis Suarez.

Perhaps putting the focus back to the English FA is not a deflecting tactic – [Everton](#) manager David Moyes suggested that had the FA concluded their enquiries sooner, Mr Blatter would possibly not even have been asked the question.

The allegations against John Terry were made last month, and so perhaps it's not surprising that the focus will return to whether England's own Association can put its house in order, before calling for the World governing body to start afresh.

Mr Blatter seems to have survived a number of issues in his tenure as FIFA President, even being re-elected with no opposition and calls for him to stand down. Perhaps this, though, may prove to be a controversy so far.

Ros Satar

Muamba and Hodgson both hoping for miracles



Bolton midfielder and England manager have tough roads ahead

Two contrasting images of British football hit our screens this week.

Exhibit A: The predictable punditry and punning around the appointment of Roy Hodgson as England boss on a four-year contract.

Exhibit B: The emotional return of Fabrice Muamba to the Reebok Stadium, a mere six weeks after the horror of suffering cardiac arrest in an FA Cup tie at [Tottenham](#).

Hodgson's appointment earlier this week has seen the focus move from a pair of (hopefully) safe hands to steady England's ship ahead of Euro 2012 to heated discussions about making fun of speech impediments.

Although perhaps asking for the nation to 'cut him some slack' hardly instils a massive amount of confidence in England supporters.

In contrast, football fans all over the country were united as Muamba took to the pitch at the Reebok to a standing ovation.

There can be few who weren't moved to tears by Muamba's emotional reaction and his amazingly humble interview where he expressed how grateful he was for the support.

Some people crave 15 minutes of fame - Muamba faced 78 minutes of fragile mortality.

Hodgson meanwhile has possibly four years of purgatory to survive at the hands of the media, which started the moment he was appointed.

They may seem disparate, but these two figures of English football do share a connection.

We hope Hodgson reignites pride in the national team and makes them capable of challenging the world's top sides, and hope Muamba completes his recovery to one day play professional football again.

Who is to say neither can do it?

Ros Satar

3rd May 2012

NON-LEAGUE FOCUS: Eastleigh set for historic goal-line technology trial

Eastleigh commercial manager Mark Jewell has expressed his delight at FIFA's decision to road-test goal-line technology at the Hampshire Senior Cup final later this month.

All eyes will be on St Mary's Stadium on May 16 when Eastleigh take on AFC Totton with the game being used to trial an adapted Hawk-Eye system.

Tennis and cricket have benefitted greatly from incorporating the technology in recent years and now it appears football will be following suit.

And with the fixture set to go down in history as the first official trial of goal-line technology in the country, Jewell is made up Eastleigh will be a part of it.

"For us it's a dream come true," said Jewell. "From a commercial view, the attention from Sky and the national press is fantastic.

"It's excellent for the club's profile. This can only help us with our project of getting into the Football League in due course. It's clearly to our benefit.

"Hopefully this will be the start of something big if it proves to be more reliable than the current lack of technology.

"It will be great if it can take the pressure off the officials who only have a split-second view."

The Hawk-Eye technology will have no bearing on the referee's decisions in the final, only being used to record data for an independent FIFA testing agency.

The system is in phase two of the goal-line technology trials and will have to be approved by the International Football Association Board before it can be used.

Whatever happens as a result of the tests, Eastleigh manager Ian Baird insists the club will have ensured it's place in football folklore.

"We're only a small club in the big world of football so it's great to be involved," said Baird. "It's a great pub quiz question in the making.

“It’s about time it happened. FIFA have been like dinosaurs when you compare football to other sports that have brought in the technology.”

Ros Satar