

HALF-TIME ORANGE

(DECEMBER 2007)

Well Christmas is almost upon us once again. Well it has been for six months in Tesco's! It seems like only yesterday that we took down our festive office tinsel. I think the Tiger wants some mistletoe up this year! We have succeeded, but only just, in making the HTO a more regular feature. Though we did have our sights set a little higher than two issues. Next year we hope to make this at least a quarterly feature. It is still a struggle to know what to write so any ideas, quizzes or articles are more than welcome. I know some of you have a flair for these things.

GAZZETTE HEADLINES

We do try to be creative, but coming up with original headlines on a daily basis is a bit time consuming. If anyone has any great ideas or one liners please send them in. If you have a big match against a friend or rival let us know and we will be more than willing to create a headline for that match. Or perhaps you have a headline in mind?

NEW PLAYER SEARCH FEATURE

I'm sure some of you have already noticed but there has been a modification to the player search facility. If you subscribe to SoccerAssociation.com you can now access player stats through the IOTP site.

Go to the player search and input a player name. When the results appear click on the player name you wish to scout and you will be asked for your SA log in details. Once you have logged in you can scout as many players as you wish (you only need to log in once).

The player search will operate as normal for those who do not subscribe you will just not be able to access the real life player stats. If you would like to subscribe see <http://www.soccerassociation.com> for more details. At only 50p a week for a 'basic' subscription it is a must for all IOTP managers and football fanatics in general.

SUSPENDED AND INJURED PLAYERS

Over the last few months there has been an increase in managers not replacing their injured or suspended players. It tends to be unfit players that people miss, just double check your yellow sheet as unavailable players will be listed there. Remember we only replace the player with the next best available option, we do not change positions or formations.

FAXING IN YOUR TURNSHEET

Please remember to call the office after you have faxed your turn sheets to check that they have arrived and can be read. People still, on the odd occasion, fax the wrong side and sometimes they are a bit patchy and can be tricky to make out.

KIERONS RANT

Life as a Leicester City fan is anything but dull and finally after five years of dismal managers we have landed a manager, who for me, ticks all the right boxes. I'm not exactly dreaming of the Champions League, but I'm certainly more optimistic about the mighty Foxes chances of returning to the promised land. Hopefully we will be giving the Rams a wave on the way past! Already I am wondering how life was possible without the odd 'Ollyism'.

Hopefully the Christmas spirit(s) will help drown the disappointments of the forever under achieving England national team. Who miserably failed to qualify for the Euro 2008

Championships under the stewardship of Steve McClaren. If I'm honest I'm not sure he should be the only one to bite the bullet. The blithering idiots at the FA selected a man who only achievement was a Carling Cup success and a UEFA Cup final thrashing. A man who was nowhere near my list of candidates and I doubt if I was the only one. Yet those who made that decision still remain in their comfortable perk ridden positions!

NEW ONLINE PAGES

I was hoping to get the new online pages to go live around mid-September and everything was on schedule with just a few little bits to tidy up. But due to problems with Mrs. Webmaster which resulted in two-weeks in hospital and two major operations (the second only necessary due to an NHS error!) it never happened. So huge apologies for that. Other things took priority and IOTP missed it's chance at the top of my agenda, although I can now work the dish washer and washing machine. Both of which are quite easy really! Only now have I finally begun to sort out the loose ends and the new pages should (hopefully) be live in early December. They will not be 100% complete, the most notable exception being the real-life/external squad viewer which needs some work particularly as I'm thinking of using the entire SA database rather than just the sub-set used by IOTP (so something like 75,000 instead of 17,500 players). I'm also looking at using this bigger database for the forum player search but the code needs changing to be more efficient with the much larger amount of data. The old style pages will still be available just in case.

SENDING PAYMENT

When you send a payment please remember to fill in the payment section on your turn sheet. When sending payment separately please let us know who the payment is from and which accounts the monies are to be allocated to. We no longer accept card payments over the phone, this is now all done online via your turn sheets.

THE FORUM

A few months ago we did a survey on the state of the forum. I will now give you the results from that survey and our conclusion. The question we asked was 'Are you happy with the running of or state of the forum?' The breakdown of the 104 responses is:

Yes 86 (82.65%), No 16 (15.42%) and don't know 2 (1.93%)

We learned that the majority (of those who participated in the survey) were happy with the running of the forum. Though we did learn quite a lot from those who were not. One of the issues raised was some forumers starting threads about other forumers. Any thread entitled with another forumers name will now result in a week ban.

CHRISTMAS BREAK

The last working day will be Thursday 20th December and we will re-open on Wednesday 2nd January 2008. As soon as we hit December it is important that you return your postal turns a bit earlier than normal. You may wish to consider having your turns sent via email too. This costs only an extra 10p per club. As always we welcome your feedback.

**Thanks for your continued support.
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all the IOTP staff.**

IN OFF THE POST GAME SURVEY

As promised we are giving each of you the opportunity to have your say on some game changes. Please complete this survey and return. The most requested changes WILL be implemented! A full list of results will be printed in the next HTO.

Please circle, highlight or write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. How many non EU players should be allowed per sixteen man squad?

- a) 3 b) 4 c) 5 d) no limit

2. If lower rated players were to be made automatically available what ratings bracket should this include?

- a) <45 b) <50 c) <55 d) don't change

3. What would you like the first team maximum squad size to be?

- a) 22 b) 24 c) 26 d) 28

4. What would you like the youth team maximum squad size to be?

- a) 14 b) 16 c) 18 d) 20

5. When a team becomes unmanaged how many turns should their players be unavailable for?

- a) 4 b) 6 c) 8 d) no change

6. What do you feel would be a fair way to combat player hoarding?

7. If you could make one game change what would it be? The best one will receive

two free turns and an mention in the next HTO.

Other amendments we will be looking at are :-

- Increased external offers
- Reduced price for 3rd teams
- Euro goals to be included in top goal scorers chart
- Seasons to start with fully fit squads
- Seasons to start with no disciplinary points
- Charity Shield match on the close season turn
- Reducing the champions league group stages to one
- Changing the address on the gazette
- adding International games to the live scores
- Improve the quality of unmanaged teams
- More bids from unmanaged clubs for external players
- and many more...

We would like to thank you for filling out this survey and for your continued support. Hopefully together we can keep IOTP the best play by mail game on the market. If you have any additional comments please put them on a blank sheet.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all the IOTP staff.