

October 2020 Issue 7

The



Halfway Line

This month features:

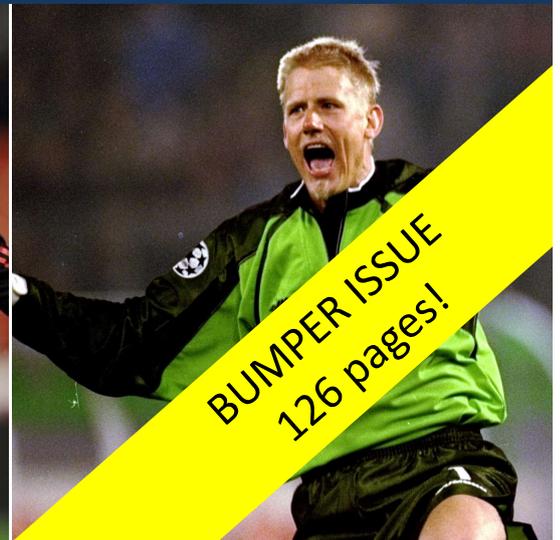
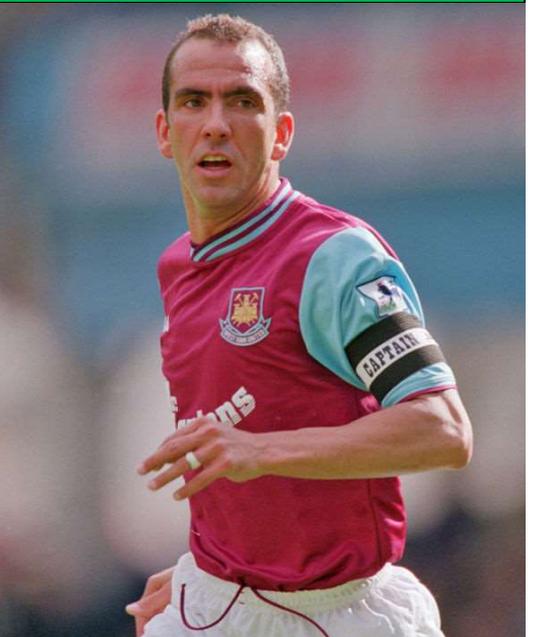
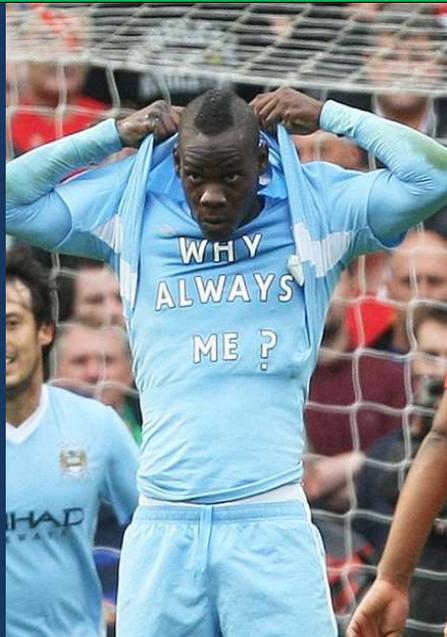
Crazy men of football

Amazing goal scorers
you've never heard
of

Football Kit Special

And we ask:

How do you replace the irreplaceable?



BUMPER ISSUE
126 pages!

Editors note: Pre-match pep talk

We're in October and can you believe it we are entering into the holiday season.

Don't look now but the shop windows have most likely been dressed for the Christmas onslaught. We are more transfer window than shop window but we are not Scrooge's here at The Halfway Line. To prove it we've got you a present. Our standard 100 page magazine for this month only is a bumper 126 page issue. We spoil you we know!

I recall a commentator passing comment once when Aliou Cisse signed for Birmingham City and he claimed the Senegalese international midfielder brought presence with him. Always thought that was a nice way to welcome yourself to a changing room, a Father Christmas like figure!! Look we know it's a play on words but it made us chuckle.

A final gift to mention is that of the Mexican top division, The Liga MX. Some of the top flight clubs, like Chivas and Atlas Guadalajara have put in place a squad number system for their entire group of players. That's first team squad and down to youth level. All of them. It means for example Atlas' highest squad number is 415. That is slightly bonkers but it means we can facilitate our page number feature all the way up to 126 so we are not complaining.

What else is bonkers? Well funny you should ask. A few footballers and a few footballers stories, and we bring you some of those in this issue.

Do you recall the football magazines Match, Shoot and 90 minutes? Gosh so do we. Here at The Halfway Line we are not trying to replace such iconic football magazines because we understand you simply can't replace everything. You can try but it'll never be the same. We've picked a few clubs that have tried ever so unsuccessfully to replace their parting players. Look out for the feature in this issue.

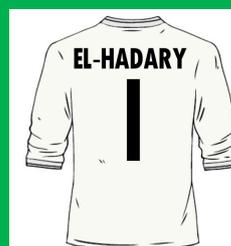
In fact if you have a spare 10 minutes have a flick though all the magazine. This issue is packed full of great stuff including a Kit special and our usual features like best XI's from around the globe to have starred in the Premier League, a twist on our classical kits, some historical line ups and loads more; and remember this, if you last more than 10 minutes you've outlasted Leroy Rosenior's tenure as Torquay manager in his second spell at the club! 10 minutes after being hired he was fired as the club was taken over!! How's your luck!

So come on, quit flicking your Subbuteo men around, hit record to watch Fantasy Football's Phoenix from the flames a bit later on and ring up Club Call another day to get your club's latest transfer gossip and for now tuck into Issue 7 of The Halfway Line.

Enjoy.



Essam El-Hadary - The Egyptian goalkeeper during the 2018 FIFA World Cup, at the age of 45 years and 161 days, became the oldest player in history to play in a World Cup match



The Halfway Line Up

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Glen Johnson – The first signing of the Abramovich era at Chelsea, moving from West Ham United in 2003 for £6 million



Crazy footballers

They say you have to be mad to be a goalkeeper. Well turns out that's a characteristic shared with a few footballers and not necessarily just the shot stoppers.

You've no doubt read the headlines of Mario Balotelli: Once setting off fireworks inside his house and generally behaving some what off the grid and being mad as a hatter. Balotelli was the subject of numerous newspaper stories after joining Manchester City; some were confirmed as true while others turned out to be erroneous. Within days of joining Manchester City, Balotelli was involved in a car crash. It was reported Balotelli was carrying £5,000 cash at the time, and that when a police officer asked why he had such a large sum of cash, Balotelli replied, "Because I am rich."

Other off-field activities involving Balotelli have included driving into a women's prison in Italy to "have a look round", and throwing darts at a youth team player during a training ground "prank" – all of which have been confirmed to be true.

Then there is the enigmatic Italian Paolo Di Canio; so fiery he once pushed a referee to the floor after being sent off, receiving a 11 game ban. You could argue he was slightly bonkers.

What about Jorge Cadete? After a successful season in a Scotland with Celtic, where he scored goals for fun, he fled back to Portugal citing mental health issues and a failure to adjust to life in Scotland without his family and forcing a transfer away from the club.

Then there is the story and the beliefs of Argentine goalkeeper Carlos Roa. Rumour has it he planned to stop playing football at the end of the year 1999 as he believed the world was going to end.

How's your luck waking up on 1st January 2000 and tucking into your humble pie.

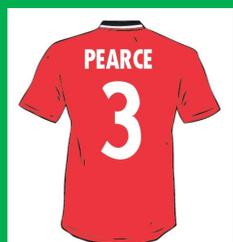
The following profiles are in no way a criticism of any weaknesses or treating ill health as a disability. It's highlighting players to our readers that you may not have heard their stores.

It's important to note footballers are not machines and there is an expectation for them to be able to always perform and not suffer side effects but that is just not realistic. If you are struggling it's important to ask for help.

Oh but there are one or two here that are just a few sandwich's short of a picnic!



Stuart Pearce - In the final game of his career, he was on 99 goals and had the chance to reach 100 career goals with a penalty four minutes into injury time, which he missed!



Sasa Ćurčić



Sasa Ćurčić joined Bolton Wanderers in 1995 but was unable to stop the team being relegated to the then first division. He moved to Aston Villa and then Crystal Palace and his latter years in England and subsequent career choices make for quite interesting reading.

His time at Aston Villa was more dominated by off field antics than on field. It was rumoured at the time he purchased a double decker bus that he would host parties on!!! He moved on to the MLS in the States and with his colourful hair choices and eccentric goatee beards he self proclaimed to be the Dennis Rodman of the MLS – however he lasted just 9 games. He retired at the age of just 29 and stated 'I would not sign for another club, not even if I was offered 15 million dollars. However, it would be different if they were to instead offer me 15 different women from all around the world. I would tell the club chairman: 'Please let me make these women happy – I will satisfy them like they have never been satisfied before'.

Post retirement, Ćurčić entered the Serbian Celebrity Big Brother house and won the contest in June 2007 winning €50,000. He appeared on a number of other reality TV shows, including 'Parovi.' The show featured couples placed in a house for a few months while competing for a money prize – which he entered with his girlfriend. Ćurčić's time on the show was marked by drunken outbursts and insult-laden tirades directed at a wide variety of public figures in Serbia, culminating in an on-air physical altercation with a Serbian rapper called Gru. As a result, Ćurčić was kicked off the show.



Virgil Van Dijk - He is the only defender to win UEFA Men's Player of the Year, and has finished runner-up for the Ballon d'Or and Best FIFA Men's Player



Patrice Loko



After the 1994/95 season, the world was at Patrice Loko's feet. He had helped his first club, Nantes to the French league championship scoring a league high 22 goals and was able to complete a dream move to Paris Saint-Germain that he hoped would help secure a spot in the France Euro '96 squad. Unfortunately for Loko, in July of 1995 he was arrested in Paris. Different news reports claim different offences, but a mixture of violent behaviour and exposing himself to a policewomen saw him sent to a mental hospital and requiring psychiatric treatment. The breakdown was put down to the pressure of his transfer to PSG and domestic difficulties.

Credit to Loko, he fought his demons and was selected for the France Euro'96 squad, and even scored in the group stage against Bulgaria.

Sadly again for Loko he was unable to stake a claim for the France World Cup squad in 1998, to be hosted on their home soil as he was to suffer his second nervous breakdown in three years.



Emerson - He was intended to be the original captain for Brazil's 2002 World Cup team but he suffered an unfortunate injury before the first match of the tournament ruling him out



Breno Borges



Breno Borges was a young Brazilian centre back, who after just 29 league games for Sao Paulo was bought by German giants Bayern Munich in 2008. His 4 years at Munich dominated by injuries and he managed a total of just 21 league appearances.

In September 2011 Breno arrested was by the Munich police force for suspicion of aggravated arson, potentially born out of frustration of his injuries. The suggestion was Breno had almost totally destroyed his villa with a fire. The damage to the property was reported to be \$1.5 million. He was initially released on bail, but in July 2012 he was sentenced to 3 years and 9 months in jail in connection to the arson.

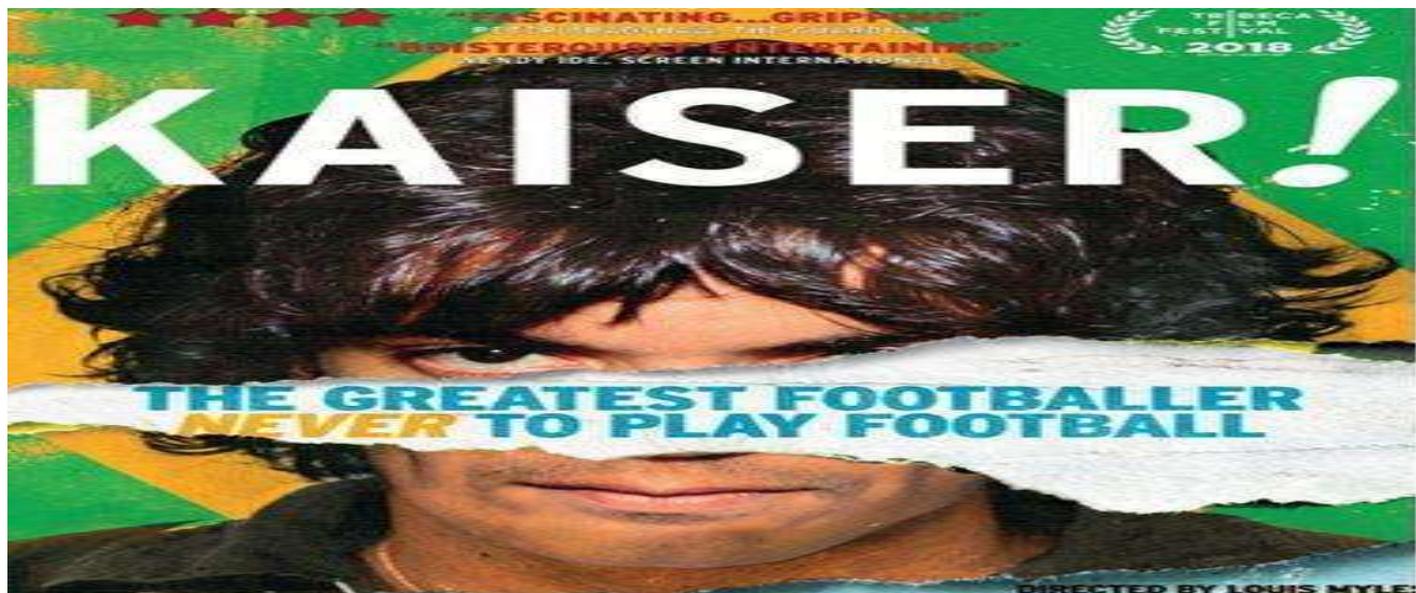
Upon release he was employed by Bayern as a trainer for their U23 squad.



Gary Pallister – On an exclusive quintet of outfield players to have played every minute in a Premier League title-winning side (John Terry, Wes Morgan, Cesar Azpilicueta and Virgil van Dijk)



The Kaiser



Carlos Henrique Raposo, more often know as Carlos Kaiser. What a story. 10 years as a professional footballer, who managed to play a total of 0 games! A total fraudster who wanted to be a footballer, but did not want to have to play football!

In 1981 he signed for Brazilian club Botafogo. His plan was to sign a short contract at the club stating that he was lacking match fitness so that he would spend the first weeks only with physical training where he could shine. When he had to train with other players, he would feign a hamstring injury; the technology at the time made it difficult to detect the fraud.

Another part of the farce was to befriend journalists so that they would write fictional stories about him. In one newspaper article, it was reported that he had such a great time at Puebla, in Mexico prior to his move to Botafogo, that he was even invited to become a Mexican citizen to play for the national team. He also used toy mobile phones, expensive and uncommon at the time, to create fake conversations in foreign languages or reject non-existent transfer offers to create an image of himself as a valuable player!

Another of his scams was he claimed that he played in Argentina for Talleres de Córdoba and Independiente, being brought by a man named "Alejandro", who was a friend of Argentine international Jorge Burruchaga and claiming that he was part of the squad that won both the 1984 Copa Libertadores and the 1984 Intercontinental Cup by portraying himself as Carlos Enrique, an Argentinian player who was genuinely part of the squad.



Alexandre Pato – Won the 2009 Golden Boy award for the most promising young footballer playing in Europe



In 1986, he allegedly moved to Europe and joined French Division 2 club Gazélec Ajaccio where a friend of his was playing. At his presentation, the club arranged a training session with the fans and afraid of being caught, he shot all the balls to the crowd while kissing the club's badge. He barely played at the club and returned to Brazil the following year, although his friendship with journalists later earned him an article where he was depicted as a top goal scorer at Gazélec Ajaccio where he had played for eight seasons! However, the friend, Fabio "Fabinho" Barros who played at Ajaccio for four years, says that Kaiser never actually went to Corsica. Instead, the two of them took photographs of Kaiser wearing an Ajaccio jersey that Barros gave to him as a present. Barros states that Kaiser later used these photographs, as well as a forged player identification card as "proof" of his time in France.

Returning to Brazil, he joined Bangu, where he again used his fake injury scam. However, the club's major sponsor and patron Mr. Castor, became tired of seeing him just training. During one match, Castor told the coach to play him, as the team was losing 2–0. When Kaiser was sent to warm up, he saw a group of supporters shouting abuse at the players and started to fight them, for which he immediately received a red card without even participating in the actual match. After the match, he lied to the patron that the supporters called him a thief. He was forgiven and earned a six-month extension.

Kaiser also had a spell at Fluminense where, together with his injury scam, he again used a toy mobile phone to pretend to reject offers from other clubs, stating that he was happy at the club, but was caught by an assistant. He later joined Vasco da Gama, where he was signed to help a teammate to overcome an alcohol problem as he did not drink and had a reputation of being a good person!

Sounds like a Hollywood story as opposed to real life, and indeed the story has made it to the big screen. *Kaiser! The Greatest Footballer Never to Play Football* had its world premiere in April, 2018. The film features contributions from actual Brazilian footballers Carlos Alberto Torres, Zico, Renato Gaúcho, Bebeto, Junior and Ricardo Rocha.



Predrag Mijatović - In the 1997–98 season, Real Madrid won the Champions League for the first time in 32 years, defeating Juventus. Mijatović scored the only goal in the final



Walter Hernandez da Silva



Simply known as 'Walter' the Brazilian forward was purchased by FC Porto in 2010. He stayed on the clubs books until 2019, though only played 33 league games and was loaned out 8 separate times. It proved an unsuccessful transfer and he was not able to replace the departing Falcao as hoped.

What we at The Halfway Line have in common with Walter is that throughout his career he has struggled with weight problems. So much so, in December 2018 he tested positive for furosemide and sibutramine metabolites after a match and was suspended until further notice. The banned substances were found in prescription drugs he had been taking to fight his obesity problem.

Although he has some of our sympathy this is then lost after we learnt in the August of that year was arrested at his home after allegedly pointing a toy gun at an electricity company's employee. Some people will do anything to get out of paying for their bills!



Robert Lewandowski - He is one of only two players to achieve the European treble (League, Cup & Champions League) while being the top scorer in all three competitions



Bruno Fernandes das Dores de Souza



OK, this one is a bit deep and horrific.

In 2010 things were looking pretty good for Bruno. The Brazilian goalkeeper had just had two successful seasons at club side Flamengo and there had been talk of a transfer to Italian giants AC Milan.

Then in the June of that year, Bruno's former mistress, Eliza Samudio, disappeared.... She had previously sued Bruno when pregnant with the child she claimed was his, and he had refused to support the child.

A cousin of Bruno's confessed to a judge that he had been involved in the abduction of Samudio, and that she was dead. Bruno was arrested, and Flamengo cancelled his contract.

In late July 2010, he was formally charged with murder, kidnapping, hiding a body, forming a criminal gang (conspiracy) and corrupting minors. According to police, Bruno's teenage cousin stated that Samudio's body was cut up and some parts were fed to dogs, while other parts were buried under concrete. Bruno confessed to organizing the plot.

On 8 March 2013, he was sentenced to a 22-year jail term for the assault, torture and murder of his former girlfriend and mother of his youngest child.

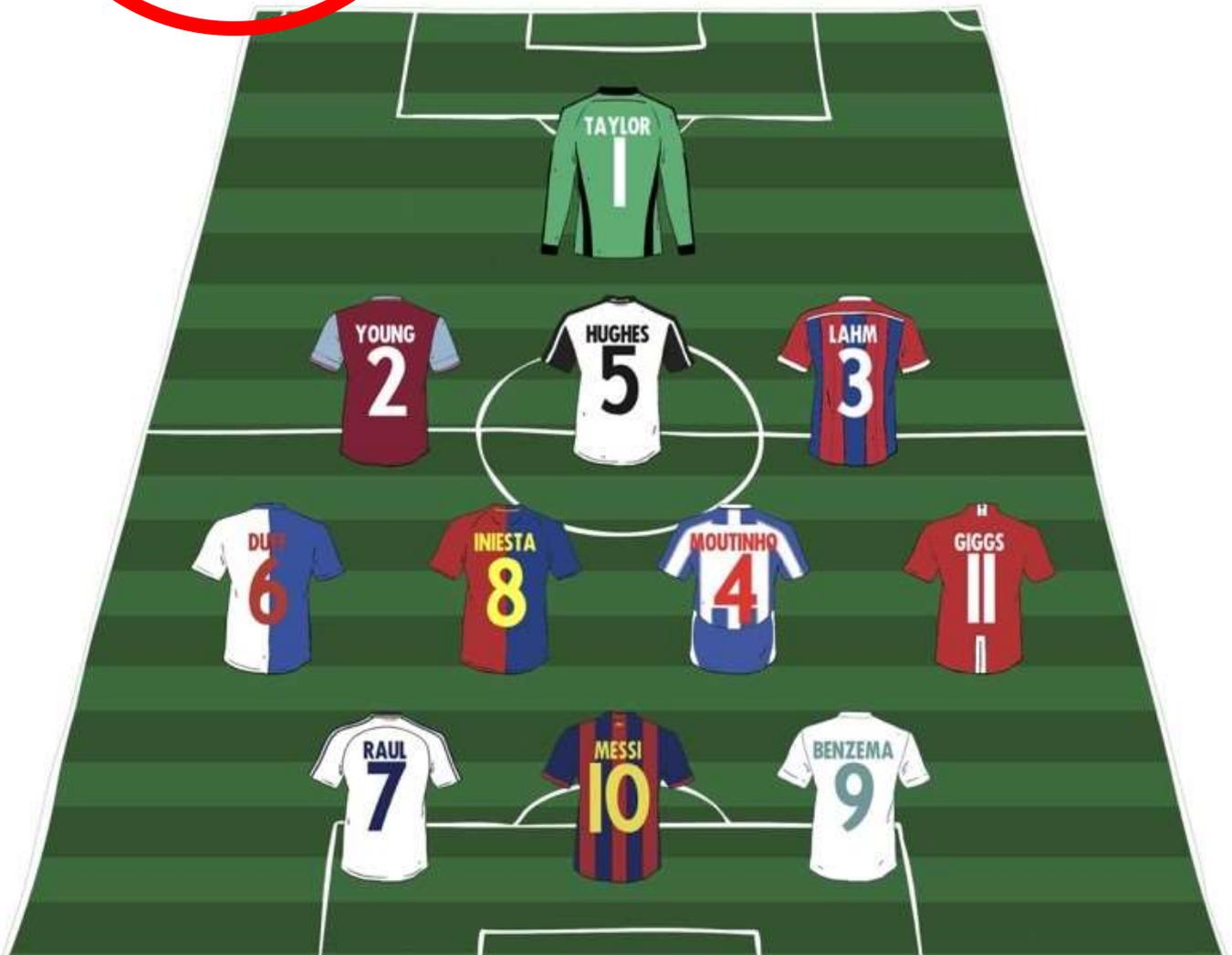


Dennis Bergkamp - Achieved a unique feat in being voted first, second and third on Match of the Day's Goal of the Month competition in August 1997





Never Red Carded Best XI



Alen Bokšić - Marseille's joint top goalscorer in the 1992–93 Champions League, which they won, alongside teammate Rudi Völler, both scoring 6 goals



Never Red Carded Best XI

Below we list a remarkable achievement by the following XI players who based on our research have never received a red card in a league game during their playing careers. Look at the number of league games they have played and to be able to keep their discipline is a credit to each and everyone of them. Of course no doubt a chunk of luck helped them along the way, but they deserved that as far as we are concerned!

Stuart Taylor – Between 1997 & 2018 made 75 league appearances for clubs including Arsenal, Crystal Palace, Manchester City, Aston Villa Reading and Leeds United

Luke Young – Between 1997 & 2014 made 379 league appearances for clubs including Charlton Athletic, Middlesbrough, Tottenham Hotspur and Aston Villa

Aaron Hughes - Between 1997 & 2019 made 525 league appearances for clubs including Newcastle United, Aston Villa and Fulham

Philip Lahm - Between 2001 & 2017 made 448 league appearances for Stuttgart and Bayern Munich

Damien Duff - Between 1996 & 2015 made 489 league appearances for clubs including Blackburn Rovers, Chelsea, Newcastle United and Fulham

Andres Iniesta - Between 2001 & 2020 has made 489 league appearances for Barcelona and Vissel Kobe

Joao Moutinho - Between 2003 & 2020 has made 477 league appearances for clubs including FC Porto, Sporting Lisbon, Monaco and Wolverhampton Wanderers

Ryan Giggs** - Between 1990 & 2014 made 672 league appearances for Manchester United

Raul Gonzalez - Between 1994 & 2015 made 675 league appearances for clubs including Real Madrid and Schalke 04

Karim Benzema - Between 2004 & 2020 has made 463 league appearances for Lyon and Real Madrid

Lionel Messi** - Between 2004 & 2020 has made 486 league appearances for Barcelona

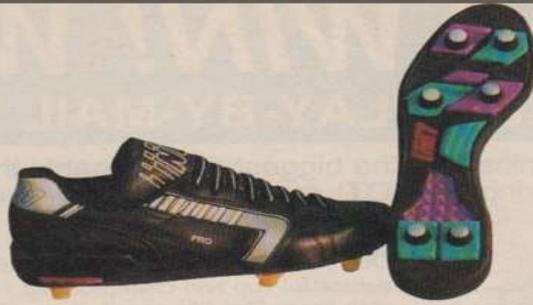
Special mention of course goes to England's very own Mr. Nice guy, **Gary Lineker** who has the claim to fame for not only never receiving a red card during his career, but also never once getting booked! Lineker played for five clubs, in 3 countries playing a total of **460** games and amassing **80** international caps, and not in the referee's note book once!

** Ryan Giggs and Lionel Messi have experienced an early bath in their careers. Scandalous I know. Both left footed wizards were given their marching orders (once) in international games for Wales and Argentina respectively – Messi actually managed to get the red card on his international debut.



Giovanni van Bronckhorst - Earned 107 caps for the Netherlands national team, and played for his country in three FIFA World Cups, as well as three UEFA European Championships





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Thibaut Courtois - In 2018, Real Madrid signed Courtois for £35 million, becoming La Liga's most expensive goalkeeper



Strikers you haven't heard of that perhaps you should of

Classic strikers to have shone in European leagues, over the last 30-40 years I'm sure you can reel off the superstars, the trailblazers, and club heroes.

The likes of Ian Rush, Jean-Pierre Papin, Alan Shearer, Jurgen Klinsmann, Gary Lineker, Gabriel Batistuta and Hristo Stoichkov are all synonymous with goal scoring and taking the plaudits that go with that. Throw in the big time tournament players like Paolo Rossi, Mario Kempes, Toto Schillaci, Davor Suker and Miroslav Klose you've got yourself some pretty high profile marksmen.

Though in and amongst the headline makers were masters of their craft going about their trade, quietly doing what they do best, hitting the back of the net, regularly and efficiently! Its just they didn't get the newspaper column inches the above strikers did.

We've picked a sample of perhaps the more unsung heroes playing in Europe in and around the last 30 years, mixed with a couple of gems in there that really deserve a mention.

All shared the attribute of knowing where the back of the net was, regardless of where they had come from and what path they had taken.

Prolific marksmen are a tough find in today's market and after you've familiarised yourself with these forwards have a think what a player of their ability and goal scoring numbers would be worth in today's transfer market. You'd be digging very deep into the chairman's pockets.



Gerard Lopez – Played superbly for Valencia from 1997-2000 culminating in a Champions League final in 2000. He then moved to Barcelona, unable to mirror such performances



Julio Cesar Dely Valdes



If I were to ask you what do you associate with the country Panama, I would expect a combination of the following answers; Hats, cigars, canals and perhaps a push John Darwin.

On the tip of your tongue is unlikely to be Julio Cesar Dely Valdes.

The Panamanian striker came to Europe after successful seasons at Argentinian club Deportivo Paraguayo (33 league apps & 28 goals) and at Uruguayan club Nacional (89 league apps & 46 goals).

He was signed by Serie A club Cagliari, becoming the first Panamanian to play in Italy and stood up to the challenge. A double on his Serie A debut followed by a further 11 league strikes in the 1993/94. He stayed a further season until for the 1995/96 season he was signed by Paris Saint-Germain as their replacement for the departing George Weah.

A solid 2 seasons in the French capital followed (23 goals in 64 league games) with 8 coming in his first 10 games.

Dely Valdes then moved to Spain in 1997, first with Real Oviedo and then a move to Malaga in 2000, where he scored 38 goals in 104 league games over 3 seasons to become at the time the club's most prolific goal scorer in their La Liga history.

Post his successful European adventure he returned to Nacional and then to the Panama domestic football scene.

Fun Fact – Julio has a twin brother, Jorge, also a successful forward, mainly for his time in Japan, who acted as Julio's assistant manager when his brother was in charge of the Panama national team.



Geremi Njitap – Played for Real Madrid, Chelsea, Middlesbrough and Newcastle United and believe it or not had a stint in Paraguay as an 18 year old before moving to Europe



Igor Cvitanovic



You may not have heard of Igor Cvitanovic and perhaps that is because the Croatian first division is not your go to league to associate with!

Though I bet you could most likely reel off a decent number of Croatian centre forwards if asked?

Alen Boksic, Davor Suker, Ivica Olic, Mario Mandzukic and Goran Vlaovic for example.

The common theme for those players is they excelled in other European leagues gaining that exposure.

What Cvitanovic did, and what he did remarkably well was to excel in his native country and domestic league.

Between 1989 and 1997 he scored 117 league goals in just 181 league games, for Dynamo Zagreb (at the time known as Croatia Zagreb) and on two occasions winning the league's top scorer award.

Comfort zones are something perhaps looked down upon and seldom are players congratulated for trying something different and are more often than not criticised for their failures. Cvitanovic did try his trade abroad and moved to Real Sociedad in Spain during the 1998/99 season but was unable to replicate his domestic form. Half the battle perhaps is admitting that, but not Cvitanovic. He picked up his boots and headed back to Zagreb and netted another 18 goals in 40 league appearances in becoming the record goal scorer in the Croatian First division. He now sits second on that list but tops the list as Dynamo Zagreb's most successful goal scorer of all time.

Fun Fact – Perhaps it could have all been different had the UK Department of Employment allowed a work permit for Cvitanovic and this would have seen a £1 million transfer in 1995 to Premier League club Middlesbrough.



Jens Jeremies – An annoying looking German defensive midfielder, who won 16 major trophies whilst playing for Bayern Munich



Krzysztof Warzycha



If I mention Warzycha, I know what you are thinking. Polish right winger for Everton at the beginning of the Premier League era, one of the first 'foreigners' in the league, with a cracking moustache. Right? That means you are thinking of Robert.

Let us introduce Krzysztof who is no relation to Robert.

Krzysztof made his own name. Successful in his home country with Ruch Chorzow, he won the domestic league and top goal scorer award in 1989 and this was enough for Panathinaikos to sign the striker, and boy did they not regret it.

He stayed at the club from 1989 to retirement in 2004. In that time he won the Greek championship 5 times, the Greek Cup 5 times as well as being the league's top scorer on 3 separate occasions.

If we focus on just the goals scored however, he is the club's all time leading goal scorer with an incredible **319** in all competitions, with 244 of those in the league, and arguably the best foreign player to have played in Greece.

Fun Fact – Warzycha scored against Ajax in the 1996 Champions League semi final in the Amsterdam Olympic stadium, that was the last ever goal scored in the stadium before its demolition.



Mark Van Bommel – When selected as captain of Bayern Munich he became the club's first ever non-German captain. Also won league titles in Holland, Spain, Germany and Italy



Rainer Rauffmann



If you have heard of Rainer Rauffmann I want to hear from you. There is absolutely a place for you at The Halfway Line!

The German striker was having an OK, modest career in his homeland, his most well known club was a season spell at Eintracht Frankfurt failing to shine despite the support from the likes of Thomas Doll and Jay-Jay Okocha.

So at thirty years of age and your career at a crossroads, what do you do? Retire to Cyprus and put your feet up?

Or head to Cyprus and redefine yourself as an absolute goal scoring machine? Rauffmann took the second choice.

He signed for Omonia Nicosia and took off in terms of goal scoring. He topped the league's scoring charts for each of the next four seasons, not once scoring less goals than he played matches. In his debut season he scored 42 league goals in just 25 games. This was followed by 35 in 24, then 34 in 26 and then 30 in 24! His worst return was a mere 16 goals in 22 games in the 2001/02 season.

In his last season, he took Omonia to the league title (his second with the club) at the age of 36, scoring a total of 41 goals in 40 matches.

He ended his time at the club with a total of 192 league goals in 153 league games!

Fun Fact – So taken by his experience in Cyprus and despite his age at the time, he nationalised to Cypriot in order to play for the national time, unsurprisingly with a good scoring record with 3 goals in his 5 appearances.



Leon Goretzka – German central midfielder whose reputation has seen him labelled as the heir to Michael Ballack's throne



Tanju Colak



The Turkish centre forward signed for Samsunspor in 1981 where he was the top scorer in both the 1985–86 and 1986–87 seasons. Çolak then moved to Galatasaray at the end of 1986–87 season and he was the top scorer in Europe with 39 goals in the 1987–88 season. At the same time, he was awarded the European Golden Boot given by France Football. He is the only Turkish footballer to date to win this award. Çolak became the top scorer again in the 1991–92 season, and transferred to Fenerbahçe at the end of the season.

He took over the title of top goal scorer in the Turkish Super League by breaking the legendary record of Metin Oktay. He had scored most of his goals (240 goals in 252 games) in only 10 seasons, between 1983 & 1993. His record was broken by Hakan Şükür in 2007–08 season after 17 seasons.

After seasons that produced 23 goals in 30 games (including 6 goals in one match) and then 27 goals in 23 games in the 1992/93 season for Fenerbahçe, Colak made one final move to Istanbulspor and struck a further 17 league goals in 19 games. He was the Turkish league's top scorer on 5 separate occasions with 3 different clubs.

Fun fact - In January 1994, he began a prison sentence of four years and eight months for illegally smuggling a Mercedes-Benz car into Ankara



Theo Hernandez – AC Milan left back (their player of the year 2019-20) who transferred from Real Madrid. His brother Lucas is the most expensive Bundesliga signing of all time



Darko Pancev



This is slightly pushing it because you may well have heard of Darko Pancev. Though there could be reasons you *haven't* heard of him. Due to conflicts in Yugoslavia in the early 90's he withdrew from the Yugoslavia squad for Euro'92, which ultimately the nation were banned from anyway.

Another reason is he was really really good before 1992 (when football actually started) and post that he unfortunately lost the remarkable ability he did have in putting the ball in the back of the net!

In his early career in Yugoslavia he was top scorer for Vardar Skopje, topping the league charts in the 1983-84 season, and firmly putting himself in the shop window for the 'bigger' clubs in the league.

Indeed that proved to be the case and after 132 league goals in 207 appearances Red Star Belgrade snapped him up.

In the years 1988-1992 he excelled at Red Star. It is actually only 1989-92, as in his first year at the club he was sent for his mandatory Yugoslav Peoples Army stint, that kept him off the pitch for the entire season. In the three seasons played at Red Star he won the league title in each campaign and was the league's top scorer on each occasion. This totalled **84** goals in **91** league appearances, and this coincided with the club's victorious European Cup campaign in 1991. It was Pancev who hit the winning penalty in the shoot out against Marseille.

Then the big move abroad came, as Inter Milan swooped. However Pancev forgot to pack his goalscoring boots, and from 1992/93 with Inter, 1994 with VfB Leipzig, 1995 with Fortuna Dusseldorf and 1996 with Sion he scraped a mere 7 league goals in 5 years!!

Fun Fact - Pancev was the highest scorer in top-division European football in the 1990-91 season with 34 goals, and should have won the European Golden Boot award. However, UEFA decided to make the competition unofficial for the season because of suspect scoring sprees in Cyprus!



Marco Asensio – Young Spanish talent who scored on his Real Madrid La Liga, Champions League, Copa del Rey and Spanish Super Cup debut



Mario Jardel



If you didn't know Darko Pancev, you must know Mario Jardel. He probably doesn't warrant a place in this article, but we are 7 issues into The Halfway Line and we kind of feel he should have featured by now.

If you were on a desert island between 1996 and 2003 perhaps you won't have heard of Jardel. We are delighted to educate you on his goal scoring record in those 7 years.

Porto have a certain panache for picking out a signing and my gosh they lucked in with Jardel. Recruited from Gremio in his native Brazil, Jardel joined Porto for the 1996/97 season and hit 30 goals in 31 league games (37 goals overall) in his debut Primeira Liga season. He followed that up with 26 goals in 30 league games the next season (39 goals overall). His next two seasons at Porto saw him register 36 goals in 32 games, and then 38 goals in 32 games!!

His reward was a move to Turkish giants Galatasaray that saw him continue his form with 22 goals in 22 league starts. He was part of the Galatasaray squad that won the 2000 UEFA Super Cup, himself scoring twice, the second a golden goal to beat Real Madrid 2–1 in the Super Cup match.

After one season he returned to Portugal, signing for Sporting Lisbon, and incredibly out did his best season by scoring **42** goals in just 30 league games! In all competitions he struck 55 goals in 42 games. In his last season at Sporting (2002/03) even in an injury hit campaign he still managed 11 goals in 19 league games.

So in those 6 seasons, in **174** league games Jardel hit **183** goals.

Fun Fact – Only Jardel and 3 other players have won the European Golden Boot award with two clubs (Porto & Sporting). The others are Diego Forlán (Villarreal & Atlético Madrid), Luis Suárez (Liverpool & Barcelona), and Cristiano Ronaldo (Manchester United & Real Madrid)



Paulo Dybala – Took on the Juventus 21 jersey from previous wearers Zidane, Pogba and Pirlo, then taking the number 10 previously worn by Roberto Baggio and Alessandro Del Piero



Classic Kits

Every issue The Halfway Line features some classic kits. It maybe purely kit based, it could be a classic kit being worn by a classic player, or a classic kit in a classic match. In this issue we are focusing on a particular player.

We've churned out some classic kits in the past 6 issues and this is a player who is no stranger to a classic.

We will go over old ground with a classic sponsor in that of Opel. We have the inclusion of the laced collar that we featured back in issue 2. We have the kit make of Hummel appear again and it is in their finest form do not worry about that and we have extra bonuses as well!

This issue we look at the career in kits of the former Denmark international **Brian Laudrup**.

The Hummel kit, unsurprisingly is from his association with the Danish nation team, but also at the start of his career whilst playing for Brøndby.

A move to Bayern Munich saw him have the pleasure of a variety of strong & classic Opel sponsored jerseys and then a move to Italy saw him style the ever so controversial Fiorentina away kit of 1992/93. Assumably unnoticed by the designers, they managed to incorporate a Nazi style swastika all over the kit. Perhaps for all the wrong reasons, it has its place in football shirt folk law. The purple home kit of Fiorentina in the 1990's is a real classic. Really takes us back to the 90s, maybe it's the 7Up sponsor that gets us all nostalgic thinking of Fido Dido!!!!

Then to AC Milan, and the combination of Red and Black stripes on the shirt with full black shorts, is just a kit marriage made in heaven!

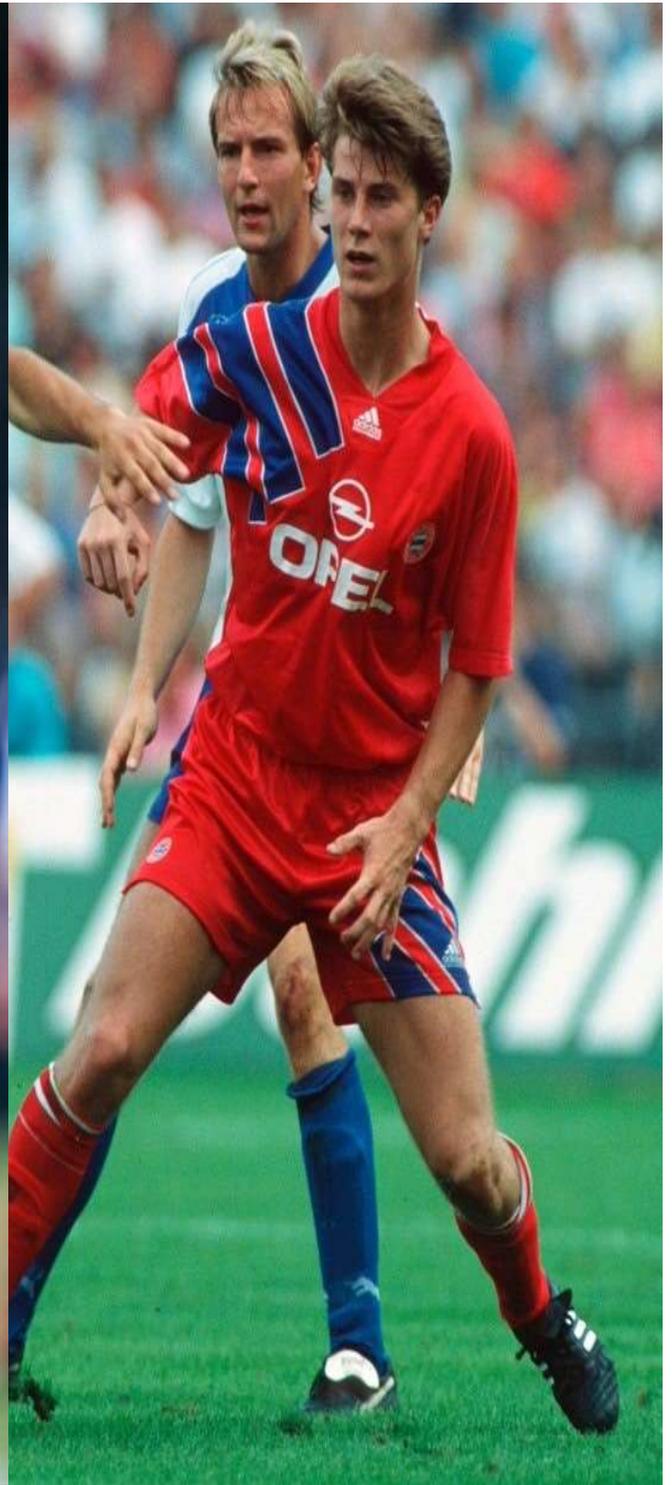
Then to Glasgow Rangers and a selection of kits, home and away that looking back were stunning efforts. The Adidas home version that we feature is an absolute beauty and the Scottish giants are yet to better that effort from 1996/97 in our view.

Add to that the array of quality away Rangers shirts, (yes, even the light purple effort) we have Laudrup firmly cemented in the Classic kits history books, and the is without even mentioned the laced collar from FC Copenhagen, and the forever impressive, simple but effective Ajax home shirt, that never gets old or dated.



Tore Andre Flo – His transfer from Chelsea to Rangers in 2000, for £12 million remains the record transfer purchase in the Scottish Premiership





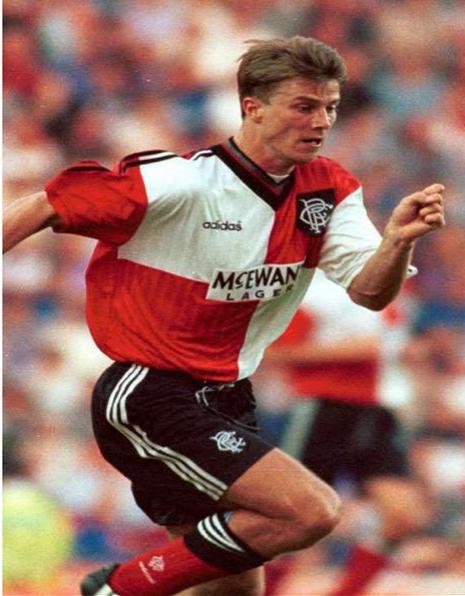
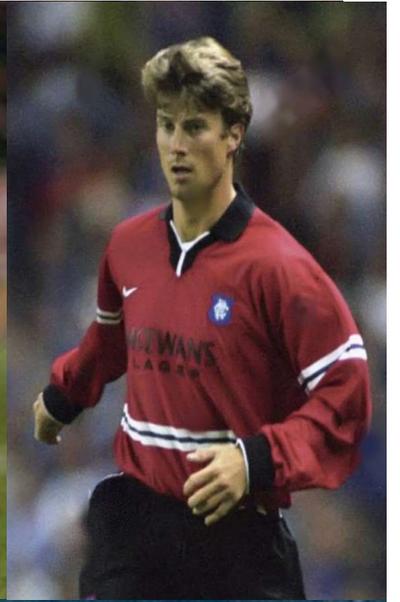
Ivan De La Pena – The ‘Little Buddha’ showed huge promise at Barcelona, leading to a big money move to Lazio that would ultimately result in a transfer flop





Mariano Díaz - Had the unenviable task of filling the number 7 shirt at Real Madrid when Cristiano Ronaldo left for Juventus, and after one season swapped to number 24



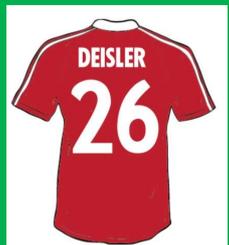


Renato Augusto – Brazilian international voted best player in the league in 2015 leading Corinthians to the Campeonato Brasileiro Série A title





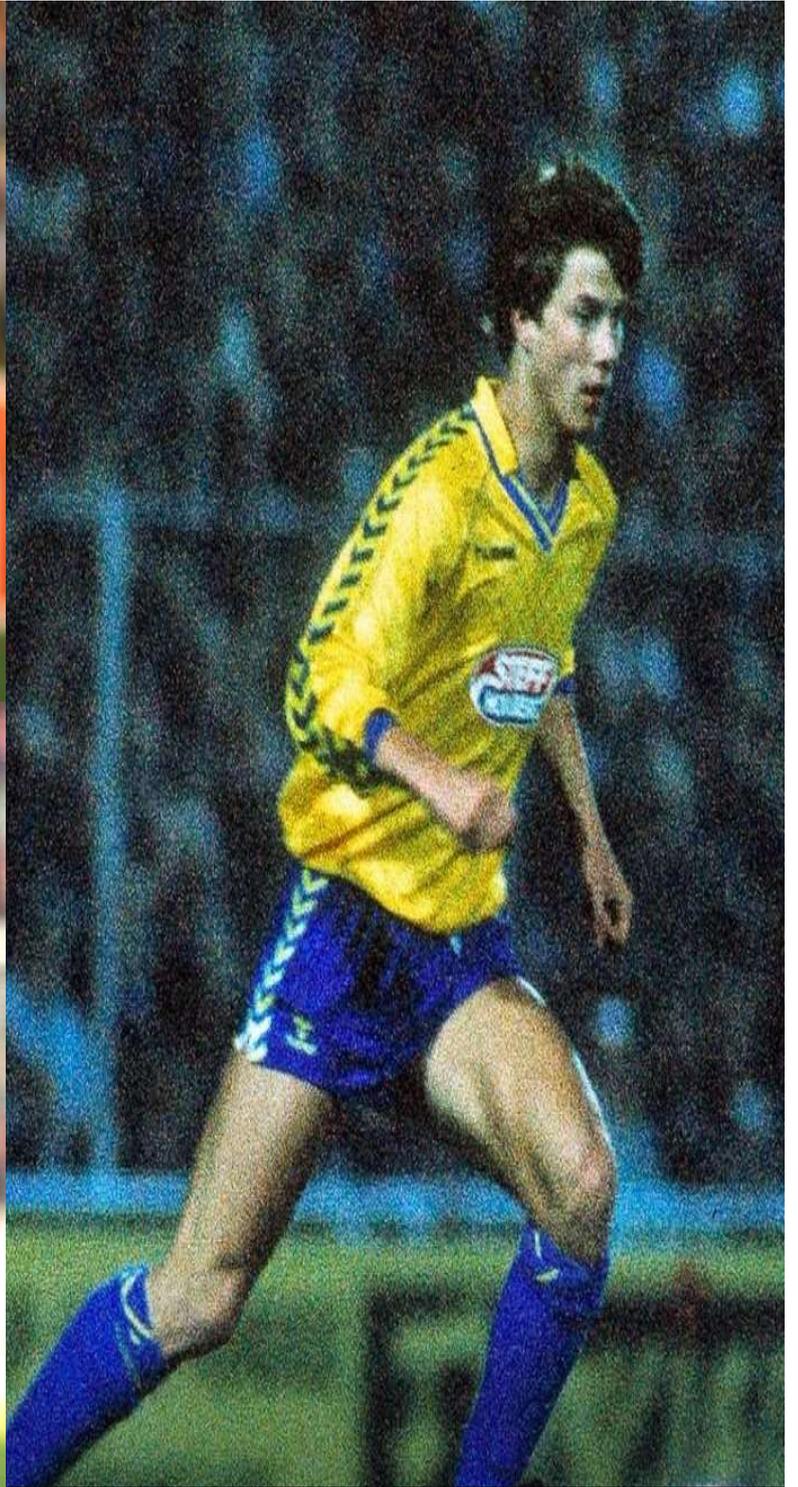
Sebastian Deisler – Former Hertha Berlin and Bayern Munich midfielder who never managed to reach his full potential due to several cruciate ligament ruptures and other major injuries, as well as depression





Emmanuel Eboué - In March 2016, he began serving a one-year ban from all football related activity for failing to pay a former agent. He was released by Sunderland in April 2016, having not played for the club





Joao Moutinho – Former Sporting Lisbon, Porto, Monaco and now Wolverhampton Wanderers midfielder who has won 124 international caps for Portugal



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William Stanger – French midfielder signed for Rangers during the ill fated management spell of Paul Le Guen. He only mustered one appearance for the Gers but he has a tremendous surname



The Premier League Greatest XI Nationalities

Featured here are the greatest line ups that only include players from one nation. In the this issue we are heading across the globe, far and wide. We're covering the United States of America, we head to Africa for the first time to look at Nigeria and Ghana and then head down under to look at the best XI for Australia as well.



These are not based on statistics, appearances, goals, records, these are merely the view of the author. That said some are self-explanatory and would imagine would not ignite too much debate, but others, perhaps less fashionable positions could irk the reader and encourage a discussion as to why the their favourite right back is not in the starting XI. I have intentionally not included a subs bench, as I fear I'd not have much space left. It should be noted, the feature sticks to a rigid 4-4-2 formation and won't be changed to fit in players of the same position.

At the end of the feature, why not play out your favourite XI from one nation and share it around for a conversation starter.



Luca Zidane – Has won the Champions League as has his father Zinedine, a feat matched only by 3 other father & son combos; Sanchis (Madrid) Busquets (Barcelona), and Maldini (AC Milan)



USA XI

Team USA, the Yanks, the guys from over the pond, the Soccer players!

A nation that could potentially dominate the sport if it weren't for all the other sports their athlete's prefer playing!! But they do have some Premier League pedigree.

In goal is probably the most competitive spot up for grabs. The likes of Ian Feuer, Brad Guzan, Marcus Hahnemann, Tim Howard, Kasey Keller, and Juergen Sommer have kept goal in the league, with Howard the most high profile, and successful. However he is trumped by Mr. Consistency and Reliable Brad Friedel. Friedel holds the record for the run of consecutive games played in the Premier League at a remarkable 310!

In defence there is less of a choice. At right back, ahead of DeAndre Yedlin is Stoke City's Geoff Cameron, who would not often let the side down. On the left side of defence Carlos Bocanegra gets a game. He was OK at Fulham, but not pressured by other options.

The same can be said for centre back. The pairing of Jay DeMerit and Tim Ream would unlikely steady the ship too much, but offer slightly more than any of Zak Whitbread, Jonathan Spector, Matt Miazga or Oguchi Onyewu.

The midfielder we see as slightly better. Two of the selections are from the early part of the Premier League. Predrag Radosavljević, or 'Preki' was at Everton in 1992 and plays alongside John Harkes, the first American ever to play in the English Premier League, with Sheffield Wednesday. The calibre of quality is increased with the next two selections. The highest scoring American in Premier League history, Clint Dempsey, who was Fulham's talisman, especially on their way to a Europa League final is the star man in this XI, and the one who looks like taking on that baton is Christian Pulisic, who plays on the left. He seems to be a Chelsea superstar in the making.

Those who could argue for a place in the midfield are the likes of DaMarcus Beasley, Landon Donovan, Cobi Jones and Danny Williams but never getting to a level where 'top' clubs were looking to poach them.

Up front seems to follow a similar theme. There is effort on the pitch but not a great deal of quality shining through. Summed up by the likes of Jozy Altidore, Eddie Johnson, Joe-Max Moore. That leaves the front two of Roy Wegerle and Brian McBride, that brings you a combination of flair and brut for TEAM USA!



Jaap Stam - In 1998, he became the then most expensive Dutch football player in history and the most expensive defender when Manchester United bought him for £10.6 million from PSV Eindhoven





Giovanni Reyna - The son of former Rangers F.C., Sunderland, Manchester City player Claudio Reyna, and Danielle Egan, a former member of the United States women's national soccer team



NIGERIA XI

A good selection of Nigerian internationals to pick for this XI that has one or two interesting selections.

The easiest pick is the goalkeeper. Wolverhampton Wanderers legend Carl Ikeme gets picked, as to our knowledge he is the only capped Super Eagles goalkeeper in Premier League history.

In defence we are holding out a lot of hope for Ola Aina. The former Chelsea right back took time out of the Premier League playing for Torino in Serie A, but is back now at Fulham for another stab at it. Another former Chelsea full back, Celestine Babayaro is in at left back, outing the likes of Taye Taiwo and Ifeanyi Udezue.

In the centre of defence we've picked Joesph Yobo, a solid performer during his time at Goodison Park for Everton. His partner at the back was between Taribo West, Danny Shittu, Semi Ajayi and Leon Balogun. None of them really stood out but we are going for the latter.

In the midfield it gets better. 10 years and 2 league titles at Chelsea gets John Obi Mikel a spot, playing alongside the man so good they named him twice! Jay-Jay Okocha, an absolute no brainer for the starting XI. On the left we've selected Victor Moses. This may surprise but he has featured for no less than 5 Premier League clubs. On the right we have a former Champions League winner, Finidi George, a somewhat surprise signing turning up at Ipswich Town. Wilfred Ndidi is performing well at Leicester City but up against too tougher opposition in this XI, and Alex Iwobi needs a step up in class to be considered for a spot on the wings.

Upfront we have a surplus of options! We've mulled over the likes of Shola Ameobi, Daniel Amokachi, Efan Ekoku, Odion Ighalo, Peter Odemwingie and Kelechi Iheanacho but we can't get away from the 2 stand out options.

The never aging, and forever scoring Yakubu Ayegbeni and the exceptionally skilful Nwankwo Kanu are the two starting strikers.



Thiago Silva - With PSG, he won a joint record seven Ligue 1 championships, five consecutive (six overall) Coupes de la Ligue and five Coupes de France





Scott Booth - Notable for being the first Scot to win the Intercontinental Cup, with Borussia Dortmund in 1997



GHANA XI

Staying in Africa, but it is a struggle. Do your homework and you don't find many African goalkeepers gracing the Premier League.

Luckily we have one for Ghana in Richard Kingson, and he did so for three Premier League clubs so he makes the XI.

Premier League winner Daniel Amartey with Leicester City plays right back alongside a strong yet unfancied partnership of John Mensah (Sunderland) and John Paintsil (Fulham and West Ham United). The left back spot is an odd one. Chelsea spent the best part of £20 million on Baba Rahman to play him infrequently and loan him out. Perhaps his time will come.

In midfield it's a mixed bunch. On the right Kevin-Prince Boateng fitted in 2 Premier League clubs amongst his 14 career moves and he was actually pretty good for Portsmouth. On the left there is another Premier League winner with Leicester City in Jeffrey Schlupp, but he needs to prove his worth now to Crystal Palace. Christian Atsu on his tail for the left wing spot.

In the centre of midfield you have Sulley Muntari, who somehow played for both Milan clubs in between Portsmouth and Sunderland, and then the world class Michael Essien. The Bison on his day could have held together any clubs midfield. A quick survey of Everton fans would unlikely get Alex Nyarko a vote for this XI, so we'll leave him out.

Upfront the question is more; who partners Tony Yeboah? The man was a walking goal of the month competition from his time at Leeds United. If ever proof was needed a volley going in off the bar makes it look better, please research Yeboah's back catalogue! We'll cheat for his partner and select Ayew, and you can decide if the shirt goes to Andre or his brother Jordan.

Asamoah Gyan, had he not upped sticks for the call of football in Abu Dhabi he may have been considered.



Gabriel Martinelli - He became the first Arsenal player to score four times in his first four starts since Ian Wright





Ruben Loftus-Cheek - He is the half-brother, on his father's side, of former professional footballers Carl and Leon Cort



AUSTRALIA XI

The Aussie selection carries a few similarities with that of the USA team. For a start there are a number of goalkeeping options to be looked at. Mark Bosnich, Adam Federici, John Filan, Brad Jones, and the latest in Matt Ryan all performing at a decent level between the sticks, but when your competition is Mark Schwarzer, the only player from outside the UK to play over 500 Premier League matches, you really only have one choice.

Defenders I would perhaps suggest are not Australia's strong point. Lucas Neill probably found his level at Blackburn Rovers and his manager in Mark Hughes. Kevin Muscat could be considered but depends on whether you wanted 11 players on the pitch at full time. At left back Danny Tiatto gets the nod over Tony Vidmar.

In the centre of defence Craig Moore and Tony Popovic make up the pairing fighting off competition from Hayden Foxe and not many others!

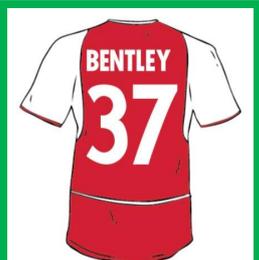
In midfield we have to start Robbie Slater, the first Australian Premier League winner with Blackburn Rovers, and on the left is the hard working and energetic Stan Lazaridis. Others on the wing considered were Brett Emerton and Josip Skoko but not many others came to mind.

In the centre of midfield no surprises that Tim Cahill is in the mix, playing alongside Miles Jedinak. Cahill mastered the art of arriving into the penalty box at crucial times for an attacking midfielder and Everton benefitted from the technique multiple times. Adrian Mooy unlucky not to feature as was always a tidy performer. Others tried and failed, namely Paul Okon, Ned Zelic and David Carney.

Upfront is a done deal from the off, and mainly due to their time together at Leeds United. Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell were fantastic performers at Elland Road under David O'Leary and although that was not matched at the clubs they moved on to they warrant their selection. In fairness there aren't actually many to challenge the pairing, perhaps John Aloisi getting a mention.



David Bentley – One of very few to have a Premier League hat-trick against Manchester United to their name (Eto'o, Lukaku and Kuyt the others)





Josh Thompson – Signed by Celtic from Stockport County in 2009, winning their Young Player of the Year award after his first season



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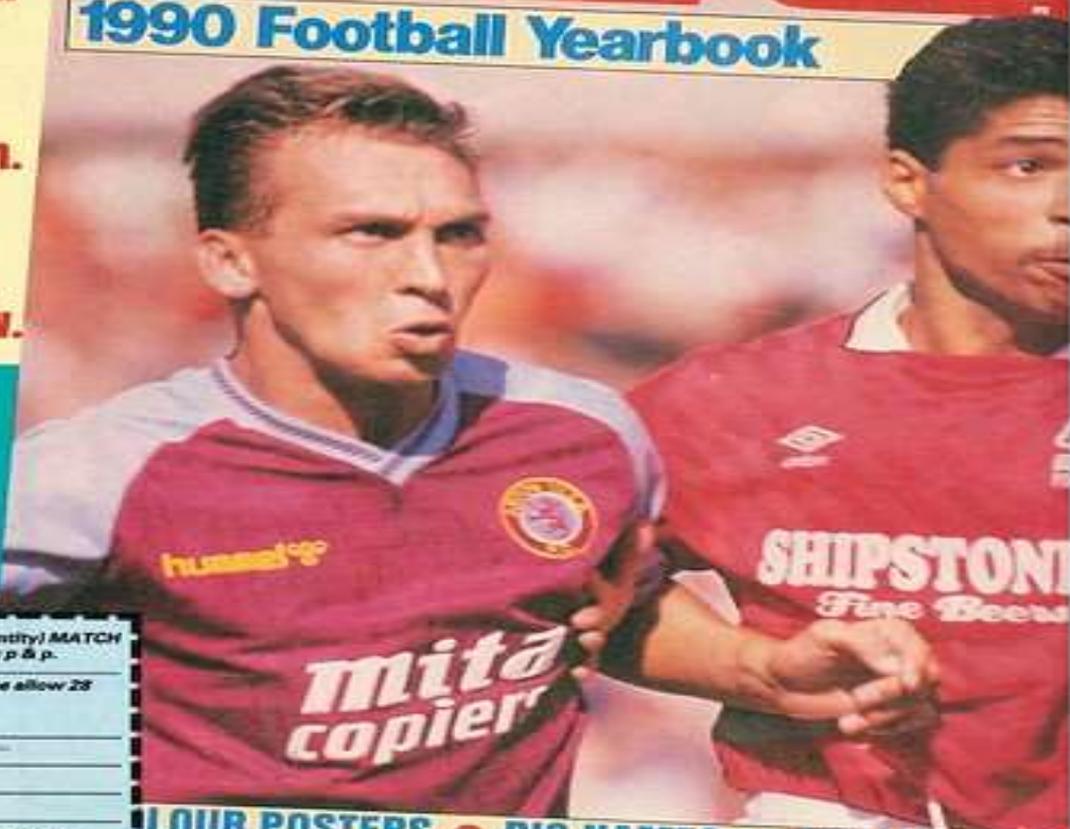
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Marcus Rashford - Scored on his England debut in May 2016, becoming the youngest English player to score in his first senior international match



Sky Sports Launch

In 1992 the launch of the Premier League took place. The world was a slightly different place in footballing terms back then. Leeds United were the reigning champions of the then First Division, the English record transfer fee had just been broken with the £3.6 million transfer of Alan Shearer from Southampton to Blackburn Rovers, and to give you further perspective, the holders of the European Cup (wasn't the Champions League then) were Barcelona, who had just won it for the first time in their history.

A driving force from that day onwards in 1992, right up to present day has been the partnership, the influence and almost monopoly of viewing rights with Sky Sports Television.

We can all associate some kind of memory with the channel, be it the Martin Tyler commentary or the numerous summer holidays lost watching hour upon hour of the Sky Sports news channel on repeat, or to more recent times watching the transfer deadline day specials wondering which car park Peter Odemwingie was going to turn up in.

It has not been without controversy; the likes of Richard Key's and Andy Gray's sexist faux pas, or the inappropriate jokes from Rodney Marsh that led to his removal.

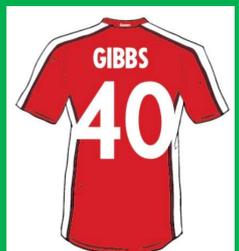
Putting all that aside some 28 years on, it's a great opportunity to reflect back and look at a promotional photo that was part of the launch for that inaugural season, when Sky Sports gathered 22 players, one from each team in the Premier League for a 'team photo.'

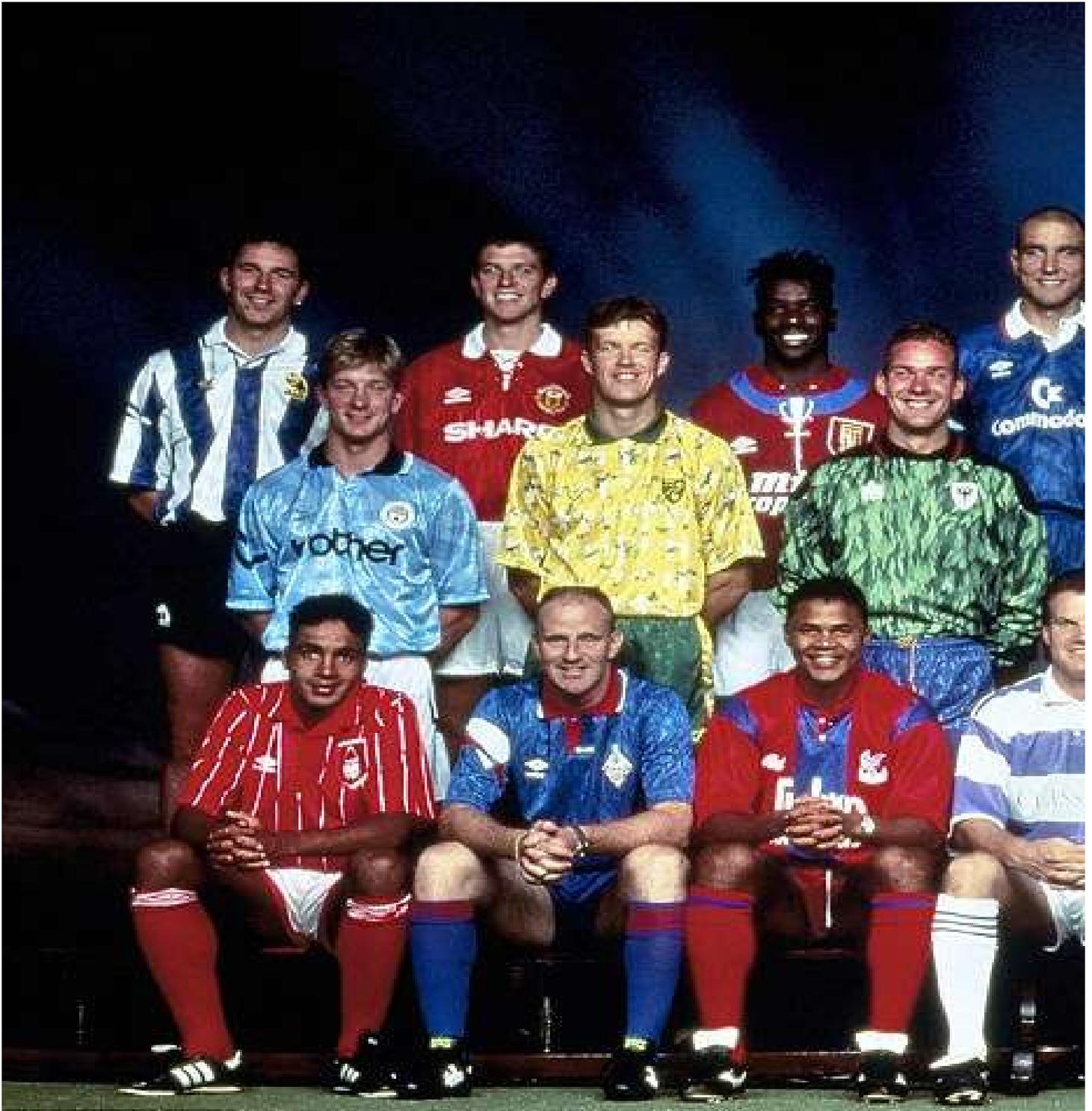
The question to you is: How well do you remember the selected 22 players from all that time ago and can you name them?

There are some obvious ones, some you'll stew on and I reckon you'll get and some will have you pulling your hair out. To save all your hair, the answers are on the page after the photo.



Kieran Gibbs – His goal against Tottenham Hotspur for Arsenal on 8th November 2015 was the 24,000th Premier League goal ever scored





Dominic Solanke - Awarded the Golden Ball as the player of the tournament at the 2017 FIFA U-20 World Cup, that England won





Callum McGregor – According to unconfirmed sources, he played more minutes than any other player in world football for club and country during the 2018–19 season



Sky Sports Launch

Who are the players?

Back row (left to right): David Hirst (Sheffield Wednesday), Lee Sharpe (Manchester United), Tony Daley (Aston Villa), Vinnie Jones (Chelsea), Mark Wright (Liverpool), John Wark (Ipswich Town), Tim Flowers (Southampton), Tim Sherwood (Blackburn Rovers).

Middle row (left to right): Ian Brightwell (Manchester City), Ian Butterworth (Norwich City), Hans Segers (Wimbledon), Andy Pearce (Coventry City), Carl Bradshaw (Sheffield United), Gordon Durie (Tottenham Hotspur), David Hillier (Arsenal).

Front row (left to right): Gary Charles (Nottingham Forest), Andy Ritchie (Oldham Athletic), John Salako (Crystal Palace), Andy Sinton (Queens Park Rangers), Alan Kernaghan (Middlesbrough), Gordon Strachan (Leeds United), and Peter Beardsley (Everton)



Alberto Paloschi - He made his Serie A debut on 10th February 2008 against Siena, and scored the game's only goal with his first touch, just seventeen seconds after coming on!



Who is playing against who?

We are back with this feature as we are able to put together another 2 line ups showing the traditional 11 v 11, with each team being represented by players who have played for a certain club.

The first is Liverpool versus Southampton. Or wait is it Southampton versus Liverpool? Can you figure it out?

The second line up is Arsenal versus West Ham United. Nope, that's wrong, it's West Ham United versus Arsenal.....

You get it? 22 players on the pitch who have each played for both clubs.

We've continued to juggle this feature around, seeing how many versions we can create and we have one (or perhaps 2) up our sleeves so keep your eyes peeled on future issues.

For each line up, our pernickety readers may have issues with our choice selections..

The Liverpool & Southampton combinations we've had to delve into the archives a little. Particular shout outs to Jim Magilton, Jimmy Case and David Speedie for jumping into the starting elevens when they thought their playing days were finished a long time ago!

With the Arsenal & West Ham United line ups, the immediate thought given was if this was a game of football in real life, there would certainly be goals involved!

If you are picking bones out the of either of the XI's, I can forgive the queries on Guy Demel for Arsenal & West Ham United. He gave plenty in the Claret and Blue shirt for the Hammers, and we are happy to acknowledge he didn't feature for Arsenal on any actual match days, but he signed for the club and we make the rules and therefore he is eligible for selection.

Can you match another 22 players from 2 teams?



Thiago Alcântara - Is the son of the Brazilian former footballer and 1994 World Cup winner Mazinho



Liverpool versus Southampton



Fabio Borini – The one capped Italian international has spent time at Chelsea, Roma, Liverpool, Sunderland and AC Milan



Southampton versus Liverpool



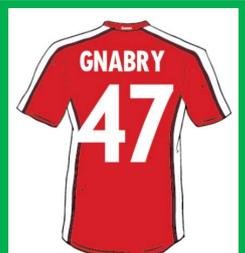
Tommaso Berni – Incredibly on the books with Inter Milan for 6 seasons (2014-2020) not making 1 appearance but managed to get sent off twice in that time!



Arsenal versus West Ham United



Serge Gnabry – The German winger to date has 15 international caps and 14 goals, including 2 hat-tricks already





West Ham United versus Arsenal



Jay Bothroyd – Former Arsenal youth player made his debut for England in 2010, winning his solitary cap whilst playing in the Football League (with Cardiff City, their first ever English international)



Historical Line Ups

In this feature we pick a team, be it international sides or domestic sides and pick 5 historical line ups to trigger memories of the good, or bad or even ugly times.

In this issue we are featuring 5 slightly different line ups, ones that only come around once every 4 years and perhaps do not capture the imagination of all football fans.

For an athlete the holy grail you imagine is to compete and hopefully win an Olympic medal, but for footballers its not a competition that roles off the tongue.

Perhaps the format is not 'user friendly' as the Olympic football competition states your squad must be made up of under 23 year olds, with the inclusion of only 3 over aged players.

Add to the this, 'Great Britain' don't often contributed to the Olympic football tournament. London 2012 was the first since 1960, so it doesn't have the pull of perhaps other nations.

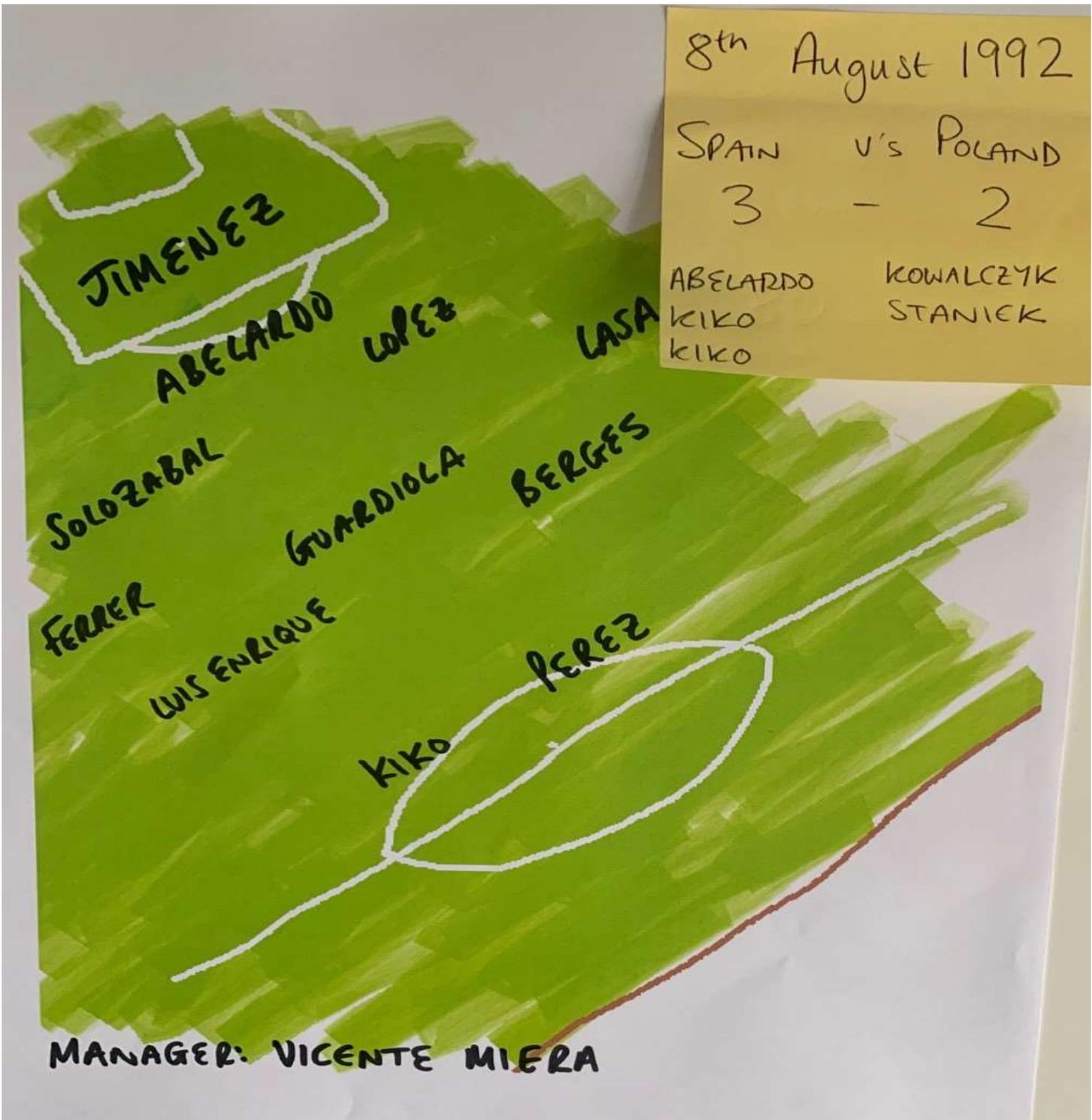
In this issue we feature:

- 1) 1992 Olympic Gold medal winners Spain
- 2) 1996 Olympic Gold medal winners Nigeria
- 3) 2000 Olympic Gold medal winners Cameroon
- 4) 2008 Olympic Gold medal winners Argentina
- 5) 2012 Olympic Gold medal winners Mexico

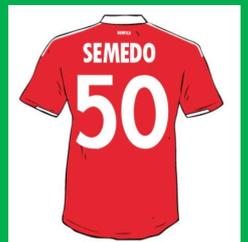


Vitor Eduardo da Silva Matos - Commonly known as Vitão, is a Brazilian who currently plays as a defender for Ukrainian club Shakhtar Donetsk





Nelson Semedo – The Portuguese defender making the unfamiliar journey of first choice right back at Barcelona to Wolverhampton Wanderers



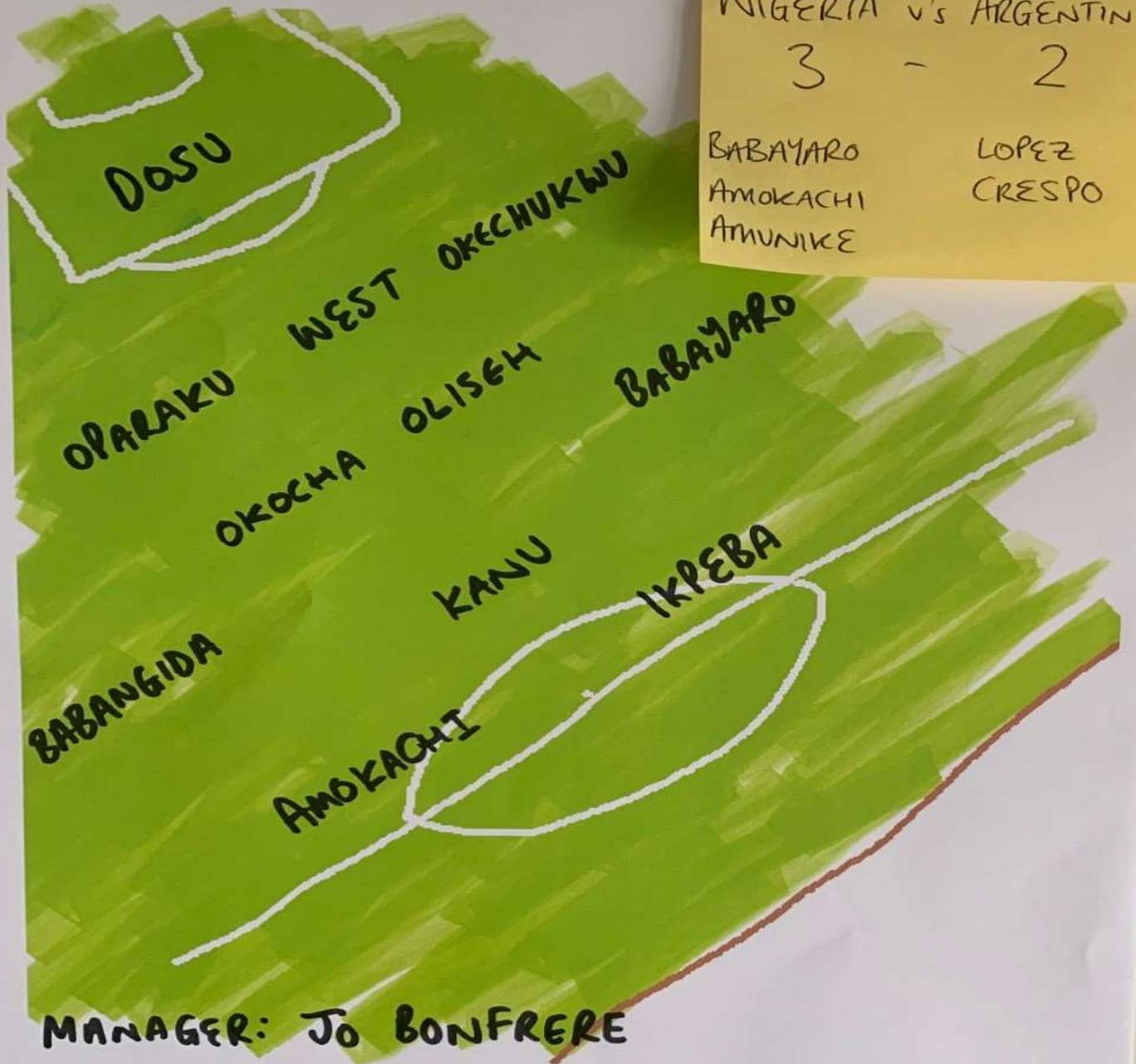
3rd AUGUST 1996

NIGERIA v's ARGENTINA

3 - 2

BABAYARO
AMOKACHI
AMUNIKE

LOPEZ
CRESPO



Bruma – Former Sporting, Galatasaray, RB Leipzig and PSV Eindhoven winger, who's brother Mesca is the sole Guinea-Bissau representative to play in the Premier League



30th SEPTEMBER 2000

CAMEROON v/s SPAIN
2 - 2

AMAYA (O.G) XAVI
ETO'O GABRI

CAMEROON WON 5-3 ON PENS

KAMENI

MIMPO

ABANDA

WOME

LAUREN

NGUIMBAT

BRANCO

ALNOU DJI

GEREMI

MBOMA

ETO'O

MANAGER: JEAN-PAUL AKONO



Georgiy Bushchan – Currently the Dynamo Kiev number 1,
with Ukrainian international caps to his name also



23rd AUGUST 2008

ARGENTINA v's NIGERIA

1 - 0

DI MARIA

ROMERO

PAREJA

MONZON

GARAY

ZABALETA

MASCHERANO

GAGO

DI MARIA

MESSI

RIQUELME

AGUERO

MANAGER: SERGIO BATISTA



Dario Van den Buijs - A Belgian centre back for K Beerschot VA.
He formerly played for Club Brugge, Heracles Almelo and FC
Eindhoven



11th AUGUST 2012

MEXICO v's BRAZIL

2 - 1

PERALTA
PERALTA

HULK

CORONA

SALCIDO MIER

CHAVEZ

JIMENEZ

ENRIQUEZ

AQUINO

REYES

FABIAN

PERALTA

HERRERA

MANAGER: LUIS FERNANDO TENA



Eric Dier - Grew up in Portugal, where he came through the youth ranks at Sporting Lisbon, making his senior debut in 2012



What happened to Anzhi Makhachkala?



Football Club Anzhi Makhachkala or FC Anji is a Russian football club based in Makhachkala, capital of the Republic of Dagestan, which was founded in 1991.

Between the years, 1991 and 2009 the club were yo-yo like in terms of league positions and divisions, with a combination of the Dagestan League, then after the Soviet Union dissolution they were in Russian Second Division, the Western Zone of a new third tier First Division, gaining promotion to the Premier League, then relegated, until finally in 2009 reaching the Premier League once more.

Then it got interesting. On 18th January 2018, Anzhi was bought by a Dagestani billionaire, Suleyman Kerimov.

The club did not mess about and started to spend Kerimov's invested money from the off.

The first big name signing came in February 2018, when the club announced transfer of former Real Madrid and Brazilian left-back Roberto Carlos. Further signings included €10 million on another Brazilian, the former Corinthians midfielder Jucilei and €8 million on Moroccan winger Mbark Boussoufa from Anderlecht.

Then in the summer of 2011, the club signed the Hungarian Balázs Dzsudzsák, who signed a four-year deal to transfer for a reported €14 million.

Anzhi also bought Russian midfielder Yuri Zhirkov from Chelsea for a similar fee. Then in the same transfer window, Cameroonian striker Samuel Eto'o signed from Inter Milan for approximately €28 million on a reported world-record €20.5 million annual salary.

In February 2012, the club then appointed the experienced Dutchman Guus Hiddink as its new manager. Hiddink's first signing was Congolese defender Christopher Samba, joining for £12 million from Blackburn Rovers.

It wasn't all Hollywood however. Due to the risk of possible armed conflict in Dagestan, the club's players primarily lived and trained at a village near Moscow, the players would fly in for home matches, which had a heavy security presence.



Julio Cesar – Former Brazilian centre back who played for Real Madrid, AC Milan, Benfica and Bolton Wanderers, but perhaps was most successful at Greek side Olympiakos





Then on 7 August 2013, Kerimov decided to reduce the team's annual budget by two-thirds!!

As a result, Yuri Zhirkov, Igor Denisov (who had only joined the club in June and had played only a handful of matches) and Aleksandr Kokorin (who himself had just signed weeks before and yet to make an appearance) were packaged to Dynamo Moscow for an undisclosed fee.

The three players had been purchased within the previous two years at a cost exceeding €50 million.

In addition, Dynamo also signed Christopher Samba, Vladimir Gabulov and Aleksei Ionov from the club.

Other cost-cutting transfers included Samuel Eto'o and Willian moving to English side Chelsea. Willian had only joined in January and played only 11 league matches before being sold.

Lassana Diarra, Mbark Boussoufa and Arseniy Logashov were sold to Lokomotiv Moscow; João Carlos to Spartak Moscow; and Oleg Shatov to Zenit Saint Petersburg.

The fire sale continued into January 2014 with the sale of striker Lacina Traoré to Monaco for €18 million and the sale of midfielder Jucilei to Emirati side Al-Jazira.



Igor Akinfeev – Veteran goalkeeper of over 600 appearances, once went 43 consecutive matches without keeping a clean sheet in the Champions League with CSKA Moscow





The budget cut and subsequent player sales resulted in Anzhi performing very poorly in the 2013–14 Russian Premier League: when the season ended, Anzhi finished last and were relegated after amassing a record-low of three wins and 20 points, making them the worst last-placed team in Europe. However, they returned to the top division at the first attempt.

Anzhi were relegated from the Russian Premier League once again at the end of the 2017–18 season, but received a reprieve and were not relegated.

Anzhi struggled once more during the 2018–19 season, and their relegation back to the Russian Football National League was confirmed.

On 15 May 2019, it was announced that the club failed Russian Football Union licensing requirements for the 2019–20 season and as a result, would not compete in the second tier Russian Football National League in the 2019–20 season.

They had an option of applying for the third-tier Russian Professional Football League license or potentially declaring bankruptcy. On 26 June 2019, Anzhi confirmed that they had received a license to play in the Russian Professional Football League for the 2019–20 season, but they were still unable to register new players due to outstanding debts. Their 2019–20 squad mostly included the under-20 players who played for their youth team in the previous season.

What's the saying? 'From Russia with love?' Well money can't buy you love, and seemingly nor can it buy you a successful football club if halfway through your adventure you decide you don't really fancy it any more.



Jon Toral – Bought to Arsenal at the same time as Hector Bellerin from Barcelona. Made loan moves to the likes of Brentford and Rangers before moving to Hull City



Replacing the irreplaceable

You know the deal here. You've got a favourite pair of jeans and you are hanging on to them. There are holes, rips, and if you are honest with yourself they are getting a little tight around the waist! But you don't want to get rid them – they're your favourites, and you know (maybe back in the day) you look good in them, and the fear is you won't get another pair like them. You've looked in the shops, scrawled through the internet sites, but you can't find the same pair anywhere. Once they are gone, you are going to have to venture out and type a new pair, and it just doesn't sit right.

The stark reality is, you don't know what you've got till it's gone. That goes for all sorts of things in life, not just a pair of denim trousers!

It can be seen at football clubs as well.

Sometimes a club are spoilt for riches and reap the benefits of the quality they have. Its when it's gone you realise just how good you had it.

We look at some examples in leading European clubs where you have the crème de la crème in certain positions. Born winners, or better still born competitors. When the tough gets going, they are sticking around and putting up a fight. Blood, sweat and tears, but above all of that, pure talent. The names on the team sheet first. The fan's favourite.

But just like that pair of jeans, you know nothing ever lasts forever, and wow when its gone, you then realise just how damn good you had it.



Fábio Bilica - While playing for Venezia during the 1999–2000 season, he replaced the goalkeeper who had been sent off and then proceeded to save a penalty from A.C. Milan striker Andriy Shevchenko



AC Milan's number 9

The number nines that have shone for AC Milan were massive for the club. From 1988 to 2012 Marco Van Basten, Daniele Massaro, George Weah and Filippo Inzaghi were legends at the club and rightly so.



When Inzaghi retired and left the club in 2012 little did the club know just how hard it was going to be to replace their special number 9. The Italian centre forward joined the club from rivals Juventus in 2001, and although not always prolific, he wore his heart on his sleeve. Goals are of course the most important attribute, but heart and courage go a long way and he had both in abundance.

Let's look at the contenders to take on the hallowed number 9 shirt since and how they've fared.



Matheus Soares Thuler - A Brazilian who plays for Brazilian Série A club Flamengo as a defender



2012 – 2013 – Alexandre Pato. Swapped from his number 7 shirt to take on the number 9 shirt. He scored 0 league goals wearing the number 9 shirt.

2013 – 2014 – Alessandro Matri – Scored 1 Serie A goal in the number 9 shirt.

2014 – 2015 – Mattia Destro – Scored 3 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

2014 – 2015 – Fernando Torres – Scored a total of 1 Serie A goal in the number 9 shirt.

2015 – 2016 – Luiz Adriano – Scored 4 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

2016 – 2017 – Gianluca Lapadula – Scored 8 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

2017 – 2018 – Andre Silva – Scored 2 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

2018 – 2019 – Gonzalo Higuain – Scored 6 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

2019 – 2020 – Krysztof Piatek – Scored 13 Serie A goals in the number 9 shirt.

Filippo Inzaghi struck 73 times for AC Milan in Serie A. These pretenders to the throne hit, between them all, a mere 38 league strikes, not one of them lasting more than 2 seasons in the shirt.



Sérgio Miguel Relvas de Oliveira - At the time, in October 2009, he became Porto's youngest ever player to appear for the first team, at the age of 17 years, four months and 15 days



Manchester United's number 7

The number seven at Old Trafford has always carried a bit of extra weight. Stems from the showmanship and class of George Best and then the captain marvel spirit of Bryan Robson in the 1980's.

Step forward to the Premier League era and you have a triple whammy of success stories.

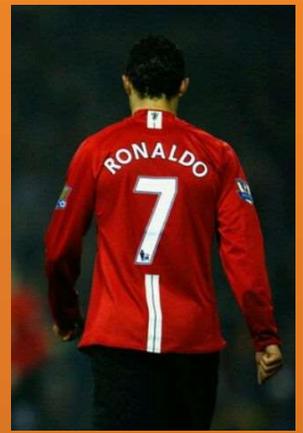
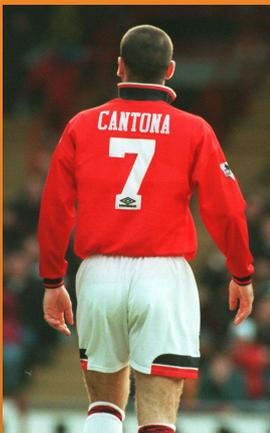
First the King and then followed by 2 Prince's.

Sir Alex Ferguson struck gold with the bargain purchase of Eric Cantona, then the evolution of the 'Class of 92' bought the iconic figure of David Beckham who was then replaced with little or no fuss with the new kid on the block, Cristiano Ronaldo.

Cantona won the club league titles, Beckham went one further and enjoyed European success as well as helping grow the United brand.

Ronaldo then took the club and the Premier League to a new level.

When Ronaldo was granted his wish to move to Real Madrid the following 5 players took on the number 7 shirt and let's see what they produced.



Abdülkadir Parmak - A Turkish midfielder plays for Süper Lig club Trabzonspor, with one cap to his name



- 1) Michael Owen – A former Liverpool striker no less! Angered both Liverpool fans and Newcastle United fans with this move. In three seasons he managed 31 league appearances and just 5 league goals for the club.
- 2) Antonio Valencia – Struck 17 goals for United, but not before firstly switching squad numbers from the number 25 to 7 and then back to 25, and then reverting to a right back as opposed to a right winger! He only scored one league goal in the prized 7 shirt.
- 3) Angel Di Maria – Came to the club from Real Madrid for a transfer fee of £59.7 million with a great reputation and left the club after just one season and just 3 league goals with a very different one!
- 4) Memphis Depay – Another big money move bought from PSV Eindhoven for £25 million. He lasted just one full season, scoring just 2 league goals for the club.
- 5) Alexis Sanchez – 3 league goals in what would surely be considered one of the worse pieces of transfer business in the Premier League era.

We won't drill into the science or the maths on this one too much, but a quick totting up, the above 5 players scored a total of 14 league goals in the 7 shirt for Manchester United. In Cristiano Ronaldo's 2007-2008 season for the Red Devils, he banged in 31 goals alone! No pressure Edinson Cavani....



Michael Amir Murillo Bermudez - A Panamanian right back who currently plays for Anderlecht and the Panama national team, formerly of the New York Red Bulls



Barcelona's Goalkeepers

A similar quandary hit Barcelona when their stalwart between the posts, Andoni Zubizarreta left the club in 1994. He had been at the Catalonian club since 1986. The club embarked on a recruitment mission to essentially replace the irreplaceable.



Many tried; Different ages, experience and nationalities. To start with Barcelona promoted Carles Busquets as the team's number 1. He managed 69 La Liga matches but the team were not successful in this period.

The club didn't truly fill the position until the 2003/04 season when youth goalkeeper Victor Valdes was trusted to take the goalkeeper shirt and make it his own. It wasn't a case of the club desperately wanting a La Masia promotion candidate to succeed otherwise Pepe Reina would have kept the gloves.

Since Valdes left, there has been the odd wobble with the likes of Claudio Bravo, but they've seen struck gold in Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

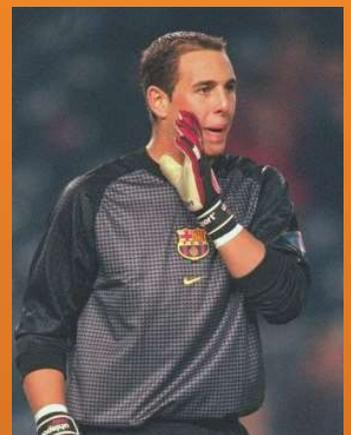


Chidozie Awaziem - A Nigerian international central defender for Portuguese club Boavista F.C. on loan from FC Porto



- 1) Vitor Baia – 1996-1998. Bought from Porto and made 39 La Liga appearances
- 2) Ruud Hesp – 1997-2000. Bought from Roda and made 100 La Liga appearances
- 3) Pepe Reina 2000-2002. Graduated through the Barcelona youth set up and made 30 La Liga appearances
- 4) Richard Dutruel 2000-2002. Bought from Celta Vigo and made 15 La Liga appearances
- 5) Roberto Bonano – 2001-2003. Bought from River Plate and made 51 La Liga appearances
- 6) Robert Enke – 2002-2004 Bought from Benfica and made just 1 La Liga appearance
- 7) Rustu Recber – 2003-2006. Bought from Fenerbahce and made 4 La Liga appearances.

In the time Zubizarreta was at the Nou Camp, he played 301 La Liga matches for the club, and held the record for clean sheets for a number of years in the Spanish top league. The goalkeepers entrusted to replace the former Spanish international, listed above, as well as Busquets, totalled 309. Not overly surprising, none went close to challenging the clean sheet record!



Ryan Nolan - A 21 year old Irish defender on the books of La Liga club Getafe CF, formerly a youth player at Inter Milan

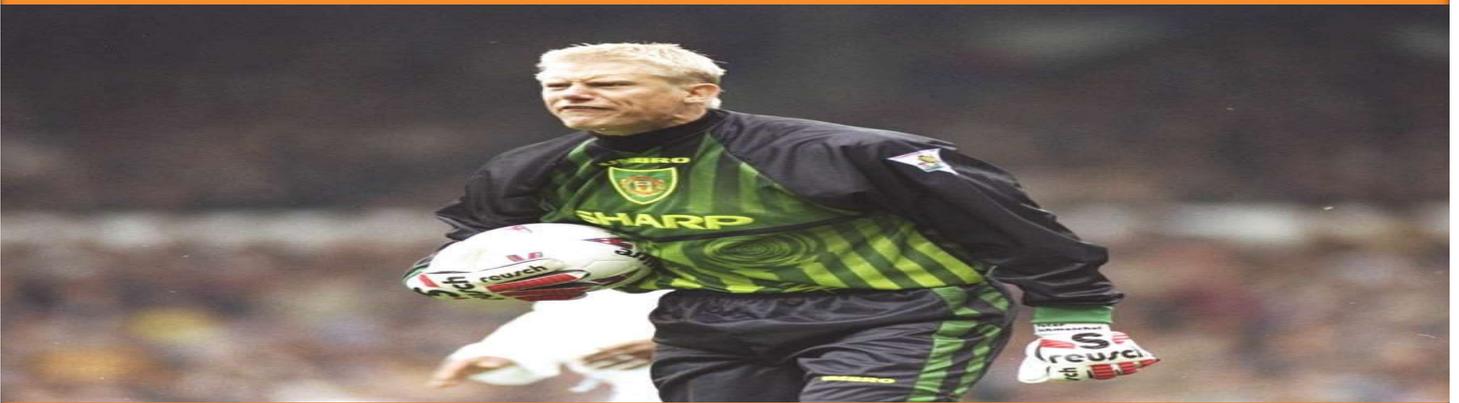


Manchester United's Goalkeepers

If we are taking goalkeepers it would be wrong not to mention how on earth do you replace a certain Peter Schmeichel.

The answer is you don't and you can't. Even the world's best managers don't have a magic replacement formula.

Sir Alex Ferguson was renowned for knowing when the time was right to freshen up his squads and ensure complacency didn't set in. For many it is felt Schmeichel left Manchester United too soon. What didn't happen soon enough was an able replacement to step up to the challenge.



There wasn't the lack of trying!!

There were plenty given a go, but truthfully not until 2005, when Edwin Van Der Sar was bought in from Fulham was the job completed. Sadly it was 6 years and 7 goalkeepers too late.



Vyacheslav Podberzkin – Russian attacking midfielder, formerly of Lokomotiv Moscow, Krasnodar, Rubin Kazan and now playing for Ural Yekaterinburg



- 1) Mark Bosnich. 1999-2001. Bought in from Aston Villa. Made 23 Premier League appearances
- 2) Massimo Taibi. 1999-2000. Bought in from Venezia. Made just 4 Premier League appearances
- 3) Fabian Barthez. 2000-2004. Bought in from Monaco. Made 92 Premier League appearances
- 4) Roy Carroll. 2001-2005. Bought in from Wigan Athletic. Made 46 Premier League appearances
- 5) Ricardo. 2002-2005. Bought in from Valladolid. Made just 1 Premier League appearance
- 6) Tim Howard. 2003-2007. Bought in from MetroStars. Made 45 Premier League appearances.
- 7) Ben Foster. 2005-2010. Bought in from Stoke City. Made 12 Premier League appearances.

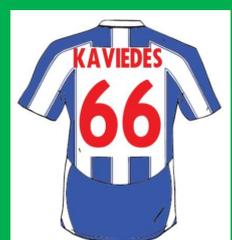
Again, there is no science to this. The 7 pretenders above totalled 223 Premier League appearances and there are actually 4 Premier League medals amongst them.



The Great Dane managed 292 Premier League appearances for the Red Devils, and took home 5 Premier League medals for himself, and after arriving in 2005 Edwin Van Der Sar collected 4 Premier League winners medals during his 6 season stay.



Ivan Kaviedes – Signed for Crystal Palace in 2004 and became the third Ecuadorian to play in the Premier League. When scoring, he would don a yellow Spider-Man mask



West Ham United Centre Forwards

There is one final question to pose in this feature. Can you miss what you've never had?

We've profiled players who've been bought on board to directly replace a player of serious calibre. What about if you are simply trying to replace poor performers but you get caught in a cycle of poor performers.

Let me explain and put it as a very simple question.

When was the last time West Ham United bought a decent centre forward?

These players have not even had the pressure of replacing anyone actually decent and they have failed miserably in terms of making an impact!

Check out this roll call of strikers churned out at Upton Park and then the Olympic Stadium with their league appearances and league goals. Some we will give a pass and not be too critical, the likes of Demba Ba (who got out when he could), and those who managed to get into double figures, like Ricardo Vaz Te, Andy Carroll, Diafra Sakho, Javier Hernandez, Marko Arnautovic and the 'hard working' Carlton Cole.

If you are a striker described as 'hard working' that is not a compliment! Means you don't score many, but you try really really hard!!



Cenk Sahin – Former Istanbul Basaksehir midfielder who moved to St Pauli in Germany in 2016



Striker	Goals	Apps	Season/s with club						
					John Carew	2	19	2011	2012
Florin Raducioiu	2	11	1996	1997	Sam Baldock	5	23	2011	2012
Paulo Futre	0	9	1996	1997	Brian Montengero	0	0	2011	2012
Samassi Abou	5	22	1997	2000	Nicky Maynard	2	14	2011	2012
Ian Wright	9	22	1998	1999	Ricardo Vaz Te	15	51	2012	2015
Davor Suker	2	11	2000	2001	Modibo Maiga	4	34	2012	2015
Kaba Diawara	0	11	2000	2001	Marouane Chamakh	0	3	2012	2013
Titi Camara	0	14	2000	2003	Wellington Paulista	0	0	2012	2013
Svetoslav Todorov	1	14	2001	2002	Andy Carroll	26	102	2013	2019
Brian Deane	6	26	2003	2004	Sean Maguire	0	0	2013	2015
Sergi Rebrov	1	27	2004	2005	Mladen Petric	0	3	2013	2014
David Bellion	0	8	2005	2006	Marco Borriello	0	2	2013	2014
Jeremie Aliadiere	0	7	2005	2006	Jaanai Gordon	0	0	2014	2017
Yaniv Katan	0	8	2005	2006	Mauro Zarate	5	22	2014	2016
Kepa Blanco	1	8	2006	2007	Enner Valencia	8	54	2014	2017
Carlton Cole	55	256	2006	2015	Diafra Sakho	18	62	2014	2018
Diego Tristan	3	14	2008	2009	Nene	0	8	2014	2015
David Di Michele	4	30	2008	2009	Nikica Jelavic	1	13	2015	2016
Savio Nsereko	0	10	2008	2009	Emmanuel Emenike	0	13	2015	2016
Mido	0	9	2009	2010	Toni Martinez	0	0	2016	2019
Ilan	4	11	2009	2010	Ashley Fletcher	0	16	2016	2017
Terry Dixon	0	0	2009	2010	Jonathan Calleri	1	16	2016	2017
Guillermo Franco	5	23	2009	2010	Simone Zaza	0	8	2016	2017
Alessandro Diamanti	7	28	2009	2010	Gokhan Tore	0	5	2016	2017
Benni McCarthy	0	11	2010	2011	Andre Ayew	9	43	2016	2018
Pablo Barrera	0	15	2010	2012	Marko Arnautovic	21	59	2017	2019
Frederic Piquionne	8	54	2010	2013	Javier Hernandez	16	55	2017	2019
Victor Obinna	3	25	2010	2011	Jordan Hugill	0	3	2018	2020
Demba Ba	7	12	2010	2011	Lucas Perez	3	15	2018	2019
Robbie Keane	2	9	2010	2011	Sebastian Haller	8	35	2019	2020



Vyacheslav Zinkov – Defensive midfielder for Shinnik Yaroslavl
formerly of Zenit St. Petersburg



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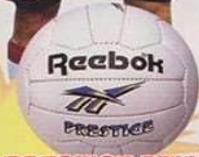


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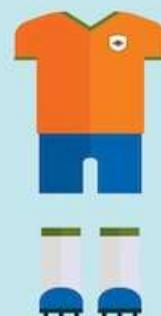
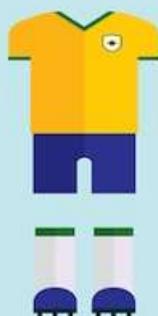
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Bartłomiej Drągowski – Polish goalkeeper who plays for Fiorentina. Whilst on loan to Empoli in 2019, he made headlines after keeping a clean sheet and having made 17 saves in the Serie A match against Atalanta, a new league record



KIT SPECIAL



We have been storing up loads of quirky thoughts and findings from football kits, desperate to share them with you but just waiting for the right time. This bumper issue gives us the extra pages we needed.

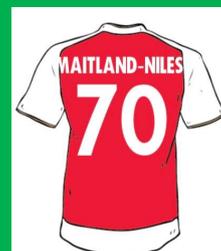
It is slightly picture heavy as you'd expect but we think it is worth it.

We got a mix of observations such as spelling errors on football shirts, we've got our usual moan via the way of Pet Hates specifically focused on kits, we've hidden treasures tucked away on football shirts and then we've got special additions to kits you many not have been aware of. There is a bit on Italian club shirts, German club shirts and International team shirts.

We've also let the graphics team loose again, so look out for their input as The Halfway Line looks to get kitted out for the occasion.



Ainsley Maitland-Niles - Became the second youngest player to have represented Arsenal in the Champions League, behind Jack Wilshere

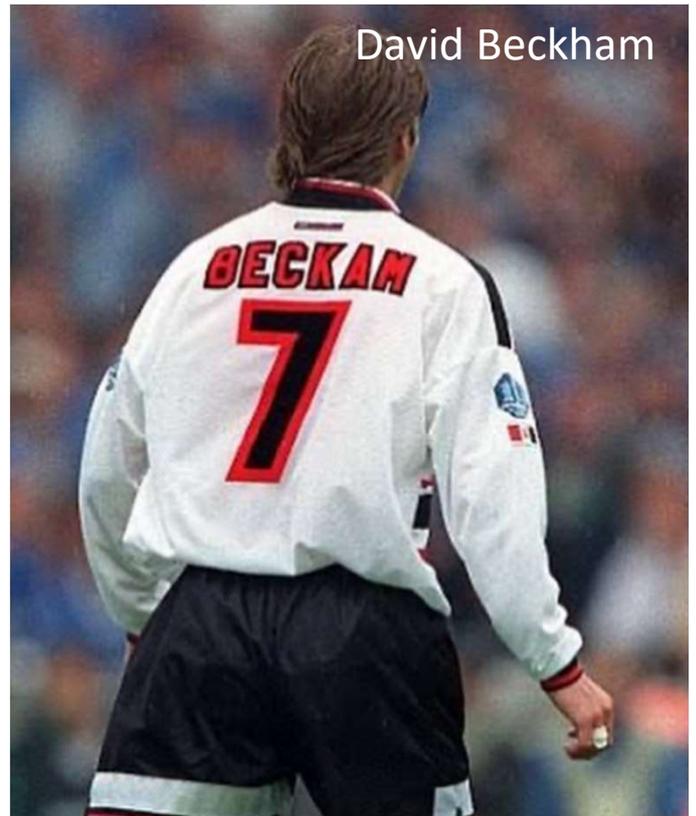


YOU HAD ONE JOB

We are far from being hip here at The Halfway Line, but we have our pulse on what's 'cool' and in trend. (We seriously don't but we feel way better for pretending we do")

For our first feature in the kit special we are channelling our inner cool kid. We've seen plenty of memes of late that poke fun at the theme, 'you had one job'. The sentiment behind it is you've one job to do, in the grand scheme of things it's pretty darn easy, and you royally mess it up!!

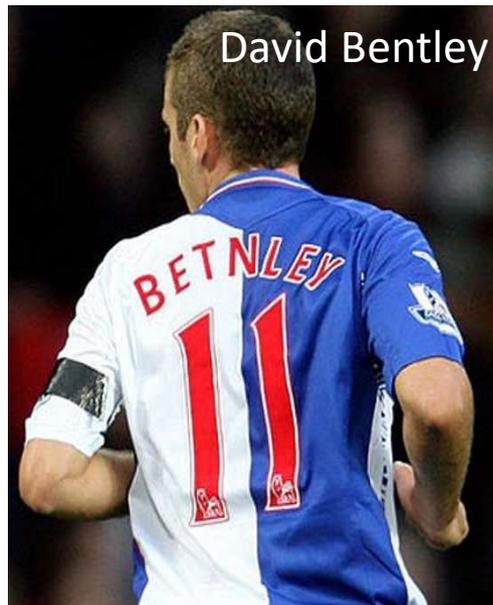
A kitman's job is no doubt stressful and there is no hiding place if you mess it up. Check out our gallery of instances where the kit man, 'who had one job' managed to get the player's name on their shirts properly messed it up!!!



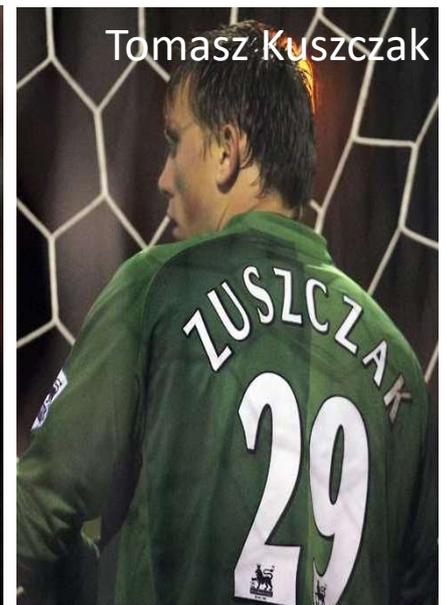
David Beckham



Kemar Roofe



David Bentley



Tomasz Kuszczyk



Yoni Buyens – Former Belgium U21 international who had a spell at Charlton Athletic before moving on to Genk





Anderson



Steven Gerrard



Zlatan Ibrahimović



Javier Mascherano



Artur Rudko – Former Ukraine U21 goalkeeper who spent time at Dynamo Kiev before moving Pafos in the Cypriot league





Roque Santa Cruz



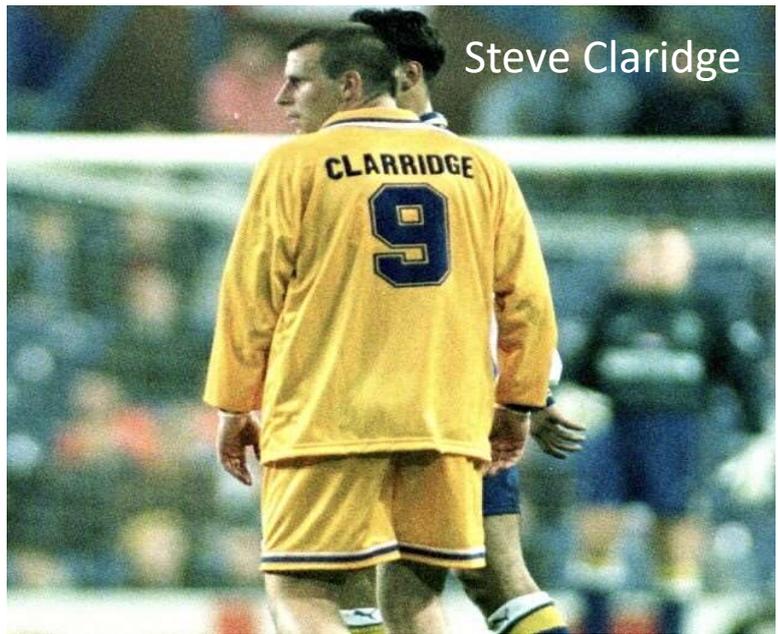
Marko Arnautovic



Chancel Mbemba



Ole Gunnar Solskjaer



Steve Claridge



Andrea Migliorini – Former youth player at Udinese, playing as a central midfielder mainly for SPAL



Football Kit Pet Hates

You'll know from previous issues we've a few pet hates with football and they absolutely continue into our kit special.

Firstly a moan with modern football. When we grew up watching football our teams would release a home kit and wear it for two seasons. Every alternate season the club would bring out a new away kit, and keep it for two seasons.

Looking back we get to relive some absolutely pearls of kits and if you search for these on eBay or classic kit websites you'll need to pay a small fortune to get one.

Nowadays clubs are bringing out 3 kits a season, every season!! Don't get me started on 3rd kits, or European kits. We are 1 or 2 seasons from having a Tuesday evening kit released!!!!

We get there is lots of money involved in sponsorship and football but spare a thought for the common football fan.

Next pet hate. Initials on shirts if a player in the same team shares a surname. Please. How bad are the referees eyesight's?

If it's Gary Neville or Philip Neville, does the fact they look nothing alike or the fact they wear a different shirt number not help? What an earth is the point of including the initial. If a ref books the wrong player as he wasn't sure of the players first name we need more than VAR to sort that inefficiency out!!

One more grumble...

To start with, let it be known we are big fans of a squad number. Loved the introduction in 1994 and yes we'll make a fuss if a players number doesn't fit their position but overall, we are a fan of the idea. That is until we start getting silly and putting players nicknames or first names on the back of the shirts.

Does having 'Little pea' or 'Chucho' on the back of your shirt strike you as a good thing? Seriously? It does not float our boat.

Givanildo Vieira de Sousa has the nickname 'Hulk' on his shirt. Assuming as he is well built and muscular. I massively enjoy 3 servings at a Toby Carvery and an apple pie & custard pudding most Sundays, but doesn't mean I have the squad name 'Fatty' on my shirt!!

The story behind the likes of Memphis Depay and Dele Alli of course we sympathise and if you have ill memories of childhoods we can't look to comment on that, but please squad names on the back of the shirts should be mandated to be your surname. End of.

Last one before you think we are a bunch of complete moaners.... We also think a player getting booked for taking off their shirt to celebrate a goal is a bit much. Have the rule makers ever played the game?

Stop taking the fun out of football. Again, assuming it is all money related as the sponsors of the clubs shirts would probably prefer the brand to be on show in the Sunday papers when the pictures go out but go about it a different way and don't penalise the players for having passion and excitement.



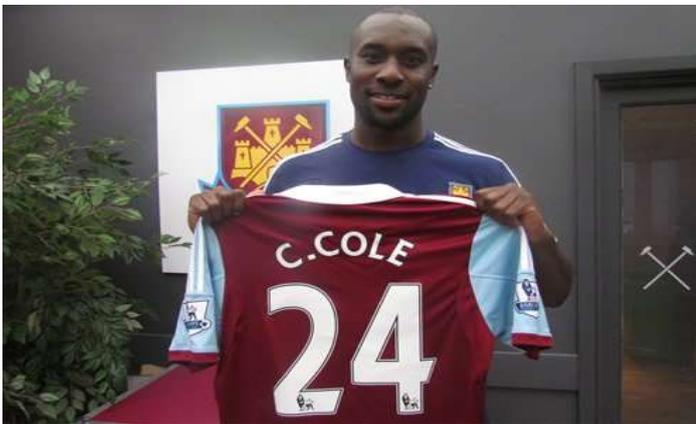
Amr Warda – Egyptian international winger, signed for PAOK in 2017 chose to wear number 7 shirt in Greece and number 74 shirt in European matches





Muhammed Emin Sarıkaya - Made his debut for Bursaspor at the age of 16 years, 4 months and 15 days, making him the 4th youngest debutant in the history of the Süper Lig and the first born in 2002





Bruno Gaspars – Angolan right back who has played for Fiorentina, Sporting Lisbon and on loan to Olympiakos



OK, less of the moaning, and more of what we like at The Halfway Line.

Spotted a few of these, and its where the shirt has a saying or a message to the fans. Can be hidden or obvious on the shirt.

We don't mean a hidden sponsor by the way.

Check out Barcelona who wooed Intel out of a reported £15 million over 5 years to have their logo printed on the inside of their shirt!!

What we mean is a quote or something that has meaning to the clubs and the fans.

Manchester United's home kit of 2019 included on each sleeve a tag that referenced the timing of their late goals in the Champions League final 20 years previously. Genius idea.

We've seen examples in recent Liverpool kits where quotes from previous legends or managers have been included and are a hidden feature of the shirt.

Or you can make it more obvious. Bayern Munich's collar on their latest away strip shows the saying Mia Que Mia that means 'We are who we are.'

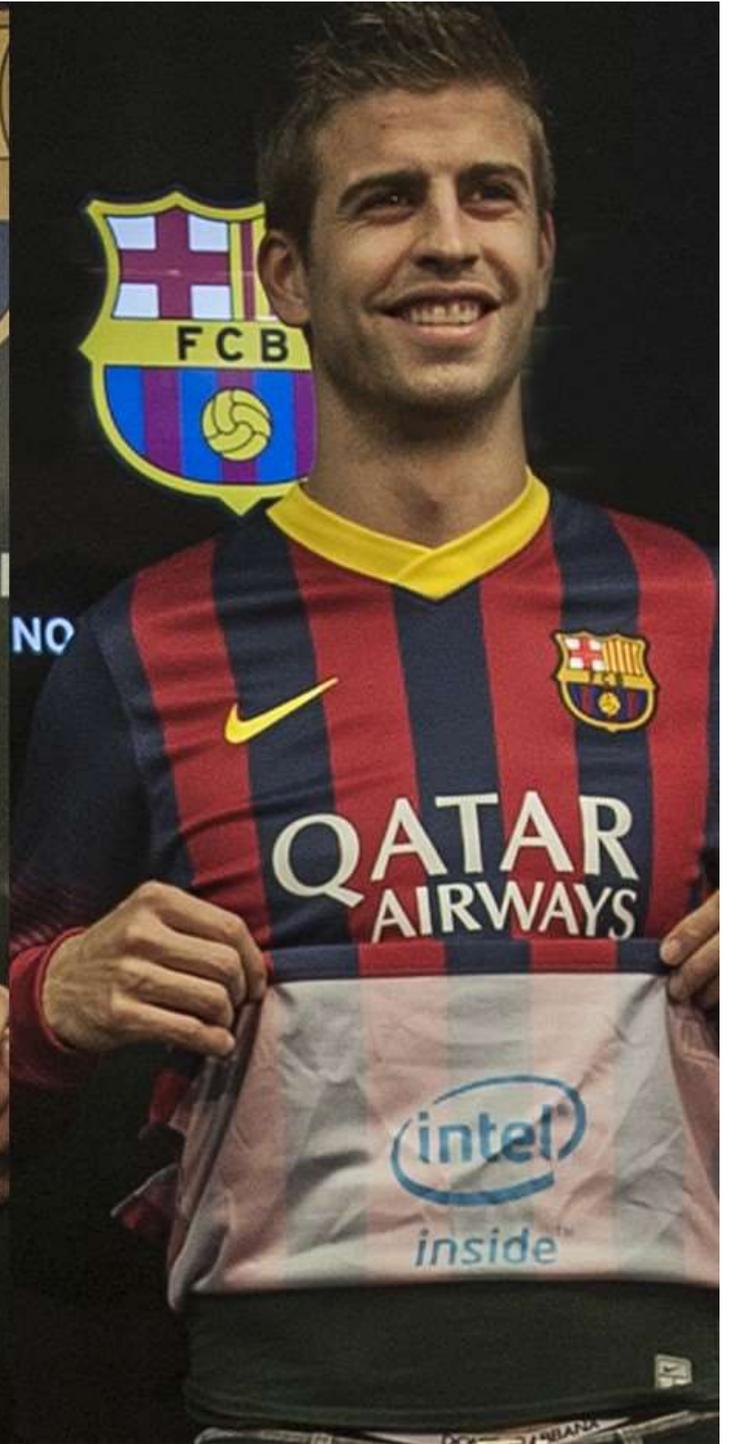
Essentially it stands for a hardcore winning mentality with a good dose of self-belief.

Or in Italy with Bologna who have the statement 'We Are One' on the back of their shirt in a show of solidarity against the prejudice being faced by the world of late.



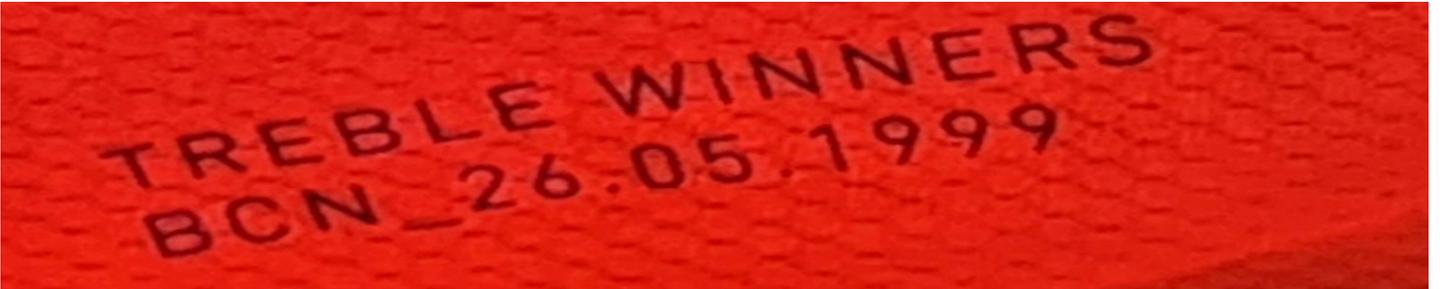
Karamoko Dembele – Youth protégé at Celtic became the youngest ever footballer to play for a Scottish team in European competition when he came on as a substitute in Celtic's game against Romanian side CFR Cluj in 2019





Ousmane Coulibaly – A Malian international right back who played for Panathinaikos before moving to the Qatar league





Paolo Guerrero – Peru's all time leading goal scorer and also the current all time top scorer in the history of the Copa América among active players



Ever seen a target like symbol, in the Italian flag colours appear on Italian club's shirts? We bet you only see it on one club's shirt every year, and do you know why? It's an acknowledgment to the club who have won the Coppa Italian (FA Cup equivalent) the previous year. We are 100% behind this idea, success has to be recognised!

The shield seen in the Dybala picture is added to the shirt of the current league title holders.



Ivo Rodrigues – Former Porto winger who didn't make the grade at the club and has since moved on to Royal Antwerp in Belgium



The Italian league have gone one better.

Since 2019 there is an award given to recognise the best players in the league. This is split up to goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, attacker and youngest. Each winner receives an award and the following season they, and only they are allowed to wear a crest upon their shirt to represent their accolade as the best in the league in their position! We love that idea!

The golden patch is taken from the top of the trophy that each player has picked up. A golden take on the re-branded league logo.

The winners of the 18/19 awards were:

Best Goalkeeper - Samir Handanovic of Inter Milan

Best Defender - Kalidou Koulibaly of Napoli

Best Midfielder - Sergej Milinkovic-Savic of Lazio

Best Attacker - Cristiano Ronaldo of Juventus

Best Young Player - Nicolò Zaniolo of Roma

Though you won't see a picture of Ronaldo wearing the crest on his shirt. Ronaldo has refused to wear the special Serie A badge, in a sign of respect to his club team mates, with it being reported that the forward doesn't want to be seen as superior to his team mates.



Mario Santana – Former Argentine international winger who played for Napoli, Genoa, Palermo and also for Fiorentina for 5 seasons





Joao Ferreira – Young Portuguese defender on the books of Benfica with international caps at U15, U16, U17, U18 and U19 level





Recognition of achievement by way of an addition to the shirt is nothing new. Any nation lucky enough to have won the World Cup is allowed to reflect that in the way of a star on their international shirts. If you are good enough to have won the World Cup then we think a star on your shirt is the least you can show off with!!!
Brazil lead the way with 5 stars above their badge.



Marc Janko – In the 2008-09 season he was the top goal scorer in all European leagues after scoring 39 goals for Red Bull Salzburg



Did you know in Germany an overwhelming number of teams in the Bundesliga have the players surname underneath their number as opposed to above it? Why? Because the team name is placed at the top of the shirt on the back. It's meant to be a reminder to the players that the club always comes above the player, and always will. Brilliant idea!

Due to other authorities & federations having different ideas, the German clubs are not permitted to carry this design into European competition, so you'll often see the players surnames and club names swapped over, which again we are a massive fan of.



Edgaras Česnauskis – Lithuanian striker who played the majority of his career in Russia, but also represented Dynamo Kiev



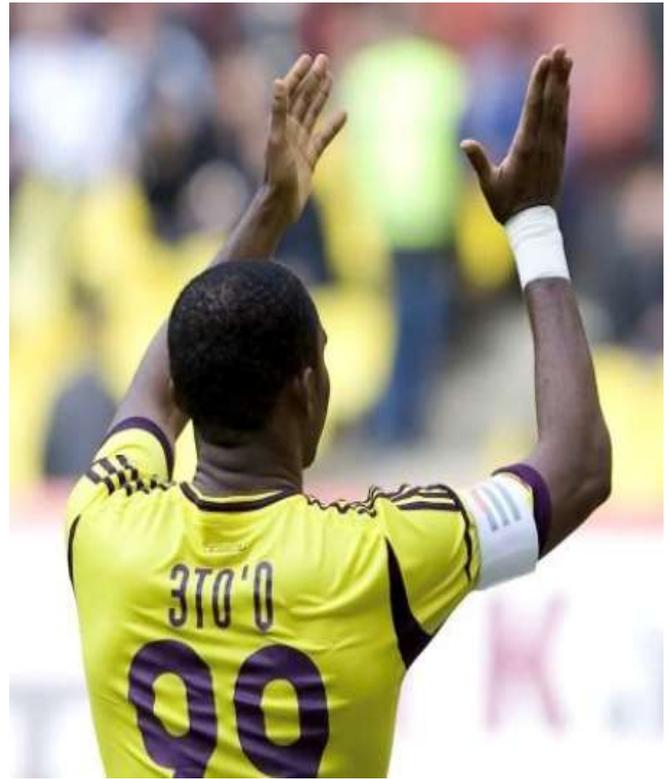


Ugur Kuru – Turkish centre back who started his career at Fenerbahce but never progressed with the first team and moved on to lower league teams in Turkey

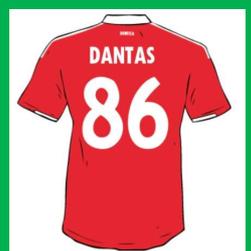


What about this one. What's better than Aidan McGeady's name on the back of a Spartak Moscow shirt? It's so obvious... Aiden McGeady's name on the back of a Spartak Moscow shirt but spelt out in Russian! Check out these shirts with players who have ventured to the Russian and Ukraine leagues and had their names translated into the local alphabet. Eto'o, Lass (as in Lassana Diarra's nickname, Danny, Fernandinho, Vagner Love and Roberto Carlos. We are even prepared to accept nicknames as we think it looks great!

Other clubs have looked to incorporate other countries spelling on their shirts. In what is perceived as a way to help break the Asian market clubs like Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain and Inter Milan have either replaced or included alongside, the Chinese translation of their player's names on the back of their shirts.



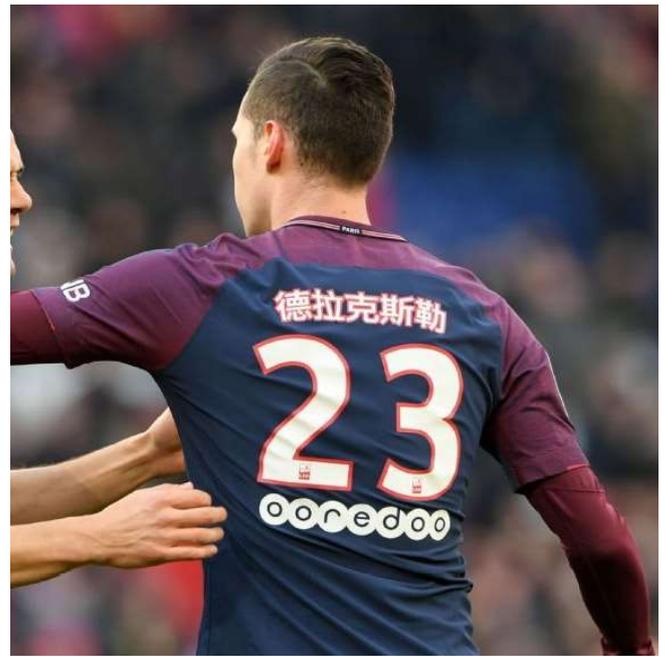
Tiago Dantas – Portuguese midfielder who came through the ranks at Benfica but is currently on loan to Bayern Munich's II team





Kevin Mirallas – The Belgium winger was the Greek league's top goal scorer with the 20 goals he scored for Olympiakos in 2011/12





Ebou Kouassi – An Ivorian midfielder who has played for Krasnodar, Celtic and moved on to Genk in the Belgium league



The Halfway Line 2020 Kit Launch!

Every club launches multiply kits a season so we thought why not us! Needless to say we got completely carried away with it but you'd be disappointed if we didn't give it the full The Halfway Line treatment.

We have a very easy wish list for what our kit should look like. If you have followed us through the first 6 issues of the magazine you'll know we have a particular set of likes and this give us the opportunity to try and bring them all together.

Quick refresher of what we've defined as classic kits in the past:

- Must have a classic sponsor. Opel and Parmalat need only apply.
 - A laced collar. There is no substitute.
- The maker of the kit. Retro Kappa or Hummel. No discussion.
 - Diagonal stripe. Always channel your inner Peru.
 - Keep it simple. Less is more. Plain kits are awesome.
 - Be on trend. Black it out.

This issues Kit Special feature has opened it up to endless possibilities as to what else to include.

Lets see what the graphics team have come up with...



Konstantin Kuchayev - A Russian player who plays as a central midfielder for CSKA Moscow who has won Russian U21 caps



The Template

The mandate is to keep it simple, no frills. Literally. That would look awful!

We are heading right back to 1992 for our choice of collar for the shirt. The laced collar sets us up perfectly and there is no doubt the stripe through the centre of the shirt makes an appearance.



Antonio Donnarumma - AC Milan back up goalkeeper with the sceptics suggesting his high salary is due to his brother being the club's first choice!





Luckily we have our own club badge at The Halfway line and so that has to be incorporated.

Starting to look at the sponsorships & kit make options, with the first attempt takes on the Hummel and Opel combination. Oh to be a Feyenoord fan in 1998.

The Opel sign you'll note is discreet and away from the centre of the shirt.



Lukasz Teodorczyk - Won the top scorer for the 2016–17 season in the Belgian First Division with 22 goals whilst playing for Anderlecht





Looking at the Kappa kit make and Parmalat sponsor combination it's the clear favourite for us.

It has to be the 1990's Kappa design where the brand logo features heavily running all the way down the sleeve and mirrored up with the design on the shorts.

Again the Parmalat brand logo remains smaller, discreet and off centre.



Petr Ten - Former Russian U21 fullback who started his career at CSKA Moscow now plays his football in Belarus





The Halfway Line badge is in place. There is no place for the Latin script on the shirt design as trying to keep the 'less is more' approach.

Starting to bring in some of the colour now and black will certainly be the dominate colour of the shirt. I know what you are thinking.. Vasco Da Gama circa 1999? We'll make it our own do not worry about that.

The reversal of the shirt sees us start to play with the squad name and team name ideas. Squad number 10 a no brainer for the prototype!



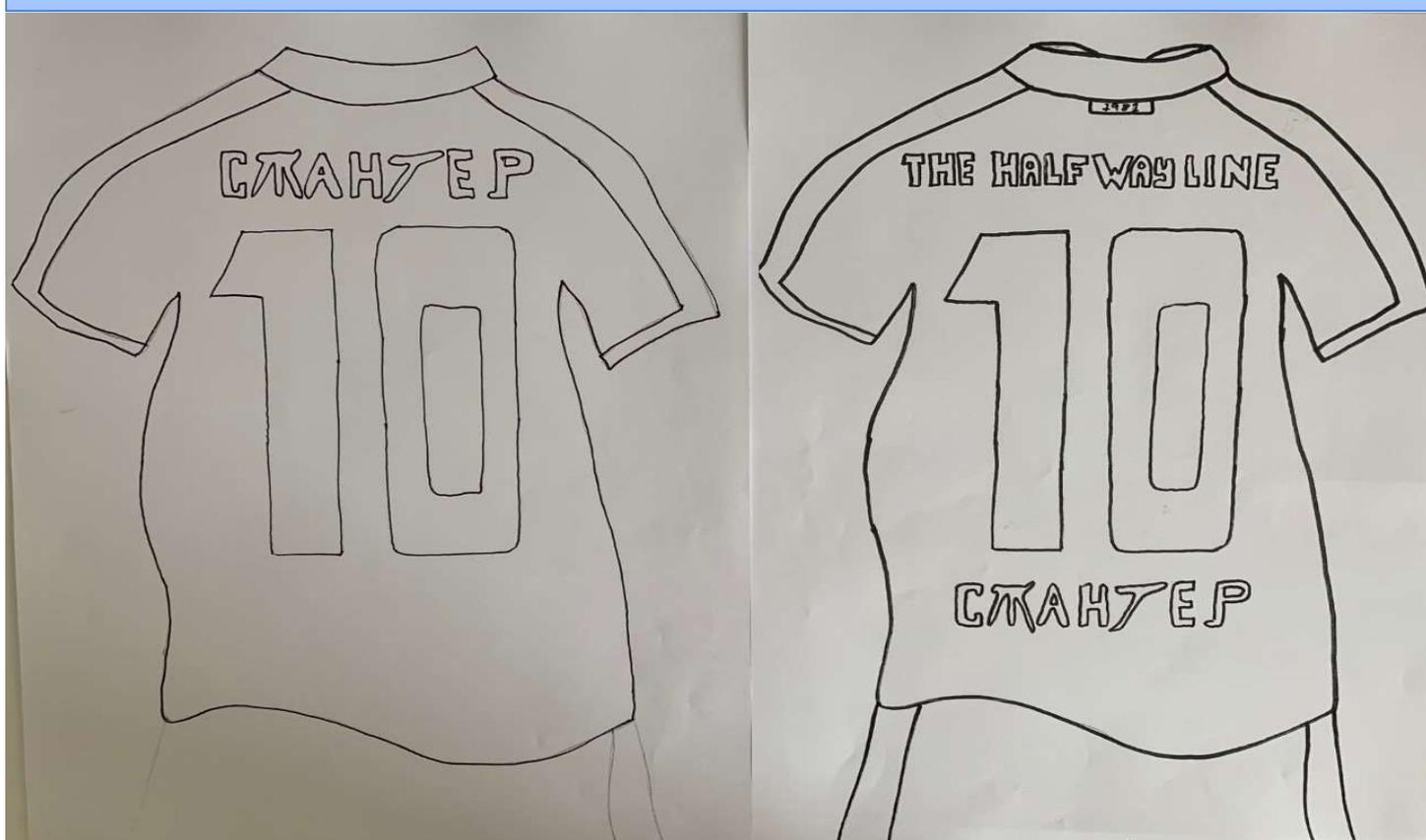
Zinho Gano - Belgium forward playing for Antwerp on loan from parent club Genk



In the world of make believe, where The Halfway Line resides, we are able to float between the countries in which we play our football. Having one year of Russian language at school in Year 9 under our belt means we are bringing it in for our squad name. Looks too good to ignore.

And of course as with the Germans we know the club (magazine) is bigger than any player (contributor) so we are switching The Halfway Line name to the top of the shirt above the number.

First addition being added sees a small tag attached to the back to the collar. We can personalise that next.



Mattheus Oliveira - The son of former Brazilian player Bebeto, and became widely known just days after his birth due to his father's 'cradle-rocking' celebration





For the tag on the collar we are going for an individual personalisation for each shirt. This tag will be for the year of birth of the player wearing it.

Alternatives could be the year the player joined the club or for each shirt worn the number could represent how many appearances the player has made for the club.

We then needed to add something for a message to be put on the shirt.

Our immediate thought was a favourite of ours;

'Play for the name on the front of the shirt and they'll remember the name on the back', Our thanks to Tony Adams for that one.

(assuming they can speak Russian that is!)



Maxim De Cuyper - Young Belgium midfielder on the books of Club Brugge



New additions to note.

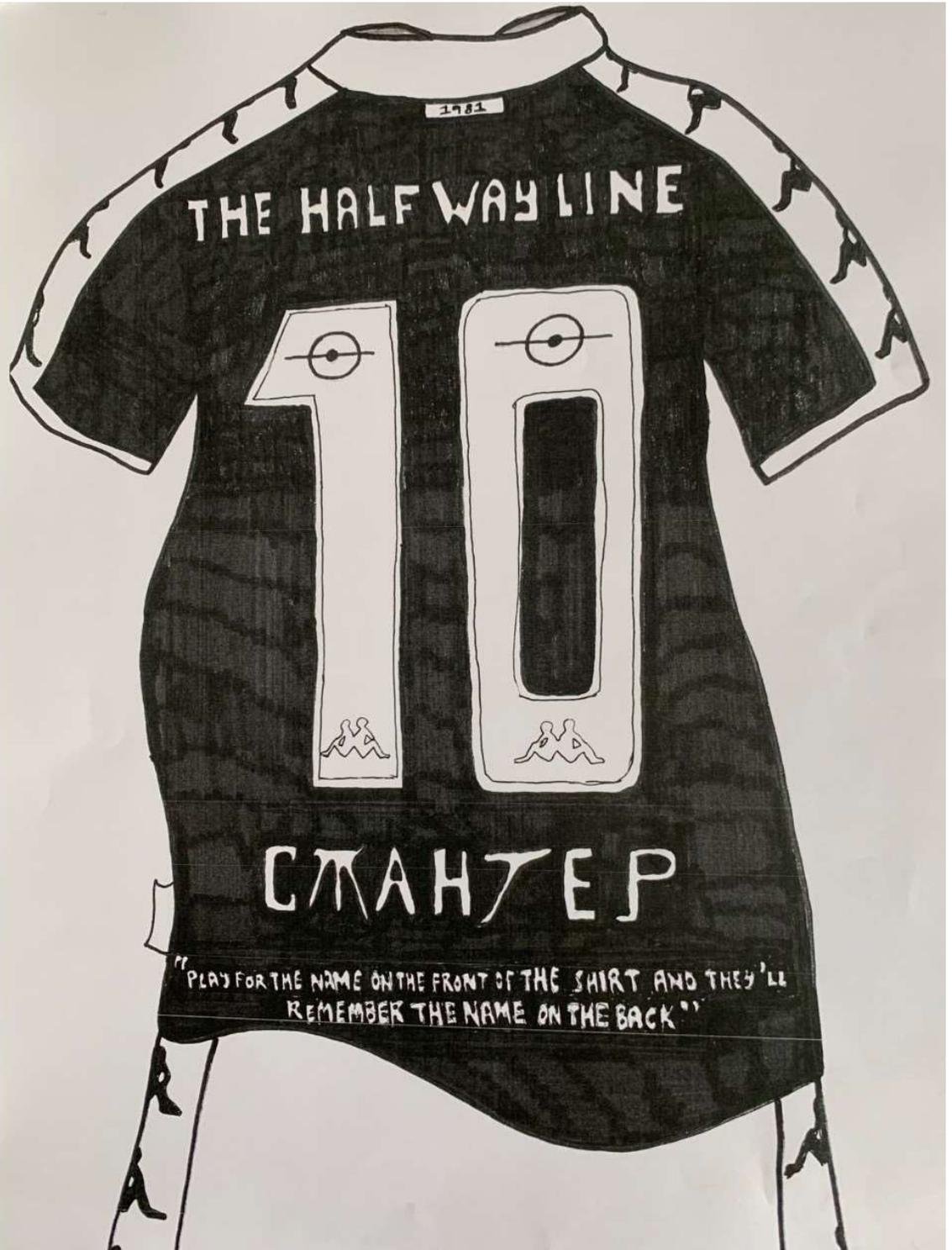
Firstly we've added the Kappa brand logo to be included in the squad numbers.

Used to love that addition to the Adidas sponsored shirts in the mid 90's.

Secondly, the Halfway line signs added to the numbers at the top.

Thirdly, a new tag to the side of the shirt.

Offers the option to recognise an achievement of the clubs that you want to be able to show off.



Amato Ciciretti - Italian forward whose been on the books of both Roma and Napoli but never made a first team Serie A appearance for either





To avoid the law suit from the Vasco Da Gama lawyers, we've gone on trend.

The shirt has been blacked out and we are happy with it.

To ensure the stripe through the centre of the shirt still has the focal point it deserves, we've lessened the colour of it slightly as so its still identifiable.

That approach is copied for the collar, the collar laces, the part of the sleeves and shorts that incorporate the Kappa logos running down them.

The side tag and lining of the collars and bottom of the shirt are in the bright orange colour to match the HL in the club badge.



Giuseppe Pezzella - Former Italian U21 left back currently on loan to Parma from Udinese, started his career at Palermo



We think its important to have the shorts match the shirt so the full kit is blacked out.

The message at the bottom of the shirt is in the same colour as the sleeves and the front stripe, so although visible it remains subtle.

Same approach from the tag on the back of the collar.

The orange tag to the side of the shirt, in the absence of an achievement of the club (magazine) we are stealing someone else's.

The eagle eyed reader will see '49' on the tag. This can be a reference to Arsenal's unbeaten run from May 2003 to October 2004 until we get our own record.



Léo Jabá - Young Brazilian winger who plays for Greek side PAOK having previously had a spell in Russia



So there you have it, The Halfway Line's very own kit design. What a beauty. Sadly Brian Laudrup wasn't available for the official launch.

As a supporter friendly establishment you can be comforted that the kit will be in place indefinitely with no redesigns, special editions, anniversary versions, fan equivalents and no European additions will be released as a side income venture!



Harry Kewell - The only Australian-born player (Craig Johnston was born in South Africa) to win the UEFA Champions League, playing in Liverpool's win over Milan in the 2005 Champions League final





Fernando Cavenaghi - Argentine striker had 3 separate spells at River Plate and celebrated his 100th goal for the club with the above shirt



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Daniel Rios - Mexican striker formerly of Chivas Guadalajara who found form in the United Soccer League (USL), namely with Nashville SC



Forgot they played for them?

They'll always be a healthy chat when it comes to naming your favourite player to represent your club. For some club's obvious candidates will dominate (top goal scorer or club captain) and perhaps some fans will have a random favourite who is their choice for special reasons (Scored in the first game you went to).

But for a selection some teams it is also possible to name a starting line up of players that it is very easy to forget they actually played for the club, let alone become a fan favourite.

In this issue we look at clubs over the Scottish border. The dominate Glasgow duo of Rangers and Celtic feature as well as the Capital clubs Hibernian and Heart of Midlothian. As it is an extended issue we've thrown in an extra line up and put in a line up for Dundee as well.

Have a look at the line ups and see if you remember the players pulling on the shirt in the Scottish leagues and when you can't, try to rack that memory bank and work out when and perhaps more relevant, why???



Alejandro Zamudio - Mexican midfielder on the books of U.N.A.M. or simply Pumas seeking first team football out on loan



RANGERS



5 games
1 goal

20 games
1 goal

9 games



5 games

22 games
5 goals

4 games
0 goals

7 games
0 goals

11 games
0 goals



Alan Pozo - Mexican international right back with 2 caps, has represented the Pumas since 2017



CELTIC



Francisco López - Young Mexican forward on the books of Cimarrones de Sonora since 2016



HIBERNIAN



0 games

1 game



(Craig)
13 games



5 games
4 goals

10 games
1 goal

30 games!
5 goals



13 games
0 goals



Diego Andrade - Mexican midfielder formerly of Querétaro F.C. and Cimarrones de Sonora



HEARTS



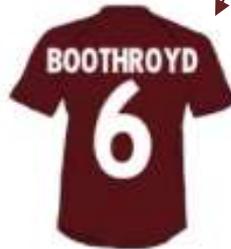
1 game



2 games



4 games



19 games
1 goal



17
games

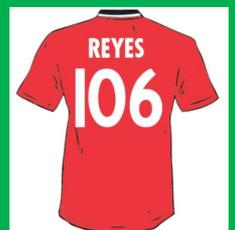
(Justin)
11 games
1 goal



7 games
0 goals



Luis Reyes - Began his career at Atlas and his performances during the Clausura 2017 season led him to be included in the best XI of the league as well as a call-up to the national team



DUNDEE



Started career here

14 games



25 games
2 goals



14 games
2 goals



14 games
2 goals

21 games
7 goals

5 games
0 goals



Luis Héctor Gerardo Estrada Treviño - Mexican goalkeeper for Potros UAEM





Pablo Bengoechea - In 1999 he wore number 108 shirt for the 108th anniversary of club side Peñarol where he is considered a club legend



Quiz time

Try your luck with the following questions and find out the answers next month or email us at Stan@thehalfwayline.com to submit your answers.

1. What's odd about West Ham United beating Spurs away in these 3 fixtures: In the league on 6th October 2013 (3-0), in the Carabao Cup on 25th October 2017 (3-2) and again in the league on 27th April 2019 (1-0)?
2. What English club did Ally McCoist play for?
3. Name the 2 Italian clubs Danny Dichio has played for?
4. Who scored more goals for Crystal Palace, Ian Wright or Mark Bright?
5. What did John Moncur give up to Paolo Futre, and Yossi Benayoun give up to Juan Mata?
6. Former Liverpool and West Ham United defender Rigobert Song was the first to achieve what in World Cup history?

Teammates (all club level)

1. I have played with Roy Keane, Alan Shearer, Frank Lampard, Rio Ferdinand, Eyal Berkovic – Who am I?
2. I have played with Micah Richards, Sol Campbell, Robert Snodgrass, Robbie Fowler and Riyad Mahrez – Who am I?
3. I have played with Ronaldo, Gary Speed, Gareth Bale, Peter Crouch and Gaizka Mendieta – Who am I?
4. I have played with Robert Prosinecki, Danny Tiatto, Stilian Petrov, Oliver Dacourt and Obefami Martins – Who am I?
5. I've managed the following players but never managed Manchester United or Liverpool: Andy Cole, Lee Sharpe, Teddy Sheringham, Ian Rush, Neil Ruddock, John Scales and Oyvind Leonhardsen – Who am I?

What club links the following players?

1. Svetoslav Todorov, Gary O'Neill, Teddy Sheringham and Andy Cole?
2. Dirk Kuyt, Robin Van Persie, Pierre Hooijdonk and Mateja Kežman?
3. Butcho Gunechev, Adrian La Paz, Michele Serena and Finidi George?
4. Heider Helguson, Hameur Bouazza, Jon Harley and Espen Baardsen?
5. Takumi Minamino, Naby Keita, Sadio Mane and Somen Tchoyi?
6. Mesut Ozil, Serge Gnabry, Per Mertersecker and Marko Arnautovic?
7. Gianfranco Zola, Nathaniel Chalobah, Gonzalo Higuain and Benito Carbone?
8. Jo, Nigel De Jong, Elano and Enes Unal?



Alexis Marquez - Former Deportivo Toluca forward who failed to make an impact at the club



Last Issues Quiz answers

1. Four Hondurans have played for Wigan Athletic in the Premier League. Can you name them?
2. Who was the first Cameroon player to score a hat-trick in the Premier League? **Somen Tchoyi for West Bromwich Albion**
3. In this century who has captained a team to FA Cup glory and also tasted defeat as a manager in the final? **Dennis Wise**
4. Everton have sold 5 players for more than £20 million. Can you name them? **Wayne Rooney, Joleon Lescott, Marouane Fellaini, John Stones and Romelu Lukaku**
5. What links Kevin Phillips, Craig Gardner, Liam Ridgewell and Curtis Davies? **They have all played for Aston Villa, Birmingham City and West Bromwich Albion**
6. Who is the highest capped Englishman to manage in the Premier League? **Frank Lampard**

Teammates

1. I have been a teammate of Chris Bart-Williams, Claude Makelele, Michael Owen, Robert Green and Gareth Bale? Who am I? **Scott Parker**
2. I have been a teammate of Michael Ballack, Jonathan Woodgate, Nani, John-Arne Riise and Bernardo Silva? Who am I? **Dimitar Berbatov**
3. I have been a teammate of Paul Gascoigne, Ian Wright, Gareth Barry, Yakubu and Vinny Samways? Who am I? **Paul Merson**
4. I have been a teammate of Gianluca Vialli, Des Walker, Christian Vieri, Pavel Nedved and Muzzy Izzet? Who am I? **Roberto Mancini**
5. I have been a teammate of Stuart Downing, Nigel Pearson, Vladimir Jugovic, Neil Lennon and Tony Popovic? Who am I? **Juninho**

What club links the following players?

1. Jermaine Jones, Yiliray Basturk, Vratislav Gresko and Dani Carvajal? **Bayer Leverkusen**
2. Sone Aluko, James Maddison, Craig Hignett and Mike Newell? **Aberdeen**
3. Luis Alberto, Lucas Leiva, Djibril Cisse and Louis Saha? **Lazio**
4. Karim El Ahmadi, George Boateng, Ron Vlaar and Regi Blinker? **Feyenoord**
5. Matt Derbyshire, Rivaldo, Roy Carroll and Colin Kazim-Richards? **Olympiakos**
6. Alan Hutton, Samuel Eto'o, Gerry Armstrong and Juan Carlos Valeron? **Real Mallorca**
7. Tony Cascarino, Joey Barton, Trevor Steven and Basile Boli? **Marseille**
8. Gianluca Festa, Paul Ince, Marco Branca and Gaston Ramirez? **Middlesbrough**



Eduardo Palacios - Midfielder who had spells at Santos Laguna, CD Irapuato and Celaya FC





Marco Olea - Wore number 111 for Universidad de Chile during the 2005 season. Originally wearing number 11, he decided to give his number to Marcelo Salas upon his arrival to the club



COUNTRY FOCUS

For this issue of The Halfway Line we are focusing on South Korea as our country of choice.

The Korean Football Association the governing body of football in South Korea. The Korea Football Association was reinstated in 1948, following the establishment of the Republic of Korea. The KFA became a member of FIFA, the international football governing body that same year. It later joined the AFC (Asian Football Confederation) in 1954.



KFA

The men's national teams nickname is the Taeguek Warriors, or the Tigers of Asia, or the Reds.

The nations highest ever FIFA ranking was 17th in 1998.

Historically, the national team are the most successful Asian football team, having participated in nine consecutive and ten overall FIFA World Cup tournaments, the most for any Asian country.

South Korea became the only Asian team to reach the semi-final stages when they co-hosted the 2002 tournament with Japan. South Korea also recorded five titles and seven-time runners-up in the AFC Asian Cup and the senior Asian Games.

The country's highest appearance makers are Cha Bum-kun and Hong Myung-bo, both earning 136 international caps. Cha Bum-kun is also the top goalscorer for the nation, with 58 goals to his name.

K League is South Korea's professional association football league including the first division K League 1 and the second division K League 2.

The K League was founded in 1983, with just 5 clubs, then reformed in 1998 and expanded from 5 to 16 clubs. Further reform took place in 2013, splitting the league into 2. K League 1 currently has 12 member clubs. The current champions are Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors, who are also historically the most successful, alongside Seongnam FC with 7 league titles each.



Saúl González - Mexican defender plying his trade with Tuxtla, formerly of Oaxaca



The number of South Korean's to play Premier League is relatively low, with the current count at 13.

In listing those who have made the greatest impact, there are 2 stand out players. **Park Ji-sung** signed for Manchester United in 2005 from PSV Eindhoven, going on to win 4 league championships and the 2008 Champions League with the Old Trafford outfit.

Currently flying the South Korean flag is that of **Son Hueng-min**, who's performance levels for Tottenham Hotspur make his tag as the most expensive Asian footballer a worth while investment. Son transferred to Spurs from Bayer Leverkusen for £22 million. He is currently the top Asian goalscorer in both Premier League and Champions League history.



In terms of British players venturing to the K League, we've a pleasant surprise. 8 Brits have made the move, including **Dalian Atkinson** (Daejeon Citizens, & Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors), **Jamie Cureton**, **Andy Cooke** and **Chris Marsden** played for Busan I'Cons, **Jordon Mutch** played for Gyeongnam FC as recently as 2019 and Northern Ireland winger **Niall McGinn** signed for Gwangju.

Perhaps our favourite South Korean footballer is that of **Ahn Jung-hwan**. In 2000 he became the first South Korean player ever to play in Italy's Serie A, after signing for Perugia. A ground breaking achievement for the player. Then in the 2002 World Cup Finals he went about knocking Italy out of the competition with a golden goal scored in the round of 16 match!

Hero status was of course achieved in his homeland, but in Italy, the very next day, Perugia owner Luciano Gaucci cancelled his contract and was quoted as saying, "I have no intention of paying a salary to someone who has ruined Italian football."



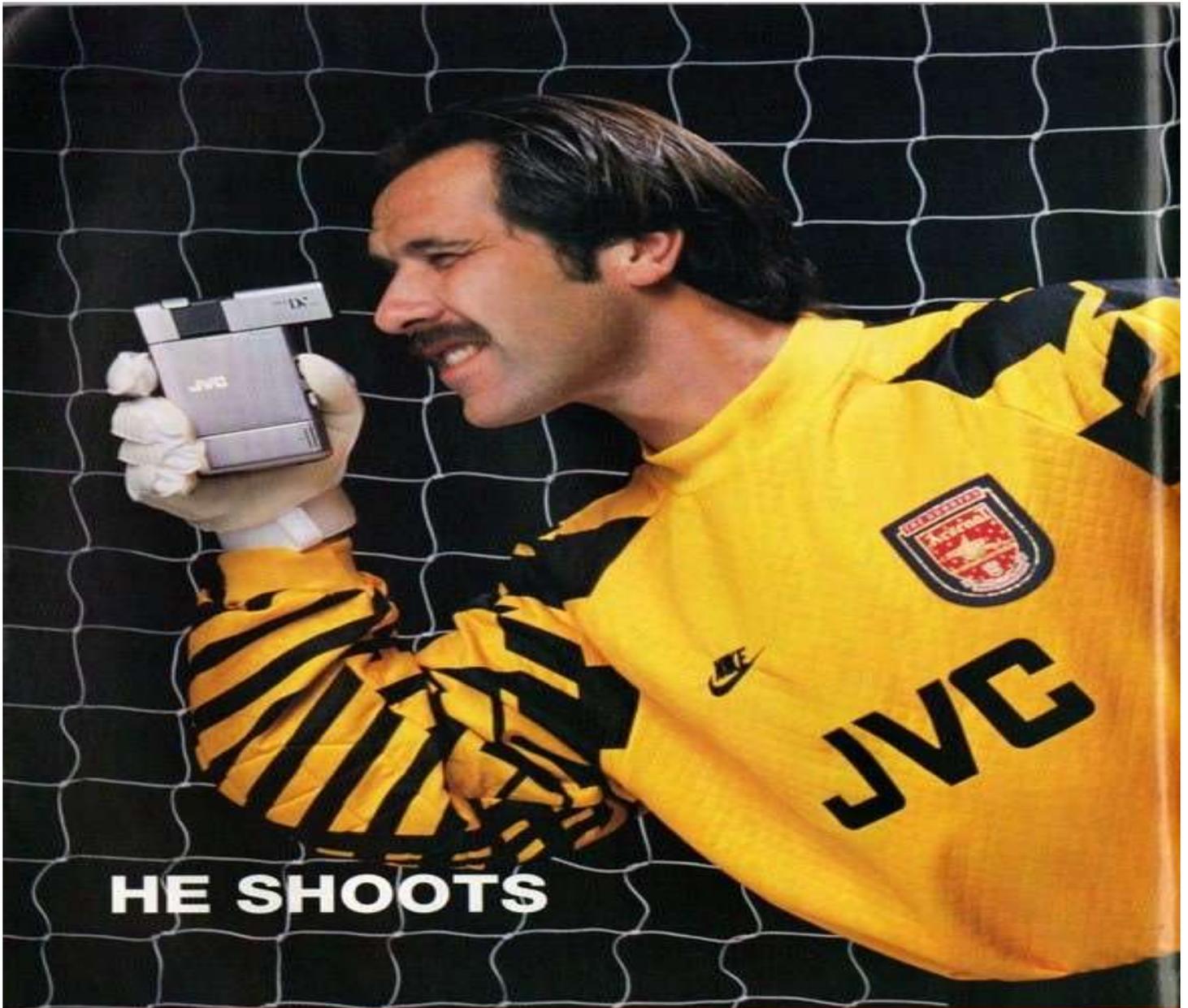
Eduardo Herrera - Former Mexican international striker who featured in 19 Scottish Premiership games for Rangers in the 2017/18 season





Juninho Pernambucano - Former Vasco de Gama captain wore the shirt number 114 against Clássico dos Gigantes rivals Fluminense for the 114th anniversary of the club in 2012





HE SHOOTS

When it comes to handling there's none better than David Seaman. Which is why he couldn't wait to get his hands around the new JVC DV1. Not only is it the world's smallest digital camcorder, but it's also the smartest. And just like David, it can save pretty much

everything. So small it can fit in your pocket, but so packed with features that it can turn your park's football video into a stunning Match of the Day spectacular. Digital sound so sharp it'll reproduce every noise the North Bank makes. An amazing

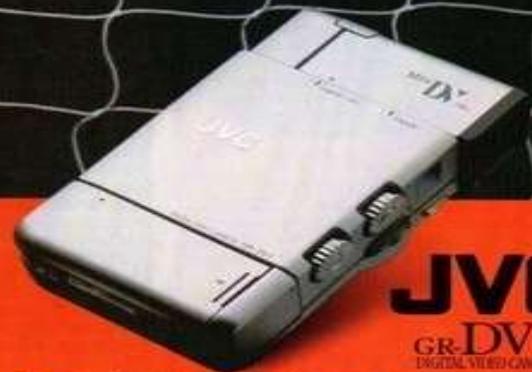


Felipe Martinez - Defender who started his career at U.N.A.M Pumas but failed to make the grade to the senior teams





HE SAVES



100X zoom so that even David can follow all of Arsenal's goals in glorious close-up. And it's also a digital stills camera (5,000 shots per tape), with an optional printer* so David can recall all those stunningly exciting victories time and time again.

FREEPAGES 0800 152 152
One free call ends them all.

*Printer available in March 1997.

Technically Perfect. Perfectly Simple

JVC
GR-DV1
DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERA



Alberto Garcia - Made his Primera División debut for Querétaro at the age of 18 in 2012 in which he also scored his first goal





THE BOOT ROOM

We are going a bit old school for this submission to the Boot Room. Remember the brand **Hi-Tec**? I believe every P.E teacher in the 1990's was given as standard uniform a pair of Hi-Tec Silver Shadows?

Remember those bad boys? All weather and for any activity, they were the chosen footwear of Mr. Singer right?

Well turns out a decent representation of 1990's midfielders chose the Hi-Tec brand as well for their choice of football boot.

Introducing the Hi-Tec King Cups, and similar versions from the brand.

A favourite feature of a 90's boot at The Halfway Line, as you'll know is the fold over tongue. It's falling out of fashion, or perhaps it is no longer practically as a feature, but in the 90's this Hi-Tec boot we always remember had the floppiest of tongues, so much so it would almost flop to one side as it was so heavy!



Edwin Sandez - Mexican who currently plays for Coras de Nayarit F.C.



The choice of submission if pushed for one, would be the Purple and White version. Just look at the size of that fold over tongue on the picture to the right. That is thing of beauty.



They literally don't make them like they used to! To get decent pictures of this antique, we had to search the sellers on eBay



Hi-Tec developed this boot in 9,999 minutes.



Steve tested it in 90.

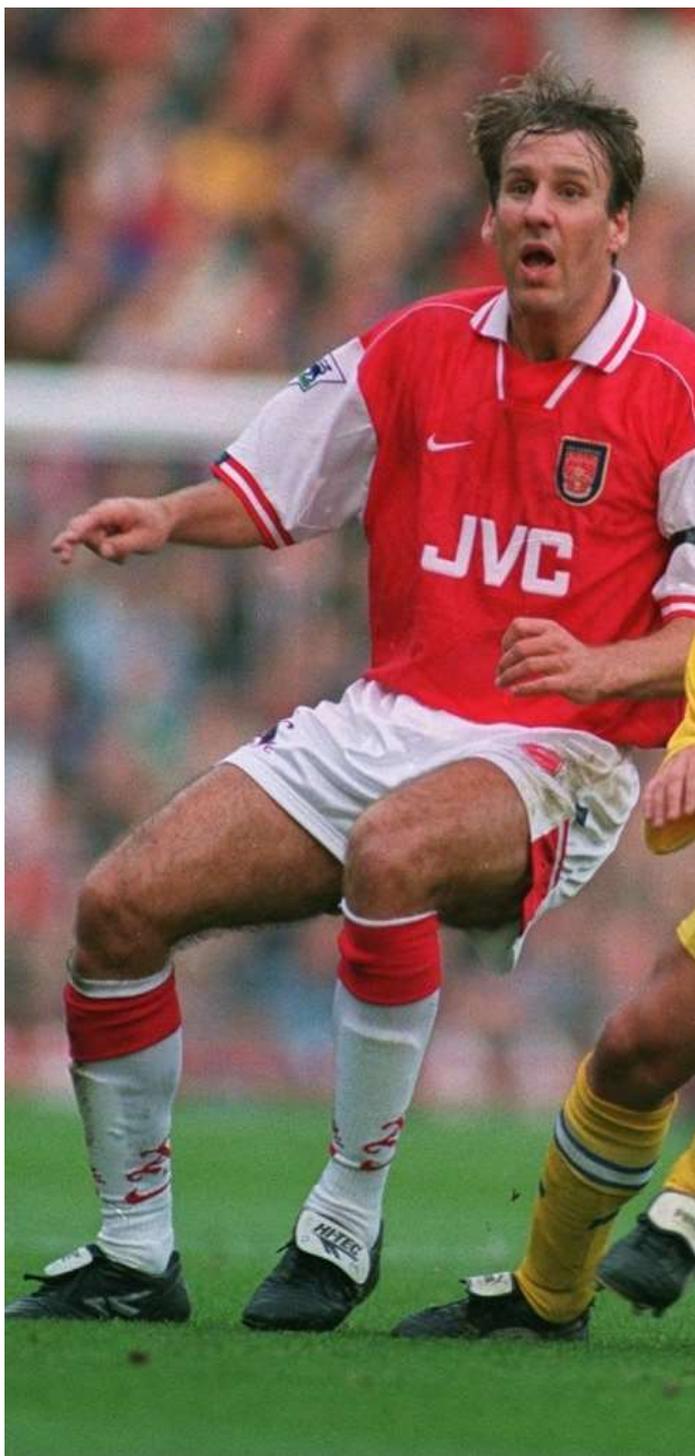
"90 minutes on a pitch is enough time to convince me that HI-TEC have produced the best possible boot for my game".

Steve McMahon
Steve McMahon
England & Liverpool



Daniel Jiménez - Made his professional debut on 22 January 2014 at the age of 18 during a Copa MX match against Oaxaca





We mentioned a decent selection of midfielders wearing the Hi-Tec boot as their choice of weapon. This included Paul Merson, Dennis Wise, Steve McMahon and at the time probably the fiercest competitor in the Premier League, Roy Keane.

(Also check out Tim Sherwood's boots in the Sky Sports launch picture, page 42)



Arturo Rodríguez - Mexican forward unable to make the breakthrough at domestic club side U.N.A.M Pumas



The right moves could take you to the 1982 World Cup in Spain!



Subbuteo's new 'Plot the Shot' World Cup Competition could take you on a once-in-a-lifetime trip for 2, to sunny Spain to see the quarter finals all the way through to the final of next years World Cup! The prize, organised by Sports World Travel includes air travel, 15 nights hotel accommodation and tickets for 8 matches plus the final.

Entry is open to everyone under 17, and is absolutely free, with no strings! All you have to do is use your knowledge of Subbuteo, the world's most popular table soccer game.

We have reconstructed an actual moment from the last World Cup with disguised Subbuteo players showing them in a skillful 3 man passing move leading to a superb goal.

In the diagram the players are lettered so you can put down your idea of the most likely move. For example if you think G passed to C who passed to A who scored the goal you simply write G-C-A in the space provided, and you could be on your way to the World Cup!

Further competition entries are available wherever Subbuteo is sold.

The closing date for receipt of entry is December 31st 1981.



SUBBUTEO 'PLOT THE SHOT' COMPETITION

Name.....
 Address.....
 S1.....
 Age at 31st December 1981.....

I 'Plot the Shot' as follows ○○○○

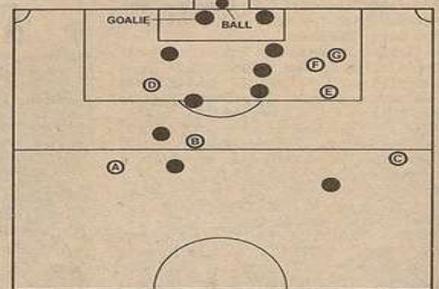
Tick the slogan that best describes Subbuteo:

- 1. The most popular table soccer game on earth.
- 2. Finger flicking good.
- 3. Top of the league for fun.
- 4. The thrill is the skill.

Post today to Subbuteo 'Plot The Shot' competition, PHS (Nelson) Ltd., PO Box 51, Burnley, Lancs. But to qualify for one of thousands of runners up prizes take it to the free post box at your nearest Subbuteo stockist.



HOURS OF FUN AT YOUR FINGER-TIPS.



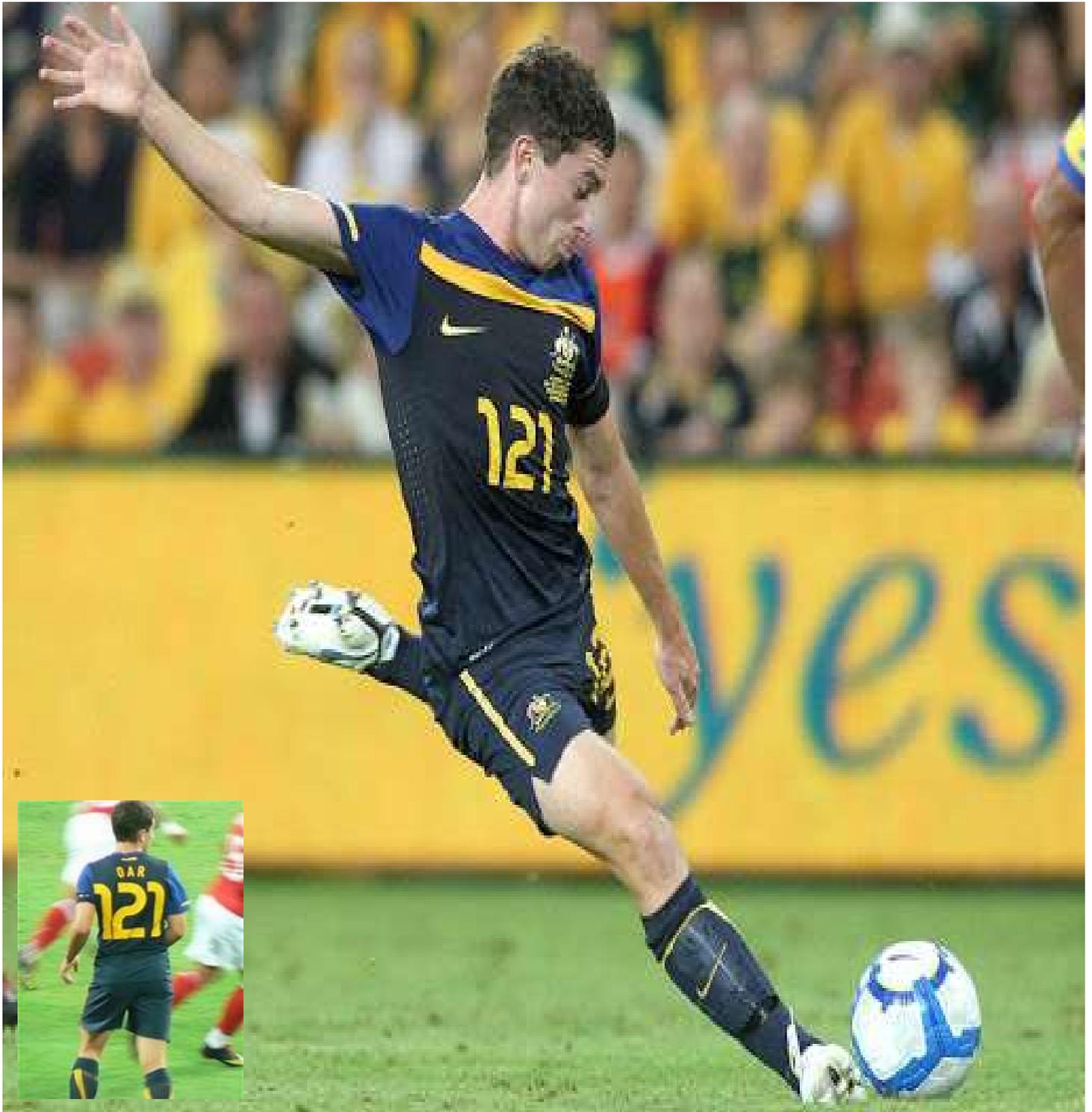
COMPETITION RULES

- 1) The judges decision is final.
- 2) Entries will be judged only if received before the closing date of 31st December 1981.
- 3) Proof of posting is not proof of delivery.
- 4) In accepting the first prize, the recipient accepts the terms and conditions laid down by the holiday organiser Sports World Travel. Phone 01-370-6075, exclusive UK agents World Cup '82. No cash alternative will be offered.
- 5) Entry is barred to all employees of Subbuteo, their relatives, and their advertising agents.
- 6) Winners will be notified by 31st January 1982.
- 7) Entrants must be under 17 years at the closing date in order to take part in the competition.
- 8) 'Plot The Shot' is a free entry competition and no purchase is required of entrants. One entry per person only will be considered for judging.
- 9) Full rules and lists of winners available by application to Subbuteo Plot the Shot Competition, PHS (Nelson) Ltd. PO Box 51, Burnley, Lancs.



Guillermo Meza - Young Mexican defender played for U.N.A.M Pumas who was tragically shot dead at just 21 years of age





Tommy Oar - Australian international who counts Ipswich Town as one of his former teams wore 121 because the Asian Football Confederation demand that players are given a number that they keep throughout a qualifying campaign. Presumably they didn't think he'd be picked!



TREATMENT ROOM

Shin splints

What are Shin Splints?

Shin splints, a common football injury, are an inflammatory condition of the outer lining of the tibia (shinbone) known as medial tibial stress syndrome. Running with shin splints during football can be painful, resulting in tenderness and discomfort in the bones and muscles of the lower leg.

Other shin splint symptoms include a dull ache in the shin, pain in the inside of the shinbone, numbness or weakness in the feet, and pain that develops as you begin to exercise.

While doctors have not found the precise cause, it is thought to be the result of repeated impacts on hard surfaces when running. Training too heavily, or increasing your training faster than recommended can result in this common problem.

It's believed that the symptoms of shin splints develop mainly due to a sudden increase in training volume combined with repetitively training on hard, unforgiving, high impact surfaces

Recognise the Signs and Symptoms

The pain from the shin splints feels like a burning, aching or just an awareness that something in the lower leg doesn't feel right. The pain can spread over the whole lower leg, not just the knee or the ankle. The pain usually only occurs during activity rather than when resting.

Over time the pain increases in frequency and intensity so that it is continuous though exercising and last for hours or even days afterward.



Afolabi Julius - Nigerian striker formerly on the books of Chiaps Jaguars without ever making an impact



Why do shin splints develop?

There are more factors which can increase your likelihood of developing shin splints, the underlying theme however is that the structures within your lower leg lack the strength and conditioning to be able to handle the excessive, repeated impact going through them.

The significance of these factors is magnified when there is a sudden increase in activity level. When the shin bone is stressed, in order to become stronger, it begins a process of remodelling and during this re-formation the bone actually becomes more prone to injury.

How can you treat shin splints?

As you might expect, the most obvious thing to do is rest and see a physio. In severe cases (like a stress fracture) you may have to rest for up to 3 months, but usually it will be a case of managing your rest time with your playing time so that you can continue training whilst allowing for recovery (discuss this with your physio).

You must be honest with yourself and extra cautious with any ongoing injury...if you continue to play in pain, the resulting change in your movement mechanics will significantly increase your risk of developing another injury on top of the shin splint injury.

The immediate action you should take when suffering from pain is to stop and apply ice to the area for 10-20 minutes at a time and repeat that several times per day – to help numb the pain and decrease inflammation

What exercises will help shin splints?

After returning to training, you should focus on improving core stability, as well as strengthening your glutes to improve running mechanics. Exercises like glute bridges are particularly helpful. Strengthening and stretching of the calf muscles regularly is also important because this will help to prevent muscle fatigue in the direct area.



Carlos Martínez - Started out at club side Lobos but now playing for Cruz Saul



Page number glossary: Shows player and season they wore the associated number

1	Essam Kamal Tawfiq El Hadary	Egypt	2005-2018	33	Thiago Silva	AC Milan	2008-2012
2	Glen Johnson	Chelsea	2003-2008	34	Scott Booth	Borussia Dortmund	1998-1999
3	Stuart Pearce	Nottingham Forest	1985-1997	35	Gabriel Martinelli	Arsenal	2019-2020
4	Virgil Van Dijk	Liverpool	2017-2020	36	Ruben Loftus-Cheek	Chelsea	2014-2017
5	Emerson	AC Milan	2007-2009	37	David Bentley	Arsenal	2002-2004
6	Gary Pallister	Manchester United	1989-1998	38	Josh Thompson	Celtic	2009-2012
7	Alexandre Pato	AC Milan	2007-2012	39	Marcus Rashford	Manchester United	2015-2016
8	Predrag Mijatovic	Real Madrid	1996-1999	40	Kieran Gibbs	Arsenal	2006-2009
9	Robert Lewandowski	Bayern Munich	2014-2020	41	Dominic Solanke	Chelsea	2016-2017
10	Dennis Bergkamp	Arsenal	1995-2006	42	Callum McGregor	Celtic	2011-2020
11	Alen Boksic	Middlesbrough	2000-2003	43	Alberto Paloschi	Parma	2007-2008
12	Gio Van Bronckhurst	Barcelona	2003-2007	44	Thiago Alcântara	Barcelona	2008-2009
13	Laurent Courtois	Real Madrid	2019-2020	45	Fabio Borini	Chelsea	2009-2010
14	Gerard Lopez	Barcelona	2000-2005	46	Tommaso Berni	Inter Milan	2014-2020
15	Geremi Njitap	Real Madrid	1999-2002	47	Serge Gnarby	Arsenal	2012-2013
16	Jens Jeremies	Bayern Munich	1998-2006	48	Jay Bothroyd	H. C. Sapporo	2016-2020
17	Mark Van Bommel	Barcelona	2005-2007	49	Vitao Eduardo da Silva	Shaktar Doneshk	2018-2020
18	Leon Goretzka	Bayern Munich	2018-2020	50	Nelson Semedo	Benfica	2015-2017
19	Theo Hernandez	AC Milan	2019-2020	51	Bruma	Sporting Lisbon	2012-2013
20	Marcos Asensio	Real Madrid	2016-2020	52	Georgiy Bushchan	Dynamo Kiev	2013-2016
21	Paulo Dybala	Juventus	2015-2017	53	Dario Van Der Buijs	Club Brugge	2014-2015
22	Tore Andre Flo	Glasgow Rangers	2000-2001	54	Eric Dier	Sporting Lisbon	2012-2014
23	Ivan De La Pena	Barcelona	1995-1998	55	Julio Cesar	Olympiakos	2006-2007
24	Mariano Diaz	Real Madrid	2019-2020	56	Igor Akinfeev	CSKA Moscow	2001-2002
25	Renato Augusto	Corinthians	2012-2013	57	Jon Toral	Arsenal	2015-2016
26	Sebastian Deisler	Bayern Munich	2002-2007	58	Fabio Bilica	Fenerbahce	2009-2012
27	Emmanuel Eboue	Arsenal	2004-2011	59	Matheus Soares Thuler	Flamengo	2016-2017
28	Joao Moutinho	Wolverhampton Wanderers	2018-2020	60	Sergio Oliveira	Porto	2009-2010
29	William Stanger	Glasgow Rangers	2006-2007	61	Abdülkadir Parmak	Trabzonspor	2019-2020
30	Luca Zidane	Real Madrid	2017-2019	62	Michael Amir Murillo	Anderlecht	2019-2020
31	Jaap Stam	AC Milan	2004-2006	63	Chidozie Awaziem	Porto	2015-2016
32	Giovanni Reyna	Borussia Dortmund	2019-2020	64	Ryan Nolan	Inter Milan	2018-2019



Gustavo Carmona - Mexican midfielder for Spanish club Salamanca B having begun his career at Lobos



Page number glossary: Shows player and season they wore the associated number

65	Vyacheslav Podberezkin	Lokomotiv Moscow	2010-2013	96	Amato Ciciretti	Roma	2011-2012
66	Ivan Kaviedes	Porto	2001-2002	97	Giuseppe Pezzella	Parma	2019-2020
67	Cenk Sahin	Istanbul Basaksehir FK	2014-2016	98	Leo Jaba	PAOK	2018-2020
68	Vyacheslav Zinkov	Zenit St Petersburg	2012-2013	99	Harry Kewell	Galatasaray	2010-2011
69	Bartłomiej Dragowski	Fiorentina	2018-2020	100	Fernando Cavenaghi	River Plate	2014
70	Ainsley Maitland-Niles	Arsenal	2014-2015	101	Daniel Rios	Deportivo Guadalajara	2014-2015
71	Yoni Buyens	Genk	2015-2017	102	Alejandro Zamudio	UNAM Pumas	2014-2015
72	Artur Rudko	Dynamo Kiev	2013-2019	103	Alan Mozo	UNAM Pumas	2014-2015
73	Andrea Migliorini	Udinese	2007-2008	104	Francisco Lopez	Cimarrones	2016-2017
74	Amr Warda	PAOK	2016-2019	105	Diego Andrades	Cimarrones	2016-2017
75	Muhammed Emin Sarikaya	Istanbul Basaksehir FK	2019-2020	106	Luis Reyes	Atlas Guadalajara	2012-2013
76	Bruno Gasper	Olympiakos	2019-2020	107	Hector Estrada (GK)	Tigres	2013-2014
77	Karamoko Dembele	Celtic	2018-2020	108	Pablo Bengoechea	Penarol	1999
78	Ousmane Coulibaly	Panathiniakos	2016-2019	109	Alexis Marquez	Deportivo Toluca	2014-2015
79	Paolo Guerrero	Internacional	2017-2018	110	Eduardo Palacios	Celaya	2015-2017
80	Ivo Rodrigues	Porto	2014-2015	111	Marco Olea	Universidad De Chile	2005
81	Mario Santana	Fiorentina	2006-2007	112	Saul Gonzalez	Alebrijes de Oaxaca	2016-2017
82	Joao Ferreira	Benfica	2019-2020	113	Eduardo Herrera	Pumas Tabasco	2009-2011
83	Marc Janko	Trabzonspor	2012-2014	114	Juninho Pernambucano	Vasco De Gama	2012
84	Edgaras Cesnauskis	Dynamo Kiev	2004-2006	115	Felipe Martinez	Pumas Tabasco	2010-2011
85	Ugur Kuru	Fenerbahce	2007-2008	116	Alberto Garcia	Queretaro	2011-2012
86	Tiago Dantas	Benfica	2019-2020	117	Edwin Sanchez	Chiaps Jaguars	2014-2015
87	Kevin Mirallas	Royal Antwerp	2019-2020	118	Daniel Jimenez	Chiaps Jaguars	2014-2015
88	Eboue Kouassi	Celtic	2016-2019	119	Arturo Rodriguez	Pumas Tabasco	2010-2011
89	Konstantin Kuchaev	CSKA Moscow	2016-2018	120	Guillermo Meza	Pumas Tabasco	2009-2010
90	Antonio Donnarumma	AC Milan	2017-2020	121	Tommy Oar	Australia	2010
91	Lukasz Teodorczyk	Anderlecht	2016-2018	122	Afolabi Julius	Chiaps Jaguars	2014-2015
92	Petr Ten	CSKA Moscow	2011-2013	123	Carlos Martinez	Lobos	2016-2017
93	Zinho Gano	Genk	2018-2019	124	Gustavo Carmona	Lobos	2016-2017
94	Mattheus Oliveira	Sporting Lisbon	2019-2020	125	Raul Fuentes	Cruz Azul	2010-2011
95	Maxim De Cuyper	Club Brugge	2019-2020	126	Oscar Gonzalez	Cruz Azul	2011-2012



Raul Fuentes - Midfielder who spent time with Cruz Azul and Oaxaca during his career



What's coming up in the next issue of The Halfway Line?

- Injury prone players
- Signings you wouldn't necessarily expect
- One season wonders
- Premier League records
- Super Subs!

And the usual:

- The Boot Room
- Classical Kits
- Historical Line Ups
- Best Nations XI
- The Treatment Room
- Forgotten Men
- Team XI never to have...
- And much much more

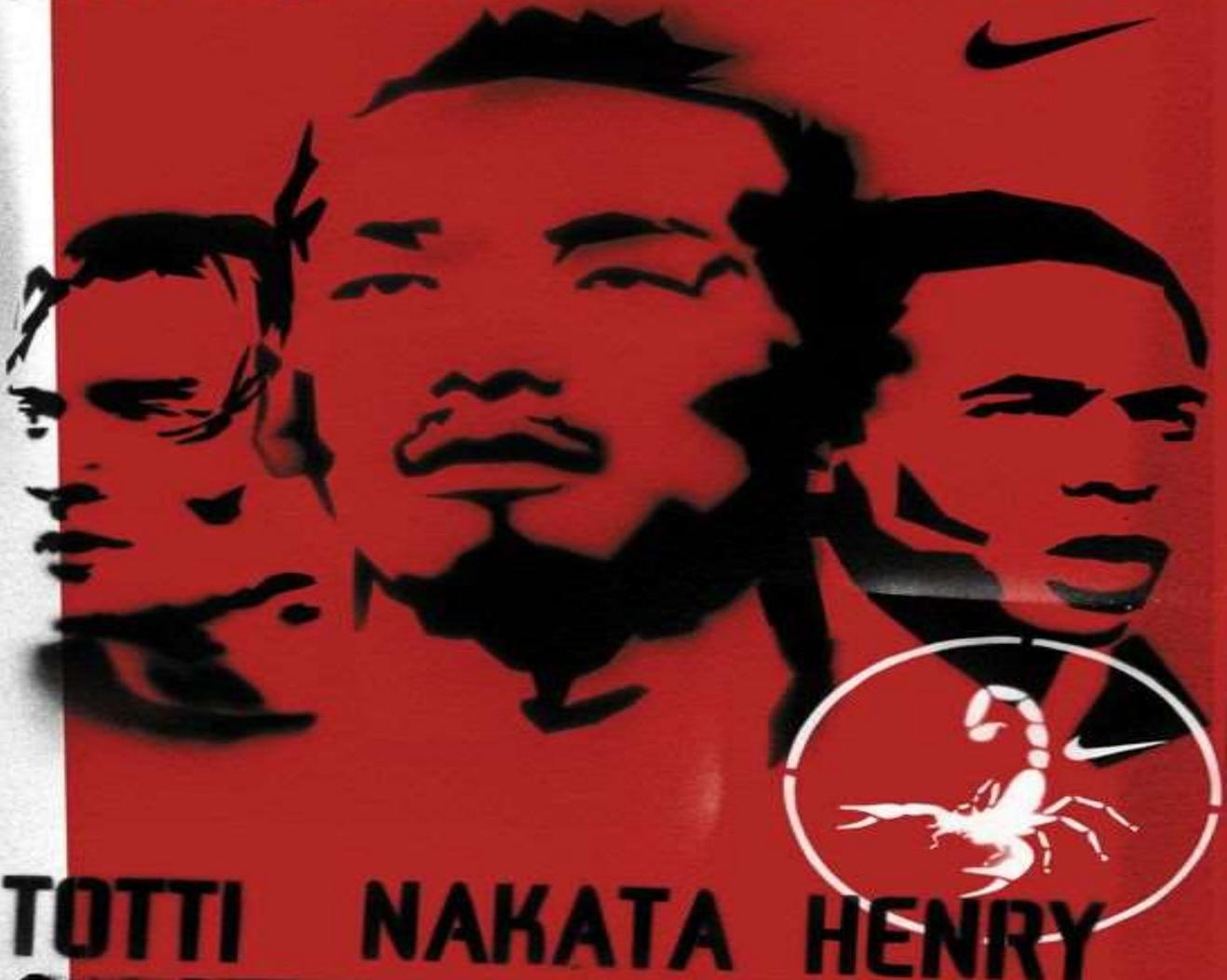
Be grateful it wasn't a 200 page bumper issue! This was to recognise Neymar's 200th game for Santos



Oscar Gonzalez - Mexican defender never truly making the grade at club side Cruz Azul



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