

LATTE

QUARTERLY



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Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM | **Issue Four**

Editor's Note

And so we reach issue four of Latte Quarterly and my turn to pen the editor's note.

The first thing to mention about this issue is that we have another guest writer featuring. From Eleven One has been brilliantly writing about Football Manager since FM18 now and it's a pleasure to have him feature in LQ as well. Hopefully you enjoy his piece around something that we don't actually see written about too much, moving clubs within a save and some of the things you need to take into consideration.

If, like From Eleven One and our past guest writers, you'd like to feature in a future issue of Latte Quarterly then all you need to do is get in touch with us. You'll have four issues now to look back on and have a think about the kind of thing you'd like to submit. Our contact details are at the bottom of this page and we're looking forward to hearing from you.

FMGrasshopper is back and gives us quite a rare insight into his unique mind. Have you ever wanted to find out how his manager personas came to be? Read on to find out. I think it's one of my favourite pieces of his.

It's not like me to be potentially controversial is it? We've been kicking around this idea for a while and we've decided to launch it in this issue. Samorama is about me investigating some of the current goings on and issues around Football Manager. The inaugural piece looks at the rise of earning money through playing Football Manager and I think it'll gall and intrigue you in equal measure. It certainly does that to me.

One of the highlights of FM20 has been FMAdventure's Glentoran save. Who doesn't love a save where the player is managing the club they love? Sometimes things don't work out the way you want them and you end up not spending as much time with the club you love. Why not change the challenge and take over the national side and set yourself a new task with some very promising homegrown Glenmen?

Enjoy the read, and let us know what you thought. We'd love to hear from you.

FMSamo

LQ Issue Four:

Moving Clubs

By From Eleven One

Writing with a Backstory

By FMGrasshopper

Samorama—Football Manager and Money

By FMSamo

Maintain the Challenge

By FMAdventure

Moving Clubs

By From Eleven One

So, you're looking for a new job, or perhaps you've been headhunted. Could be that you're climbing the divisions in a journeyman save, looking for a new challenge, or just fed up with your current incompetent board.

How do you win a new gig? What can you do to make sure it's the right role for you? And which things could you do in the first couple of weeks, to start your tenure off in the right way?

Case Studies

For the sake of getting a better idea of some of the things I'm trying to talk about, I used three open job opportunities from various points in my own save, taking interviews at Dortmund, Juventus and Manchester City. The former was a role I hadn't applied for, whilst the latter two I had actively sought the job.

Pre-Interview

I know you're excited, but before hitting that attend button, do a bit of research. If applicable, check out the director of football, definitely look at the other staff, and of course, the first team players.

Part of the interview process may include answering whether you're happy to work with the current DoF, and will certainly involve deciding what sort of budget you believe you need for new staff, as well as total budgets for wages and transfers.

Getting a feel for the current set-up at your target club will give you a better idea of how to answer. From my case studies above, Juventus and Man City had very impressive staff teams already, whereas Dortmund's was

in need of a lot of work. My quick assessment of Dortmund's squad led me to the conclusion that they could probably do with a new starting goalkeeper, central midfielder and striker.

These situations are examples of how a bit of research can impact how you may want to answer. Do you really want the job if they're not going to pony up the budget you feel you need? Balancing the risks of demanding more versus making do to make yourself a more appealing candidate, are an interesting part of the process, but how much do your answers really matter?

Interview Questions

Something I was interested in, was how important my interview answers were. To try and get some insight on this, I did a bit of experimentation, running through each interview around twenty times.

I was somewhat taken aback by the results. In two cases, I didn't find any combination of answers that changed the initial decision. Firstly, and perhaps least surprisingly, there was nothing I could say to secure the Manchester City job.

Leagues, Tactics, Training, Analysis... Everything FM

But at the opposite end of the spectrum, I couldn't fail to get the Dortmund role, with even an attempt at sabotaging the interview resulting in being offered the job.

Only in the discussions with Juventus did I find the interview answers made a difference, with any demands for improved facilities or a new affiliate club leading to them counting me out of the job.

What sort of conclusions can we draw from these examples? Well firstly, these are just a few interviews from the same save universe, so we can't be too definitive, but it seems that if a club has sought you out, you're in a

very strong position, and can really push for more resources.

Furthermore, I have long held suspicions that the non-budget, non-facility related questions in job interviews are more colour than substance, and nothing in this brief flirtation with experimentation has dispelled that belief for me. In all three interviews, these answers had no impact on the final decision.

Backroom Staff Changes

I think of all the screens in Football Manager, this one is my personal favourite:

The screenshot shows the 'Staff' management screen for Borussia Dortmund. It is divided into two main sections: 'Mačva Šabac Staff' and 'Borussia Dortmund Staff'.

Mačva Šabac Staff - Select any staff members you would like to bring with you to Borussia Dortmund.

NAME	JOB	SECONDARY JOB	CURRENT WAGE	REASON	COMPENSATION
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arkaitz Mota	Director of Football	None	£600 p/w		£22,163
ASSISTANT MANAGER					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Milan Berck Beelenkamp	Assistant Manager	None	£400 p/w		£14,578
HEAD OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT					
<input type="checkbox"/> John Morling	Head of Youth Development	None	£750 p/w	Not interested in relocating to Borussia Dortmund	£27,750
MAČVA ŠABAC COACHING STAFF					
<input type="checkbox"/> Patrick Bettoni	Goalkeeping Coach	None	£600 p/w		£22,274

Borussia Dortmund Staff - Select which staff you want to retain. You may choose to change a staff member's job role if they are interested.

NAME	JOB	SECONDARY JOB	CURRENT WAGE	COMPENSATION
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL 1/1				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arkaitz Mota	Director of Football	None	£600 p/w	
ASSISTANT MANAGER 1/1				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Milan Berck Beelenkamp	Assistant Manager	None	£400 p/w	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yalçın Yılmaz	Assistant Manager	None	£11K p/w	£2,116,160
HEAD OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT 1/1				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joey Klaus	Head of Youth Devel...	None	£10.5K p/w	£2,031,450
BORUSSIA DORTMUND COACHING STAFF 5/9				

Compensation Budget: £6.25M Current Compensation: £2.15M Reset Confirm

There's something extremely gratifying about making such sweeping changes in one fell swoop (with the bonus of not having to negotiate a single contract). From this example, I sacked seven sub-par members of the Dortmund staff, and brought in twenty of my former charges, to immediately make significant upgrades to the coaching and recruitment teams.

That's one less thing to worry about on day one. Speaking of which...

Getting Started

For me, it's straight to the Reserve/U23/II squad. Hear me out. Before deciding on a tactic, I want to see the first team players, but before seeing them, I need to establish whether there are any decent players that have been underrated, quite possibly criminally so, by the previous manager (check the youth squad too). Spoilers, there's at least one, every time.

In a similar vein, look through the squad for transfer listed and loan listed players. You may need to have a chat with them to convince them to stay (if you want them to). In some circumstances (Juventus) you may join as a transfer offer has been accepted. No, we will not be selling our only decent right back to Turkey for peanuts. Sigh.

Next stop is fitting your new players into a tactic. Like me, you'll likely have a way you want to play the game, but you'll also be faced with accommodating your new board's ideas, as well as having a new group of players that may or may not be able to do the job immediately.

Our two remaining case studies differ a little more from this point on. Both of the boards want to play "Entertaining football", with Dortmund also demanding "Attacking football". Fortunately for me, these demands overlap quite nicely with my own ideas. For a further look at the differences, I'm going to break down how a few things go in the first couple of weeks at each club.

Dortmund

It's early October and the transfer window will remain closed for the next three months. Dortmund are second in the league, but in a

tight cluster of six clubs chasing the leaders, separated by a mere four points.

My eventual desire here would be to play an attacking 4231 formation, but until the transfer window opens, Dortmund are a little lacking for it in my opinion. They are without a striker capable of leading the line alone, and short of central midfield depth, so a more conservative 442 formation is how I'd decide to start. Sometimes you need an initial short-term tactical plan when starting at a new team.

This is probably not going to thrill the board, but covering for the squad's obvious deficiencies seems the best way to remain in contention, before a theoretical FEOfication of the team in January.

First team needs: GK, CM, ST. Squad depth needs: DL/DR, DC (x2)

Budget: £189m.

Board: Sign German players, don't sign over-30s.

Dortmund have a big drop off after the likely first team. Six new players in one window is a pretty massive change that I wouldn't usually enjoy, but the squad needs it.

With such a massive budget available, it should be easy to fill the gaps, especially considering I'd be targeting my former club for a really cheap, world-class striker, and a German U21 capped left back. With those signings arranged early, the newly revamped scouting team now has a couple of months to find the players needed to enable the switch to a 4231.

After the first two weeks, things are looking promising. I've improved the staff at the club, there are two transfers arranged already, and

the first couple of outings for the transitional tactic showed promising signs.

The next ten weeks before the transfer window opens should be focused on improving knowledge of the current players, working the recruitment team hard to plug the holes in the squad, and trying to stay in touch with RBL. With so much money on offer, the Dortmund project should be yielding success fairly quickly, the only concern in the short term would be an early injury or two, with such a shallow squad.

Juventus

In textbook Calcio style, the Old Lady has many players approaching the end of their careers, although in stark contrast to Dortmund, Juve have a pretty deep squad.

A further difference comes with where Juventus are weak. The full backs are ageing, and the best choices for wide attackers aren't entirely ideal. However, there's no reason not to go with my preferred formation from the get go. It's still pre-season, so the ideal time for the squad to learn the ins and outs of it quickly.

In further good news, this is one of those rare times when a new job has commenced during an open transfer window, so we can get cracking on signing reinforcements right away. The bad news is, the transfer budget is far more limited than that available in Germany.

First team need: AML/AMR. Squad depth needs: DL, DR, AML/AMR.

Budget: £48m.

Board: Sign players based in Italy.

I immediately sent a bid for the same cheap striker I went for with Dortmund, as he'd do a

grand job on the left wing. That leaves about £42m for three players.

But there's a couple of stops to make first. Checking out the existing transfer clauses can be a nice booster to your funds. Attempting to get the board to increase the percentage of transfer revenue retained before triggering them is a good idea, but as you're a new arrival, they may not agree to it (as they didn't in this instance).

By selling off a handful of sell on and appearance clauses early, I managed to raise the transfer budget to about £55m.

With the squad's depth and age being excessive, there are also some players we can move on. Foremost among them is the 35 year-old Antoine Griezmann. A fine player, but well past his best and paid monster money. Everton want him for £5m? Yes please. By selling just three overpaid veterans (and adjusting the wage/transfer budget slider afterwards), the transfer budget now stands above £70m, a great improvement.

A great and necessary improvement. A suitable winger (from Sassuolo) for the first team takes up half of that budget and back-up full backs for a reasonable fee are hard to find, especially those based in Italy. Presented with a choice between two full backs from abroad or a single more expensive option (and a superior player) from Atalanta, I opted for the latter, emptying the transfer budget almost entirely. Firstly, another Italian-based signing should please the board, and secondly, being Juventus, raising money for a future window should be fairly simple..

Despite (or because of) it being mid-summer, the first couple of weeks with Juventus have been more frenetic than those with Dortmund. Transfer business is all concluded before pre-season friendlies start, so there's every reason to expect to hit the ground running. Areas of concern include the dressing room atmosphere, which has taken hits from a) my inexperience, b) losing a couple of influential players, and c) selling N'Golo Kanté (35) less than a fortnight after he was signed on a free transfer. Also, the board have very high expectations, potentially difficult to achieve with both Milan clubs currently true European heavyweights.

Conclusions

1. Do your homework before you interview.
2. Don't be afraid to ask for more money, especially if you've been headhunted.
3. Bring in your favourite staff.
4. Check for mistakes made by your predecessor, eg. undervalued players.
5. Need more cash? Go to the transfer clauses, the AI uses these a lot.
6. Cut the dead wood and the overpaid.
7. Figure out if you need a transitional tactic more suited to the squad you inherited.




Writing with a Backstory

By FMGrasshopper



Football Manager  @Footb... · 8 Jun 

Cricketer Scott Borthwick told us his FM alter ego is called 'Jurgen Di Badger' 

What's the best back story you've ever created for a save? 

 62

 8

 165



Back in June 2020, the Football Manager official Twitter account posted the above tweet. Personally for me, it was a “you are not alone moment”. It turns out a fair few people, like me, add a backstory to their Football Manager saves. Today for #LQ4, I’ve decided to explore why I write a backstory and the personal history behind them.

Background

Annually my Julys are partially spent in France, where I spend time with my wife’s side of the family. It’s a time of reflection, often away from the demands of work and the distractions of social media. A time where I take in plenty of Vitamin D, good food and, more importantly, red wine.

But my July holiday for the last few years has been a time for me to get creative with words too. As I’d often use my Summer break to compose the endings or starts of new stories intertwined with Football Manager. It’s become my ‘forte’ so to speak in the FM Blogging World and a style that

allows me to enrich my virtual football management universe.

But thinking back, this isn’t just something I’ve spontaneously done on the back on blogging FM. It’s certainly been enhanced and perhaps snowballed out of control by being a ‘creator’...but the backstory has always been there. Ever since CM97/98.

You see, CM97/98 was my first edition. Thinking back, it was quite a turbulent point for me growing up. A year later, I’d gone from living in an inner city house with my two brothers to being moved out to a seaside town where I knew nobody. The friends that had introduced me to the game were now back in London...and this was before the time of social media to share save stories or updates. So, perhaps this was the birth of the backstory for me. Instead of sharing the save outwards, I was growing the save world inwards. I often played as ‘Tony Olsen’ back in the early CMs, a Swedish/Danish Manager who would often

start in Scandinavia before moving to more renowned leagues. It would often be like this, a man in a smaller country rising up the leagues with reputation and trophies.

The creative spark stalled somewhat, as I found myself at University at the onset of the Football Manager era. Gametime dipped, and so did the stories in my head. Whatever I did with FM was either in a shared network save across student accommodation or shared over dinner/beers. Nobody would really care to hear the legend of Tony Olsen there.

But I've found as you grow older, the less time we have to share our stories with friends. Until in 2015 I decided to take the plunge into blogging FM. I was then a father, and I found I wasn't going out as much because of this. So, why not use my time 'effectively' and open up my stories to the infinite number of Football Manager fans around the globe? Initially I had the aim of capturing the events in a One Club save with Grasshopper Club Zürich (hence my blog's name). Unsure if it would keep my interest, I thought that I would most likely write for a year and then stop the blog.

FMG OAB (After Blogging)

Loïc Swartzendruber was born. A 60 something Swiss guy whose Germanic surname I decided on in a museum in London when looking at Swiss Amish farmers in America. His French first name, the same as my father-in-law, was to ground him in Switzerland: a country of bigger neighbouring ones merging together. Poor Swartzendruber never really got the full FMG experience. No artworks in his image and no real creative pieces. But FM16 was all about testing the waters, how far could I push the storytelling backstory? There was only one way to find out.

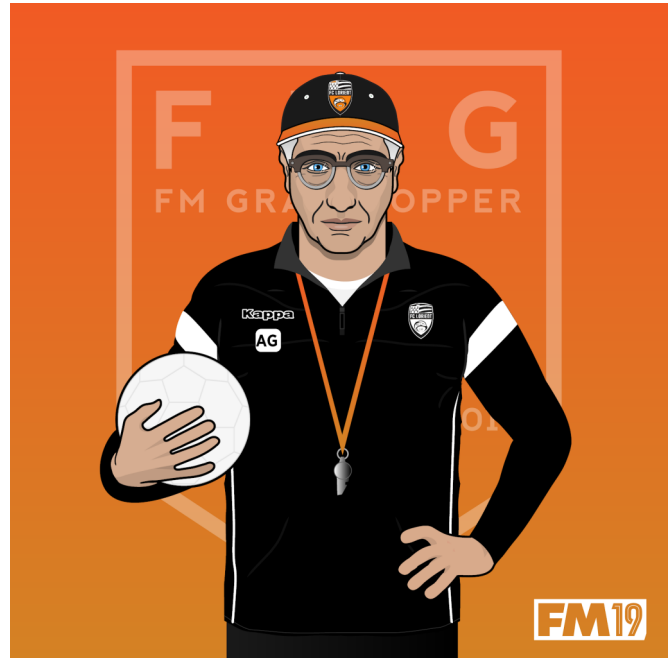
FMG 1-3AB

Ángel Bastardo. The name is now synonymous with my blog. A character that represents the Argentine spirit and passion for the game, and with Ángel in my arsenal I was able to go up a few creative gears for FM17 and FM18. We had bank heists, cocaine, hacked elections, stabbings and much more...all within the world of Football Manager. I felt, at this point, I had truly found my place in the FM blogging sphere...and my enjoyment of FM increased too. The distraction to think about Ángel's exploits, and what he would do as part Football Manager and part Mob Boss, was a relief from the gritty real world; where I saw my dad go through (and beat) cancer and also the birth of my second reflux Hell pest: Luca Yann Loïc.



FMG 4AB

But I knew I couldn't always write the same character. Despite introducing other FMers slowly into my Expanded Universe (Diego, Rensie, Eadster et al)...I felt I needed a break from the Underworld. So, in FM19 we saw Achilles Goss take charge of FC Lorient in another One Club save. But once again, like Swartzendruber, I never really took to the creative side with Goss. He was undoubtedly in the shadow of Bastardo, whose story continued with the "Bastardo At War" series through FM19's cycle. The Argentine continued to fuel my creative spark, but Goss allowed me to explore his character in how I actually played FM. He was a Head Coach, a more continental interpretation of the man in



charge, and FM allowed me to tailor my playstyle with the new training modules and Director of Football role. The backstory wasn't really a story here, but it was a way of playing and justifying for how I delegated certain tasks.

In this personal LQ piece I've come to the realisation that the backstory (and the character that comes with it) drives how I play FM. Goss wanted a more intricate style of play, whereas Bastardo likes it fast. Whereas Goss concentrates on certain areas, overlooking certain parts, Bastardo tried to do it all.

FMG 5AB

This is reflective in how I approached FM20. It's become a story of two men, a master and an apprentice. One starts out with a big reputation and at the biggest club in the country. The other starts with no reputation and rises from nothing. It's perhaps the most complete my writing has been from a creative stance in the five years I've blogged FM. But I've also experienced two different sides of FM. I've experienced trophies, International Management,

promotions and relegation battles. I've probably turned a mediocre edition of Football Manager into something I can look back on with fond memories. All because of the backstory. In my twisted mind, one man like Ángel Bastardo couldn't have done all those things in FM20. But (spoiler incoming), having him incarcerated in the US in order to be replaced by a young Venezuelan refugee...meant I could see a different side of FM20.



Hugo Ojeda, the newest FMG character (whose name was taken from a Newgen in Diego Mendoza's past save), was gradually introduced on the onset of FM20. His development is in its infancy...but I know one thing: everybody should fear him. He rose up from refugee to becoming a foot soldier in Bastardo's caporegime, but now finds himself a Sinaloan Drug Lord. La Plata: Mexico carried on the same themes of the Bastardo Universe (it's in the same original FM20 save file) but it introduced a new story arc, overlapping Bastardo's and entering new

ground. It allowed me to chop and change teams, experience new Club Visions, win at a virtual job interview and adapt to new challenges. Once again the backstory helped me stick at it, lasting 9-10 real-life months of play time.

I'm now five years into blogging FM and it still feels good. Writing a backstory has no doubt helped me stick at it, but the secondary benefit is that people seem to enjoy it too. The Football Manager tweet also shows I'm not alone, is it time to write your backstory...?



Football Manager and Money By FM\$amo

It wasn't always like this. If you're reading this then it's highly likely you first started playing a version of Football Manager out of intrigue and excitement.

However, as eSports and gaming as a career becomes more prevalent, money has crept into the Football Manager space too. In this first edition of Samorama, I'm going to look at the relationship between money and Football Manager and how it's affected the content creation landscape.

Ads on Websites and Blogs

The written word of Football Manager arrived before the visual form of creating content around the game, so naturally that's where we start. The easiest way to make money from a website is through ads. My day job is in paid marketing, I work for a company who doesn't have a physical bricks and mortar presence, so a large chunk of our revenue comes from on-site advertising. The way this has worked for Football Manager sites over the years is exactly that, but on a much smaller scale.

The usual benchmark clickthrough rate (the ratio of clicks versus the number of people who saw the ad) on an ad is around 0.05%. It does depend on what type of advert it is though. You might be being retargeted by a website that you've visited, so it's a more relevant ad to you, meaning you're more likely to click it. Alternatively, and this is what is seen frequently on Football Manager sites, the ads have no relevance to anything you're interested in or have clicked on before. They're filled with advertisers looking to just advertise, likely on the Google Display Network (GDN).

Using data from an online tool, a rough estimate for a website like FMScout sees them getting over 2million site visits a month. Again, a very rough estimate sees websites earn around \$0.15 from whenever there is a click on the ads they're hosting. This puts their monthly earnings at a very rough ballpark figure of \$600.

FMScout have been around for as long as I can remember being in and around the community and I very much see them as the place to go for any add-ons to the game, while it's clear others see them as the place to go for wonderkid lists, guides and even as a place to discuss the game further. As I said, I work in ads, I'm all for them if they weave nicely into the website experience. However, in recent years, a blight has swept over on-site ads and onto Football Manager websites too. It's the dreaded full page ad pop-up.

They really are the worst and most of the time they make me give up on reading the thing I'd gone on to that website for. The worst culprit for them in the FM space from my memory is Football Manager Blog (or OfficialFMB to give them their Twitter name). Over the years they've had so many complaints about the spammy nature of their website, but refuse to change their ways. Why? The clickthrough rate is higher which means more money. It may be accidental clicks when trying to get rid of the pop-up, but they all count.

One thing I haven't seen done that well or at all is the affiliate partnership with an advertiser. If done well, this can be really relevant and rewarding for the advertiser, site owner and reader. You might have seen the shoehorned in URLs behind random pieces of text or a dodgy looking sponsored

blog post. Benefitting the reader will benefit the advertiser which will benefit you. Just think about it.

Earning from YouTube

You don't need me to tell you that the rise in popularity of YouTube in a wider sense has also happened in a Football Manager sense too. The big players in this space are huge. Some have benefitted from being early adopters in the space while others have cleverly spotted gaps and opportunities that they could fit themselves into to grow. The numbers, in terms of subscribers and views, has led to "Football Manager player" being something some write down as their profession when required to share that information.

As far as I'm aware, you need to hit 1,000 subscribers and have 4,000 hours of watchtime in the previous 12 months to be eligible for YouTube's Partner Programme which then enables you to earn money from ads before and during your videos. This is done in a similar way to making money from a website in that it's done through Google AdSense. A very rough estimate, which I'm sure could be easily corrected, is that some of the Football Manager YouTubers with large numbers of subscribers could make an estimated \$40 per video they release.

In terms of ad formats, there is of course those ads that we all skip before videos begin but there's also an option of non-skippable ads before videos. These can either be short videos or ones that are a bit longer. You've also got some overlay ads which can appear midway through your video which can be a mixture of text and image. Then we come to mid-roll ads. These can be activated if your video is over 10 minutes long.

Creators can choose whether to let YouTube add as many or as few of these as possible, or if you feel there's a natural break in your video, you can add them in yourself too. If Google/YouTube thinks the user watching experience is poorer for having a mid-roll enabled though, they'll decide to not show it. All of these points are moot though if Google's algorithms have decided that your videos aren't interesting enough to serve any ads in the first place.

My first observation on this is on that fact I mentioned in the first paragraph of this section. There are now people who play Football Manager as their career and these people started their content creation around the game on YouTube. I think this has led some others to believe there's riches ahead of them. Reading this you'll be able to think of some examples in your head immediately I'm sure. People busting to make sure they upload a video everyday, people going link spam crazy, people offering out "sub for sub", doing anything they can to grow their number of subscribers. For me, this leads to people not playing the game for the love of it, and that upsets me.

My second observation is around that last sentence. I love Football Manager, but I'm not sure I would ever want to, or even could, play it as my career. Maybe that's just me. It's my hobby, the thing I spend my time on when I want some downtime to relax (or not, depending on results). If you're making a viable career out of it, then cool, well done, good for you.

I always think if you love what you're doing and you've got a real passion, and when it comes to YouTube, a skill for it, then that'll show in what you produce. If those boxes are ticked then those watching will enjoy it and

you'll grow. If you're forcing it or doing it for the wrong reasons, it really shows.

Twitching for Cash

This leads us very nicely onto Twitch. It's absolutely exploded over the last couple of years and if you haven't realised then I'm not sure where you've been or who you follow. As another form of visual content creation, it's often lumped together with YouTube but it's very different. We've got ad revenue, subscriptions and bit donations as three ways to make money from streaming Football Manager on Twitch.

Subscriptions on Twitch are different to YouTube where you can click subscribe and it's totally free. When you subscribe to someone on Twitch, you're choosing to pay for that on a monthly basis and the creator you've subscribed to earns a cut of that, sharing it with Twitch themselves. There's three tier options with the cheapest being £4.99 a month and the most expensive being £24.99 a month. That tier is presumably if you're a hardcore fanatic with a significant amount of disposable income to burn watching someone else play a computer game. Twitch has also partnered with Amazon to enable Prime subscribers to gift a sub to their chosen favourite streamer each month.

Then we come to bits. I've got to be honest here, I do not get this side of Twitch whatsoever. The easiest way to explain them for those that don't know is that they're donations. Casual viewers can purchase a certain number of bits that they can choose to contribute to their favourite streamers. Twitch pays creators around £0.01 per bit they receive, and you can purchase 100 bits to "cheer" on your favourite streamers for \$1.40.

If someone is popular on either YouTube or Twitch then they also might approach or be approached by businesses to do some affiliate marketing similar to what I mentioned earlier on the blogging side. You've seen these in the past with the likes of the dearly departed 2Game, who every year used to partner up with creators who would then promote a unique link to purchase the new edition of the game so that they'd earn some money off the back of it. To give a rough idea of earnings through this avenue, I donated the £140 I made through a link to buy FM20 to charity. I'm imagining that others earned a lot more from their individual links.

Every so often, it seems as though there's an exodus from those creating YouTube videos around Football Manager. They head to Twitch, where seemingly it's a little bit less time consuming to create and connect with potential viewers. Time spent recording, editing and uploading is replaced for viewers watching you play the game live. Rather than comments being left on videos to be read later, there's real-time interaction and reaction based on what's happening on screen.

I've done a couple of streams in the past and been in a fair few too. They really can be a great way to interact with people around the game, but again, I actually really love playing the game and giving it my undivided attention. I actually found it really tough to keep up with the (limited) chat going on by those watching and also pay attention to what I was doing in-game.

All About the Threads

The connections that creators on YouTube and Twitch are able to make with their audience, in comparison to those that I've

seen in the past with Football Manager writers, sees them be able to create merchandise around their channel and content as an additional revenue stream. Is that because they're basically "in the same room" as their viewers with their faces shown on their screens versus just being a name on a page? Who knows. It's not something I'll be exploring for today, I'm just here to tell you it happens.

You could get a t-shirt from your favourite creator with their signature catchphrase on it or one relevant to a certain save series they've played. Maybe a newgen turned into a hero like Ivica Stok, although he's a charitable figure doing good as opposed to earning money for Jonny Sharples.

Then we have the gap in the market that was spotted and taken advantage of, creating a new club. This opened up a new avenue for creators who are now able to get kits of their newly created clubs manufactured and sold to fans of them who are now fans of the club that doesn't actually exist in real life too. I think this kind of thing could actually spawn off into an article of its own but I'll stay on topic for now.

I think for the bigger creators, with my marketing experience hat on, I totally understand why you would go down this route. You're diversifying, capitalising on a big opportunity you have, jumping on the level of pure devotion you seem to have. Similarly to those that seem to get into creating content for other reasons, this happens in the merchandise side of things. I can't get my head around the thought process of someone who's not quite hitting 100 views on a video that makes them decide that they're going to get a line of merchandise released.

Who Gives You Extra?

Another route that a good number of Football Manager creators have also gone down over the years to earn additional sums of money on top of some of the aforementioned routes has been Patreon. It's a subscription service where, similar to Twitch, you decide how much you want to contribute to support a creator on a monthly basis based on different tiers provided. It's a massive platform used by so many types of people. It wasn't long before it became almost a normal step for Football Manager creators, and more often than not, it's been those that create visual content around the game.

One of the expectations of Patreon is usually that your backers get something extra from you in return for you earning money from their backing. This is where some of the lines blur a little bit in a Football Manager sense. I'm not sure I quite understand some of the "benefits" being offered out by creators. An example being for \$2 a month you get "thanks". Nothing extra. Sometimes not even an actual acknowledgement of the support you're giving them, but hey, "here's some access to this Patreon-only feed where I sometimes post some things which you'll probably find on my Twitter feed anyway".

Then you go up a couple of monetary tiers and things get a little weird. You could pay \$10 to get your name on someone's video or brainstorm about their future content. You could get access to play against them in tournaments or get a discount on their merchandise. Here's the one that blows my mind. I've found one creator offering one-on-one Football Manager "coaching". If you're someone that pays someone \$10 a month in order for them to teach you how to play the

game then I'm not quite sure the game is for you and I really hope you aren't reading this right now.

Some are earning over \$1,000 a month from their Patreon. Chilled Moose, who creates and provides different newgen faces for those that pay \$5 or above on a monthly basis, is close to earning \$4,000 a month from this at the time of writing. The levels of support are quite unbelievable.

All You Do is Win

The final avenue for earning isn't as open for everyone to get involved in. Over the years there's been a number of Football Manager competitions that have been set up where the winner would earn a cash prize. Some of these have been open for applicants to enter, whereas there's been some closed for anyone to just enter.

The biggest one, to my knowledge, has been the FMWEC in 2018. It was hosted by Insomnia Gaming and Bidstack and the advertised prize was twofold. The big prize was £25,000. An absolutely whopping amount of money. Fryman7 won the tournament and as far as I can see from news reports and Tweets, he won £15,000. Again, not an insignificant amount of money at all, but not the amount first advertised. I wonder what happened there. The second part of the prize was to, randomly, help manage a team of Norwich Legends against a team of legends from Inter.

In 2017, Iain MacIntosh was at the height of his Football Manager popularity. The Set Pieces website had featured a couple of very popular blog series around the game, and in partnership with BetBright, created the FM Cup with a prize of £5,000 on offer for the winners.

They'd held regional qualifying events, I actually had successfully applied for the Glasgow tournament but had to drop out because it clashed with a holiday. It could have been me lifting that big comedy cheque, but it was another Scotsman, Jordan Murphy, who was part of the duo that eventually won it.

The predictions around that time were that Football Manager as an eSport would take off. It hasn't panned out that way, but Football Manager themselves have dabbled in a couple of tournaments too. They invited some of the bigger players on YouTube to their London offices for a couple of tournaments across FM18 and FM19. Again, a £5,000 prize was on offer for the winner. These events were much more closed off than the other two I've mentioned. It was invite-only and teams were done through the very under utilised draft feature. There was a little bit of controversy at the time surrounding the nature of the invites, especially with Football Manager's social media lead at the time being a former YouTuber himself. Someone called Le96z

walked away with the 2018 £5k while FoxInTheBox won the FM19 event. The events helped to propel growth on their own channels for certain participants and help them in continuing to build their brand to in turn earn more through the likes of Patreon and merchandise.

Football Manager tournaments continue to pop up to this day but the prize money part of them has disappeared somewhat. Will they return? Who knows.

For The Love of The Game

The rise of influencers and vloggers where they share their entire lives with their viewers has more than crept into the Football Manager world. It's almost like the early days of football itself. I'm seeing the rise of "professionalism" infiltrate into the reasons why people start to make Football Manager content on Twitter, YouTube and on websites. They see others earning from it but the circumstances are so different. Very few starting now will make it to that level so they should stick to "Ludere Causa Ludendi" - to play for the sake of playing.

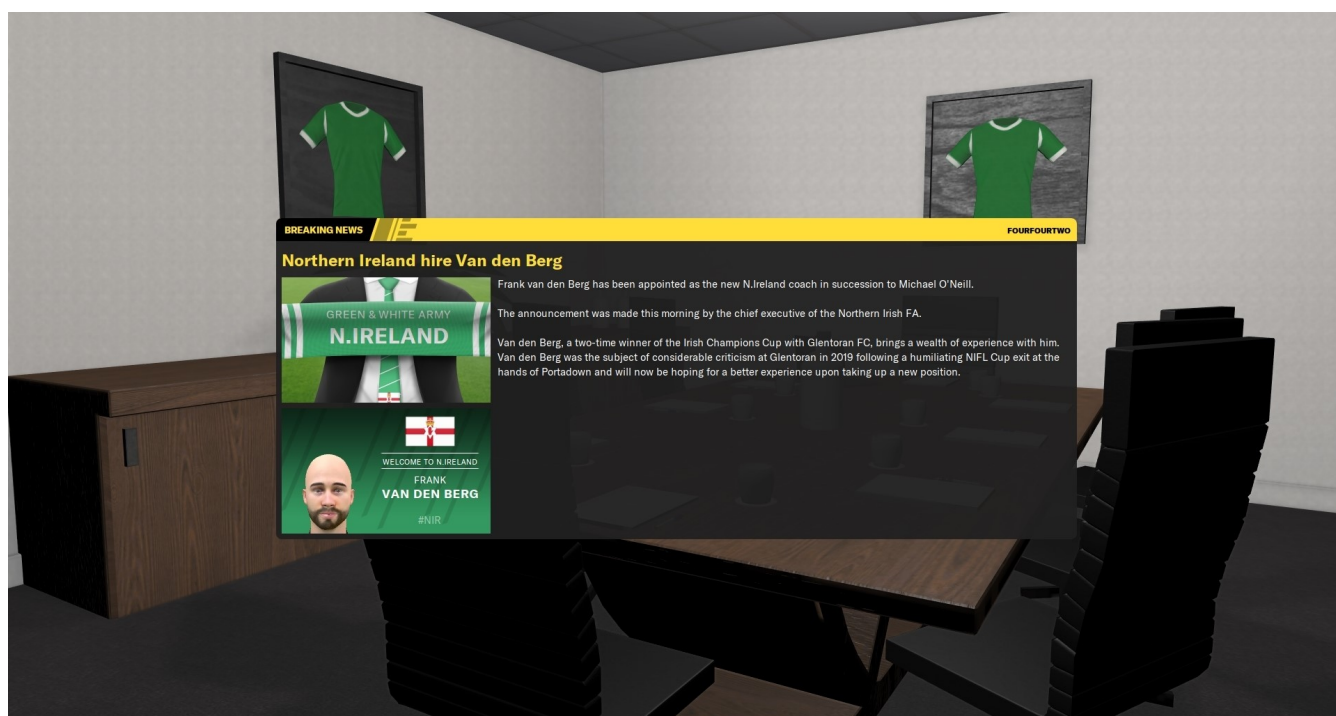
Maintain The Challenge

By FMAdventure

For my FM20 save, I decided to start close to home. Very close to home. In fact, a literal stone's throw from my front door. My local side, Glentoran FC, had recently undergone a takeover with the promise of financial investment. Glentoran have always been known to be a big name in Northern Irish football but due to various factors had began to slip down the league table. A sleeping giant with a tycoon takeover - it's a Football Manager player's wet dream!

The plan was to gradually build the club up into a force to be reckoned with once more. Annoyingly, I found success far too soon and before long we were dominating the local football scene while making modest waves in Europe. At the conclusion of my sixth season in charge we had won 18 trophies - of which were four consecutive league titles. To add to the ever growing burden on the trophy cabinet, the club's bank balance was at an incredible £20m in the black - an unimaginable amount of money in Northern Irish footballing terms.

As someone who is unaccustomed to such easily gained success in FM, I started to feel the need for a new challenge. That being said, I was curious to see how the future would turn out for Glentoran with their new found success and, as such, I decided that starting a new save would not be an option. It was when a certain job in the international job suddenly became available that the stars aligned and I made my decision on how to continue my save but in a new direction...



Choy and Coyle

I've always enjoyed a brief foray into the International Management game but I decided to set myself a task which would be more of a mid-to-long term assignment. With my time at Glentoran, I had developed that natural FMer's attachment to several players. Stephen Coyle and Choy Yiu Fai are two such players.

Stephen Coyle had burst onto the local scene in just my second season in charge at Glentoran. Coyle came through, fellow Belfast club, Crusaders' youth intake in 2020 and made his debut in that first season - his only appearance in that season. It was in 2020/21 that he came to my attention as he struck 23 goals in 32 league appearances at just 17 years old. Crusaders were not open to negotiation on his transfer but Coyle was keen on the move to Glentoran. Eventually his contract expired but I had forgotten about the compensation fee due to his age - £250k. A fee I was initially unwilling to pay, eventually in the summer of 2023 I bit the bullet and stumped up the money, a record transfer fee for a Northern Irish club. In Coyle's two seasons under my club management he scored 64 goals in his 65 league appearances with a further 31 in our various domestic cup and European fixtures.

It was in Coyle's 2023/24 debut season at Glentoran that Choy Yiu Fai appeared in our own youth intake. A Hong Kong-Northern Irish dual national, the young striker instantly stood out. He was physically adept with high attributes for Technique and Off The Ball - that's my sort of player. He was debuted in our last two games of this season and grabbed himself a brace and one further goal in those two games along with three assists. His talent couldn't be ignored and so he was thrust into a strike partnership with Stephen

Coyle for the 2024/25 season. In 33 league games he managed himself 15 goals at the age of 19, with another 13 in our other competitions.

My new challenge had presented itself. I would take Coyle and Choy into the Northern Ireland national team and see them compete to break the Northern Ireland international goalscoring record. It was a record that stood at an achievable 36 goals, previously set by David Healy (who would manage our bitter rivals Linfield in my first seasons in charge of Glentoran).

The measure for success was easy - it was simply to take either player to 37 goals. The obstacles were easy.. Northern Ireland are not very good. I would not concern myself too much with trying to bring success for the national team but good performances go hand in hand with the goal I had set myself. The more games we played, the more quickly one of these players could break the record.

Broken Record

I tried to replicate my 4-4-2 formation that I used with Glentoran on the international stage but I didn't have the right sort of players in the midfield to make it happen. I made a change to a 4-3-1-2 narrow formation with a flat three in midfield and an Enganche in the attacking midfield position. It was all engineered to provide as much support and service to the strike partnership as possible.

Stephen Coyle was the man to step up to the plate and take the record. He was more suited to the role of the Advanced Forward while Choy played as a Pressing Forward. The roles will definitely have played a part however Choy did a fantastic job in notching up a tally of 22 goals for himself by the time Coyle reached the magic 37.

Stephen Coyle - A Story of Unfulfilled Potential

Club

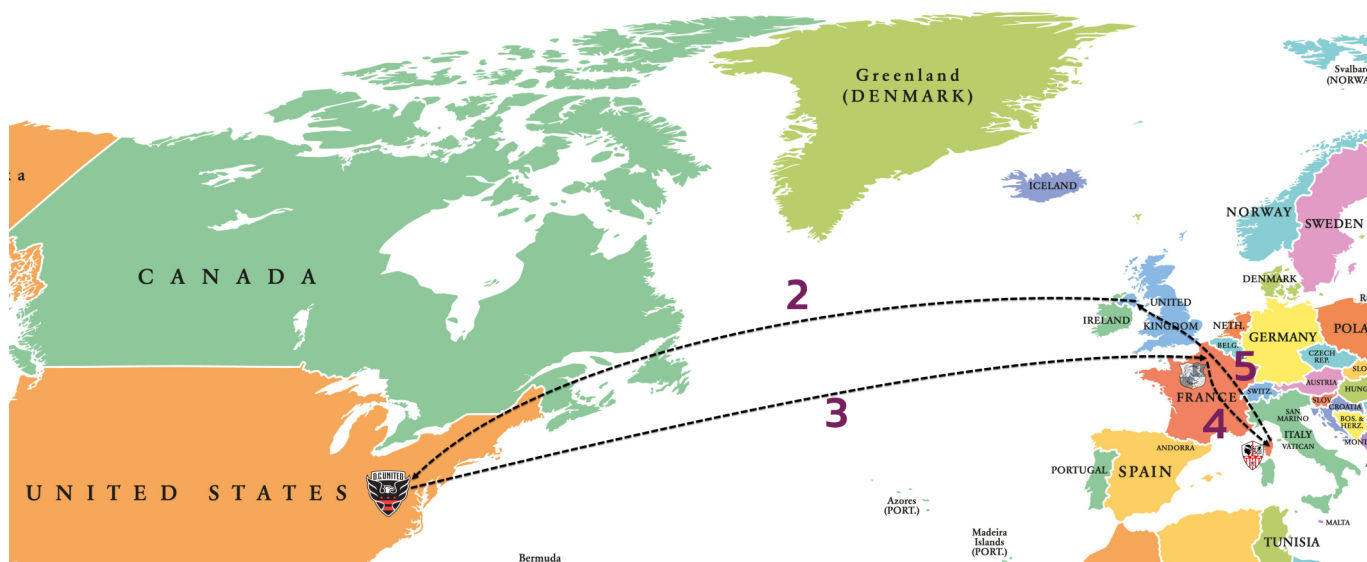
As I left Glentoran, Stephen Coyle was in blistering form at club level and was the subject of interest from a number of English Championship clubs as well as a few MLS sides. When Carnlough-born Brendan Rodgers - yes, THAT Brendan Rodgers - replaced me at The Oval I was excited to see how he would develop Coyle and inevitably set him on his way to a glittering career in a bigger league.

Given Coyle's (then) record of almost a-goal-a-game in the league, it was somewhat surprising to see Rodgers deploy him in the AMR position of a 4-2-3-1 formation. As a 'Right Only' footed player, I found it strange that he would be played as an inside forward who would naturally cut inside to his left foot. Nevertheless, Stephen Coyle maintained a modestly impressive tally of goals as he scored 95 goals in 152 league games during Brendan Rodgers five-season reign.

Coyle was not favoured as much by Rodgers' replacement, not really finding his place in the new 4-1-4-1 DM line up. After making just 7 appearances in the 2030/31 league season

would finally spread his wings and fly. 27-year-old Stephen Coyle eventually landed in MLS as a £600k signing for DC United.

Four years and just 5 goals later, the NI record goalscorer was a free agent signing for French Ligue 2 side Amiens SC. After two seasons in Ligue 2 with Amiens, Coyle helped the club to promotion and played one year with them in Ligue 1 before ending his time in France with a season on loan at Corsican side AC Ajaccio in Ligue 2. Stephen Coyle's final move in his career before retiring from playing was to ruin his Glentoran legacy by signing for their bitter rivals Linfield. What a devastating end to his club career.



International

On the International stage, sadly Stephen Coyle's career just kind of petered out after I left the international job. My replacement was Colin Nixon – an Irish League legend but with no real managerial success to speak of – who only capped Coyle a further seven times before never selecting him again. Stephen Coyle's international career ended on 39 goals in 52 games.

Coyle is one of those players who doesn't stand out attribute-wise but just seemed to excel in a certain role for me, as evidenced by his extraordinary goalscoring exploits under my command.

Choy Yiu Fai - The Greatest Northern Irish striker ever?

Club

Choy's career path was very different. The young forward stayed at Glentoran for a mere seven six months following my departure as he made a January move to Portuguese giants FC Porto for a crazy low price of £195k. Despite managing to bag a goal on his debut, that would be his sole appearance for his new club in that season. Loans moves would follow in the next three successive seasons to Maccabi Tel Aviv, FC Kobenhavn and Burnley with a further 34 goals in 78 appearances in that time – a very respectable count.

In 2029/30 Choy would finally get his chance for his parent club, initially given by André Villas-Boas. Choy found his place as the lone striker in a 4-1-4-1 DM and racked up 31 goals in 66 appearances over the following three seasons. In 2032/33 Choy made a controversial loan switch to Liga NOS rivals Sporting CP which was made permanent a year later for the princely sum of £30.5m! In

his nine seasons with the Lisbon outfit, Choy scored 87 goals in 223 league games.

International

The appointment of Colin Nixon as Northern Ireland boss was certainly a boon for Choy. He seemed to thrive as part of a strike partnership so Nixon's preference of a 4-4-2 was the perfect vehicle for getting the best out of Choy. With Coyle soon out of the picture, Choy had room to step up and shine. From the point that I left NI in January 2029, Choy went from strength to strength on the big stage and stole that international goalscoring record from Coyle. Choy Yiu Fai went on to score a record 66 goals in a Northern Ireland record of 139 appearances before retiring from international duty in 2039 aged 32.



Leagues, Tactics, Training, Analysis... Everything FM

Does a new challenge have to mean a journeyman or even a new save?

In short, no. Over the last few years I've needled myself into a position where I can only really get fully invested in one club per edition of FM. As soon as I begin to 'club-hop' I know my interest in the save is dwindling. That said, to start a new save file doesn't feel like an option to me either - it's a bit like spending years painting a masterpiece only to scrub the canvas clean and start again.

FM20 was very enjoyable for me to find an angle to continue the save but with an entirely new perspective. Part of that also came in reviewing how the players' careers played out without my involvement. In essence, for the last 10 years of the save I ended up playing the game without really playing the game as such. Maybe a step into the direction of VoyeurFM...

Football Manager is such a versatile game that there are innumerable ways to keep your interest in the game. For some it is to overhaul the squad or implement a new transfer policy, a move to an entirely new club maybe in a distant part of the world. For me, in FM20 it was to set myself a goal of eclipsing a real life record with one of my chosen beaus.

One Choy Yiu Fai, there's only one Choy Yiu Fai!



Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training...Everything FM



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We invite articles of serious analysis, tactical discussion, guides, hints and tips or even tongue in cheek humour.

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