

LATTE

QUARTERLY



Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM | Issue Five

Editor's Note

The FM community is on hand to provide you a great many league guides, club selection articles and tactical analysis. In this issue of LQ we've decided to give you a little bit more of the subject matter we call 'Everything FM'.

FMGrasshopper has joined minds with the ever-hilarious TedRedwood to discuss the essential actions we should all follow before we even consider hitting that continue button.

We're hosting another new guest writer in Charlie Tango who discusses what is involved in the role of an Assistant Researcher for the FM database. What does the role involve? What problems do you encounter? And what happens if someone isn't happy with an attribute you've given them?! Charlie Tango has the answers in this issue.

FMGrasshopper marks his brace for LQ5 with his thoughts on 'The Blueprint of a Save' - a bit of food for thought to those who don't like to amble through their FM save aimlessly but rather want to set themselves a clear direction.

While the previous article can provide you with nuggets of inspiration for your save idea, FMSamo talks about his thinking when he hit a lack of inspiration tactically.

Last, but certainly not least, we introduce you to The LQ Save. Our new side project for the FM21 calendar. We've picked a club to manage and we aim to talk you through every step of the way with some help from the great knowledge pool that is the FM Community. Just don't call it a succession save...

As always: sit back, relax and grab yourself a LATTE.

FMAdventure

LQ Issue Five:

Things to do before starting your save

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Things to do before starting your FM21 save

By TedRedwood and FMGrasshopper

A tongue in cheek look at the lengths you can go to before starting your FM21 save. Some serious, some not so. We'll leave it for you to decide...

1. Attribute Colours - Grass

I make no secret to the fact I love colours. I also make no secret about my love for Football Manager. So, the joy is immeasurable on release day where I combine both hobbies and choose my attribute colours.

Sadly, my two favourite colours never fit quite well on the Player Profile screen (Orange and Purple). Instead I opt for a nice nautical turquoise for any high attribute score. The solid, but unremarkable middle of the range attributes are yellow. It's warm and comforting for the dark nights left of 2020. The poor, emerging, attributes are a faded white...their absence of vividness is a reminder that I need to work hard on these players in the training modules. Darkness is reserved to those attributes not worth saving. I have no time to be reminded of what a player can't do, they are as good as attribute-less here.

Slightly adjusting the thresholds is something I do each year, depending on the league I am managing in. In Colombia, I have reduced it slightly from my European thresholds but not too

much; ensuring that I don't trick my eye into thinking that every guy from the barrio is class in FM21.

2. Turn sound off - Ted

Picture the scene – it's moderately sunny, although with scattered, grey, clouds, over the usually sunny town of Southend-on-Sea. A young, handsome man sits down at his kitchen table, after calling in sick, to play the newest version of his favourite game. The game is Football Manager 2018. The coffee is strong, and hot. The sandwich is moist, and full of eggs and brown sauce. The sound of the birds is...being completely overshadowed by a hideous tune blasting out of my laptop. What the hell has happened!?

Fortunately for every Football Manager player out there, Sports Interactive have decided to not repeat their errors, and have left out load-up screens music free since 2019. Who on earth wants to listen to the sounds in Football Manager? Well, after extensive research, I've discovered that not one, not two, but zero people actually play our beloved game with the in-game sounds on.

So, when you first load up the game, what do you do? The first thing I do is jump into the preferences and turn the sound off. I do not wish to hear generic match-day sounds whilst I'm commuting, or ignoring my children, thank you. Thankfully we are yet to be bombarded with a loading screen song for a few editions now, but when that day comes I'll certainly be panic-muting my laptop.

3. Think about countries - Ted

When you go to set up your game in the first instance, you'll be nudged into making a decision on your club/country immediately. Personally I've found this nudge quite unwelcoming, as I find it easier to choose the team from the UI once I've set the game up, and I'd recommend the same for most Football Manager players.

Imagine the scenario - you're a balding, bearded fellow who wears eco-friendly clothes, and you're sitting enjoying your quarterly soya latte after attending a human rights rally. Israel isn't a massively trodden path by most Football Manager players, perhaps you'll manage there. You hover over Beitar Jerusalem, one of the most famous and historically massive clubs in the heart of Israel, however you're overcome with hesitance. You hold off, and start to load your game, safe in the knowledge that you can choose Beitar Jerusalem once the database is loaded. A cursory glance at their Wikipedia page can't hurt, can it? Hold on a minute, what's this? Their fans want to keep their club 'pure' by never signing Muslim players, and have left the stadium when a Muslim has scored for them? Racist

chanting as well? Perhaps this isn't the club for you.

If the real world doesn't affect you or your decisions in any way then that's great, but if you're a little more bothered by what goes on outside of your four walls, perhaps you'd be best served to at least have a quick look online to see if a club you want to virtually align yourself with goes against everything you stand for or not.

4. Do not forget to re-unmask attributes - Ted

As a seasoned Football Manager player I know exactly how to set up every save I'll ever play, it's simple really:

- Countries, leagues, and players relevant to my save choice - check
- 'Do not add key staff' so I can hire my own Assistant Manager/Coaches rather than have newgens allocated - check
- ? 'Disable player attribute masking' - err, let me think...give me a minute. Don't check. Wait. Check.

It's an issue that's caught out many-an-FMer before, and it will again. It looks so simple to understand in this article, but I challenge you to find me one person that doesn't re-read this tick box option at least three times before deciding what to do with it when booting up a new save. When the pressure is on, and you know that you'll have to reload your entire game if you get it wrong, and that's when the nerves kick in. What's that? You should have ticked it? Restarting the whole save will be proof that you can't comprehend simple

words – better to play out the entirety of your Ukrainian Lower League save with player masking enabled then, I guess.

5. Choosing the right start date – Grass

Out of all previous editions, Football Manager 2021 is a game where your start date is key. Manage in Brazil and Uruguay...and you'll likely need to choose the earliest pre-season start date possible (hint: it's Brazil 07 December 2020) in order to ensure that soon-to-be out of contract players haven't left you by the time New Years Day has arrived.

Additionally, some leagues have had a massive restructure, due to a naughty pandemic that has been going about. It's recommended to do some prior reading on your league and seeing when the fixtures start...otherwise you could be smashing Continue for months on end OR walk right into the league campaign with limited pre-season.

Check the dates. Not the fruit.

6. Rebrand (ask Samo for a new logo) – Grass

Taiwanese toy production is estimated to produce 5 billion plastic units per annum [source: none]. This pales into insignificance when comparing the units that Samo's logos ship in the FM Twittersphere. An estimated 1 in 3 FM Creators now own an FM Samo created logo, and his market share extends further into Scotland where even his dog Thomas has a Samo logo on his own canine Instagram account.

But, having a logo and a brand makes sense from a content perspective. You're more easily recognisable when searching through the thousand of We Are Live tweets in the #WeAreTheCommunity Twitter hashtag.

What better way to celebrate the launch of a new game by rebranding with Samo's help. Either that, or you can go to Fiverr...



Assistant Researcher Life

By Charlie Tango

FM21 is here and we get a look behind the curtain as Craig Thompson/Charlie Tango gives us the insight on life as an Assistant Researcher for SI.

The life of an assistant researcher for Sports Interactive and by association, Football Manager, can be a frustrating one. Why, you ask? Sit down, get your slippers on and get comfy... because I'm going to tell you.

There are a lot of positives about being an assistant researcher or scout for Football Manager. I'm not even contractually obligated to include that statement. Not least is a free copy of the finished product, supposedly including beta access, and the chance to influence a computer game that is enjoyed the world over. Apart from Brazil, sorry guys. Your name is in the credits, you have the opportunity (I'm told) to test the game and your fingerprints are all over the squad you submit data for.

In truth, there are negatives along with the positives. You may be of the impression that a researcher is a man of the world, man of the streets, with his ear to the ground and an eye on the pitch who sees everything and knows what's what. Often times, it's akin to putting a finger in the wind. Football changes on a weekly basis and is

frequently unseen, especially where the lower leagues are concerned.

Connected to AFC Fylde, I work hard to perfect the data for the club. It's difficult in the National League, North and South especially, there's a lot of player movement as most players are only on one-year contracts and sometimes it's difficult to get a proper read on new players. There are academy players coming through the ranks who have never seen the light day and whose personal details are locked behind a plethora of algorithms.

Choosing the attributes for a player is not an exact science, I don't think it could ever be. It's based on comparison, performance and above all it's the interpretation of one person. That's something of a limitation. You want to compare the players against those in the same league but the data reaches all four corners of the earth. It is difficult, especially as a fan of the club you research. You see your own players every week but you only see certain opponents once or twice a season to compare them to. It's natural to skew in their favour.

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Inherited data regularly survives over different versions of Football Manager, especially mental attributes. They're harder to judge and as such, it's easy to stick with what's already established, even if it's a cop out.

When your technical attributes are in single figures down at non-league level, there's only so much you can do. Certainly nothing tactically complex. I've only ever been challenged once in over four years about an attribute, that was Danny Rowe when he moved to Oldham as I was informed that the finishing rating I'd given him was inappropriate.

Submitting data for Football Manager has never been easier, a new online research database has been introduced to allow submissions to be made as transfers and loan moves happen. Previously it was the case that work would be done to meet deadlines and files were only available on set dates. You'd keep a log of moves or changes to input ready, now the system is much more responsive and live. As always with any sort of system or computerised process, initially there is a period of familiarisation and it can be a struggle but once you get your head around it, it's less of a chore.

As with any popular computer game based on real-life data, as soon as the data is submitted, it's out of date. This is especially a concern when the actual game is released, which it will have been by the time you read this column. Something is always the cause of frustration, be it a late player signing, a loan that doesn't make it into the game or an attribute which bears no

resemblance to reality. There is a waiting period until the next update is released and by then, plenty will have changed.

Loans are especially an issue where short-term moves are concerned. Only long-term loans make it into Football Manager (those that go from one transfer window to another) and as such if your club brings in a player only for a couple of months even in October, they won't be contained in the data and to my eye that's a shame. When you fire up FM for the first time, you want to play the game and select a team based on the current players you'd see on a Saturday but it's not always the way.

Fylde failed to live up to expectations in 2019/20 to say the least, a side that should have been challenging for automatic promotion after two years of consecutive Play-Off appearances including taking on Salford City at Wembley in a Play-Off Final, ended up cruelly relegated by points-per-game when the season was curtailed due to the ongoing global pandemic. Relegation remains difficult to explain, the team just never got out of the blocks. In Football Manager, they were predicted to finish second in the National League. In reality, they finished 23rd. Perhaps on this occasion Football Manager was the more realistic.

Good luck in your own Football Manager saves, especially those in the lower leagues. If you are interested in joining the assistant researcher ranks, head over the SI forums, where there's a topic all about which clubs require a watching eye.

The Blueprint of a Save

By FMGrasshopper

For some, finding that special Football Manager save is something to savour...months of research, endless planning and a clear list of priorities laid out for the task ahead. Then there are others conversely, who power up Football Manager before deciding their initial plight...led by the unpredictable destiny of their unique FM Universe. But I guarantee there remains a large number of people where neither planning nor spontaneity works. This is why I'm on #LQ5 to present some potential 'save blueprints' for those in need of inspiration, for them to take these blueprints and apply it to their Football Manager 2021 saves.

Fibra, Fibra, Fibra!

"I want to thank the mothers of these players because they gave birth to them with balls this big" (Diego Simeone, 30 April 2014)

You can base your save around a recruitment model, which I have done on multiple occasions with the concept of 'fibra'. Firstly, I need to define what 'fibra' is and how it translates into Football Manager games. As Jonathan Wilson documents in his 'Inverting The Pyramid' book, Diego Simeone's footballing upbringing at Club Atlético Vélez Sarsfield was the grounding for the tactical instructions we see today at Atlético Madrid. Simeone's Youth Team Manager at the time, Vélez Legend Victorio Spinetto, was obsessed with finding players of a specific kind of 'fibra'. For him, a player's fiber/fibra needed to be one of self-sacrifice...where only players who give absolutely everything on the pitch can ever be

considered 'Great Players'.

After reading about this view, I looked to apply it to Football Manager: **by recruiting and favouring players who possess a strong Mental disposition.** This can either be a preference you factor in when recruiting (as part of a larger set of criteria)...OR the overarching blueprint which governs your transfer dealings.

What makes up 'fibra' is open to interpretation, but I certainly consider it to be the mental attributes of Aggression, Bravery, Determination, Teamwork & Work Rate. Some have followed suit with this approach and have added physical criteria such as Stamina (which will determine the rate at which a player's expendable condition is depleted in match conditions). But my advice would be to not restrict yourself too much, to the point where you miss out on too many players and stop enjoying the game.

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However, providing you think about this before starting the save, I do guarantee you will find enjoyment with this approach. Using search filters in the Scouting and Player Search screens will throw up some interesting players, who traditionally would probably be overlooked due to age or technical competency. But if the fight is what you're after, and the players of fibra complement your tactic, then who are we to judge?

Clubs: You can adopt this approach to any club in any league. But for a historical example, which I did, look no further than 1960s **Estudiantes de La Plata**. Or Diego Simeone's modern interpretation with **Atlético Madrid**.

Cantera Policy

"If I win a couple of trophies at Liverpool, it will mean an awful lot more

to me than if I win 10 at Chelsea, or Inter Milan or Real Madrid. It always means more when you win for your people" (Steven Gerrard, 11 May 2015)

Despite football operating in an ever increasingly global and interconnected world, tribalism in football can still remain...as Steven Gerrard's quote from 5 years ago shows. The temptation to earn and win more is a common reason for a lot of players to leave their geographical home, but for some the sense and desire to play for the place they call home is their *raison d'être*.

You only have to look no further than Athletic from Bilbao to see this in action. A club whose policy is so insular that they are a direct contrast to the modern game, yet they are still able to compete in one of Europe's top leagues; having never been relegated from

LaLiga. To put it simply, all players who represent Athletic must have family ties to one of the 7 Basque regions across France and Spain (known as the Basque Country). Their potential male player pool is estimated to be around one million, meaning that the vast majority of their players are homegrown and educated at the Athletic facilities. These players are born, raised and educated to not only play for Athletic...but also for the Basque people and its identity.

Youth Development is a typical approach for many Football Manager players, but taking on Athletic's Cantera Policy is a further challenge. To follow this blueprint, set out a geographical area and simply stick to it with your recruitment using custom search filters of 'Birthplace' or 'Nationality'. It's akin to what fellow FM Blogger FM Rensie did in FM18, where he based his recruitment around the 120km geographical area of Siófok, Hungary which sits on Lake Balaton. Still to this day, FM Rensie's 'Around The Lake' is one of my favourite blogging series to have followed.

Clubs: For a hardcoded version in Football Manager look to the aforementioned **Athletic** or perhaps **Chivas** in Mexico (who have the slightly easier task of only fielding domestic players).

The Statistical Approach

"You are talking to me about expected goals in the Champions League semi-final they've just lost? What an absolute load of nonsense, I expect things at

Christmas from Santa Claus, but they don't come, right? What I deal in is facts!" (Craig Burley, 04 May 2016)

Association Football has historically lagged behind the American sports such as American Football and Baseball when it comes to how it has used performance data. But there's no doubt that we've seen a shift in attitudes towards the use of more complex data in order to assist decision making in football. Look no further than Liverpool FC where their Data Science Department, led by Ian Graham (a doctorate in theoretical physics), who undertook the numerical rendering of Dortmund's 2014/15 performance data to identify that Jürgen Klopp's 7th placed Bundesliga finish was one of great misfortune. Every pass, shot, tackle and chance was evaluated to determine that Klopp's Dortmund ought to have finished 2nd in the league, and thus Klopp's stock was the lowest it had been in many years. It was therefore time for Liverpool to make their move...and the rest, as they say, is history.

From the outside, one can assume that Liverpool's secretive data team is having a continual positive impact. The side is currently one of the best in world football, having won the 2019/20 English Premier League and the European & World club titles of 2019. But being data driven is not exclusive to the elite clubs, more and more smaller clubs are using data to empower the underdog. Look no further than Matthew Benham's impact as club owner at both FC Midtjylland and Brentford FC.

As a professional Gambler, Benham does not believe in luck...rather: he believes in data driving decisions in order to bring success. The same mindset is applied to his football clubs too, where radical Expected Goals/Points Per Game system would be used...where analysts would look for marginal gains in any 'nook and cranny' either within their club or on the opposition: successful corner kick %, passes in the middle and upper central zones, chances, shot distance etc. This data drives the team talks, the post-match briefings, the team selections and the tactical style.

A topical discussion in Football Manager circles is around whether Expected Goals & Assists should be included in FM, and for the first time ever: **an Expected Goals metric is in Football Manager 2021**. Whilst I have no doubts that this will be expanded upon in future editions, it's a real milestone for the series and a new partnership with Dutch data company SciSports - who, despite not developing the statistic, have offered an advisory role over its introduction. Chief Analytics Officer at SciSports, Jan Van Haaren, has been quoted as saying:

"Sports Interactive developed their expected goals model in-house using data that was produced by the Football Manager match engine. However, the SciSports and Sports Interactive data science and development teams met regularly to discuss the progress and challenges".

So, do you use statistical analysis of previous player data to drive your recruitment, in the way that Liverpool

do? Or will you look to marginal gains, altering your team and opposition instructions to drive your proficiency with set pieces? Will you base your decisions around player retention on individual performances OR team combinations as a whole? Will xG now be part of your decision making? Statistics are a growing area in football, as well as Football Manager, and they are here to stay. It's a fact, Craig.

Clubs: Any club, but recommended further reads on all three previous clubs mentioned above: **Brentford FC, Liverpool FC & FC Midtjylland**.

Affiliates and the commercialisation of football

"The investment in CA Torque enables our organisation to build on existing connectivity in Uruguay and helps to expand the options for identifying and developing local and South American talent" (Ferran Soriano, 05 April 2017)

In a direct contrast to Athletic's Cantera Policy, the Global Game is one that others have fully embraced. Look no further than holding company 'City Football Group' (CFG), which is 78% owned by the Abu Dhabi United Group for Development and Investment group. On inception in 2014, their aim was to own a club in each continent with the 'City' identifier. As of September 2020, City Group have substantial stakes in 10 ten professional male sides across four continents in: Australia (Melbourne City), Belgium (Lommel), China (Sichuan Jiuniu FC), England (Manchester City), France (Troyes), India (Mumbai City FC), Japan

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(Yokohama F. Marinos), Spain (Girona), United States (New York City FC) & Uruguay (Montevideo City Torque).

The benefit of having a stake in so many teams allows CFG to share financial, analytical and personnel resources around the world; with the aim of continued improvement of all teams across the CFG estate. Take for example Jack Harrison, an English born winger who burst onto the scene with 14 Major League Soccer goals for New York City as a 19/20 year old. It was not long before CFG had moved his high potential over to Manchester City, gaining loans to Middlesbrough and Leeds...before being priced around £20m by the club, should another English team want him. In a similar way, if a Manchester City player displays a high potential but is not at the level of Pep Guardiola's initial 25 First Team squad; he will be loaned to another CFG club to contribute to the overall cause. An example is Yangel Herrera, who impressed as Captain at the 2017 u20 World Cup with Venezuela (who finished Runners Up). Herrera has spent two years at New York City (2017-2018) and

recently finished a full season in Europe with Grenada (2019/20). Both CFG sides.

In Football Manager 2021, links to other clubs can be developed via the Club Vision screen. Here, at a Boardroom level, you can request affiliates in all shapes and sizes. A save blueprint could be to build a new interpretation of the CFG model. Be the Parent Club who sends their youngsters across the world for game time; with an eye on what talent an affiliate can offer you in return. Whether that's a first option to sign players from their current squad OR an increase to the chances of acquiring a Newgen from that country in your youth intake.

Increase your resources too, by gaining more affiliates with a global mindset and boost your overall scouting knowledge. There will also be economic and reputation boosts here, as you look to commercialise football even further.

Clubs: Either start out and build your own empire, or perhaps take on an existing conglomerate and go even further with the likes of **RB Leipzig** and **Manchester City**.

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(A lack of) Tactical Inspiration

By FMSamo

I'm going to tell you something. I don't actually watch that much football at all. I can't remember the last time I watched a Champions League match live, and you couldn't pay me to watch the English Premier League.

I support a team in the Scottish Championship (the second tier of the Scottish football pyramid) and that's where all of my football viewing happens. It's chaotic and unpredictable. I love it, I love my club, but we don't exactly play an exciting brand of football. There's a few outliers occasionally, but for the most part, the style of play in the league consists of long balls and lots of running around. There's not much in the way of cleverly built attacks or pressing triggers to keep the opposition at bay.

What does this have to do with Football Manager? It puts me in a tricky situation, that's what. As the years go on and new editions of the game come out, I have less and less inspiration tactically.

I decided on the save I was going to do a good few months ago now, but as I fired it up on release day I sat there staring at the tactics screen for a good while. I had a complete blank about how I wanted to set my team up.

If you don't watch any football in the non-FM world, how do you decide how to setup tactically on the game?

Standout Players

You've had your introductory press conference, now it's time to meet the players and assess who you've got at your disposal. It's highly likely you've got a couple of players who are better than the rest of your squad. It makes sense to try and build a tactic around them, that can give you a great starting point in terms of a formation.

This was the case with me. I'm doing a

Club and Country save, I've got some incredibly talented players eligible to play for my Norwegian national side. How the hell do I get the best out of Haaland? How the hell do I get Ødegaard assisting him as much as possible? How the hell do I get Sander Berge flourishing in the middle of the pitch and how the hell do I aide Kristoffer Ajer in keeping out the opposition?

Those four are my best players. Fittingly, it's one defender, one midfielder, one attacking midfielder and one striker. It's some spine of a team to work with.

How do I want to win?

So I've set my players out in a formation. Now I need to think about how we're going to firstly, score goals, and secondly, win. I'm not looking to create some monster that wins every single match and scores 5+ goals like you seem to find available to download elsewhere. I mean, obviously I'd like to win, but it's great to win the hard way. Nabbing a late winner after you've been knocking on the door for 89 minutes.

Keeping it tight and aiming to hit our opponents on the counter could be one way I approach things. Maybe that 4-2-3-1 I'd initially set out could be more of a 4-4-1-1 aiming to stop the opposition and then get the ball to Ødegaard and Haaland when we do get it. There's the option of a 5-3-2 or alternatives of that like a 5-2-1-2, potentially making room for Alexander Sørloth to come in and partner Haaland up front, with Ødegaard behind them and then behind that, basically making the seven players as impenetrable as possible.

I'd consider a defensive or cautious mentality if I chose this overall approach. It'd keep us tight, even coupling it with being more disciplined. This would see us remaining in that shape

With the quality I have at my disposal, I don't think we should be sitting back. I

think we should be taking the game to the opposition and controlling the play. For me that involves engaging them higher up the pitch to force them into errors. It involves urgently counter-pressing them to win the ball back quickly when we lose it. Finally, it involves giving the players freedom to decide what they want to do when they've got it. I hate overloading the team instructions and telling them to cross it a certain way or to focus play through a certain area on the pitch. I like to go minimal on the in possession instructions and I think that's something I take with me from edition to edition of the game.

Should you go Preset?

Previously I would have said never. Now, I think it can give you a great starting point to work from.

I just said I was looking to potentially control the play, so let's look at Control Possession. In possession it suggests short passing, playing out of the defence, working the ball into the box and playing at a lower tempo. They probably make sense in the grand scheme of things but I just think that would limit us. How many times would a Haaland run in the penalty area be missed because my wide players cut back, took their time and played it backwards or inside to the midfield?

Like I said, I think the presets can give a great starting point and you can shape how you actually want to play by removing a few of the suggested instructions and adding in a few of your own.

Your assistant will give you a couple of pointers too about the tactical style you should pick. Mine clearly agrees with me that we have the players to dominate matches, which I guess is good. If only our assistant's advice was always that good.

Reading

I'm not that interested in reading high brow pieces about the evolution of tactics but I do like to pick up on little tidbits from various places. Spain's La Furia approach from back in the 80s got me thinking about how I could interpret that on the game, which led to how I approached FM20 with the plucky LaLiga side, Eibar. FMGrasshopper constantly reminds us of Fibra (yet again here in LQ5) which you'll all know by now follows along similar lines.

Don't mention it, don't mention it, don't mention it...

The European Game book is an annual read for me now and I've spoken at length on numerous occasions about how I really think it can help others looking for FM inspiration. It's not a highly tactical read, but like I said, snippets from it could just spark an idea in your head about how you fancy setting a team up on the game.

I haven't got stuck into Wings of Change by Karan Tejwani yet but I'm sure when I do it'll have me wanting to either manage Red Bull clubs again on a future edition of the game, or get a high intensity pressing system going at whatever club I'm managing.

I'm always on the lookout for more inspiration so I'd love to hear about where you get yours from if it's not from watching football. Just please don't make me watch Barcelona v Bayern Munich for the umpteenth time.



The LQ Save



With the release of a new edition of Football Manager comes the chance to introduce something new to the Latte Quarterly offerings. We bring you The LQ Save: an in-depth playthrough of the 2020/21 season with a top European club. After much consideration and research we have decided to take over the reins of Ligue 1 side OGC Nice.

After securing a 5th place finish in the 2019/20 season, Nice are back in European competition with their participation in the UEFA Europa League. Les Aiglons (The Eagles) continue to improve under the stewardship of Patrick Vieira and the future looks bright after Ineos CEO Sir Jim Ratcliffe completed their acquisition of the club in July 2019.

There's plenty of young domestic talent to be excited about with Stanley Nsoki, Myziane Maolida and Khépren Thuram being joined by new signing Amine Gouiri. To add to that Nice also boast some real quality players from recent editions of FM in Kasper Dolberg and Rony Lopes, the latter on season loan from Sevilla. In terms of experience amongst the squad, we will be able to look to the likes of Morgan Schneiderlin and a former Champions League winner in defender Dante.

Taking some inspiration from the

wonderful Real Time FM, LQ will bring you an almost real time update of the saves progress by playing month-to-month in our efforts to maintain Nice's resurgence over the current season. We will not be alone in this journey as we seek to bring you insights from various other names in the FM Community. We'll draw upon the strength and knowledge of others at various points to review the save's progress and improve our management method. We'll be looking at various areas such as tactical reviews, scouting, transfers, training and more!

If you believe you can lend your expertise to guide us in any particular subject then feel free to get in touch via the usual channels and write for us in our Latte Monthly save.

We look forward to bringing you the first installment in early December 2020 as we look at our pre-season preparations for the 2020/21 season.

Allez Les Aiglons!

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