

Season 2008 / 9 - Podcast 6

The Champions League - Spanish and English teams

By Damon Brewster and Damian Fitzpatrick (20th September, 2008)

Pre-Listening

A. Background information

- The Champions League group stages started in September. There are 32 teams competing in eight groups.
- Both Spain and England have four teams in the competition.

B. Vocabulary

Check the meaning of these words and phrases before you start listening. Match them with the meaning on the right.

Word	Meaning
_____ have the necessary tools	a. to reduce
_____ to ease	b. make it to the final
_____ comfortable	c. ability to do the job
_____ cost (someone) their job	d. perform well regularly
_____ go all the way	e. win easily
_____ be suspect	f. be doubtful, don't inspire confidence
_____ consistent	g. easy
_____ have an eye on	h. result in being fired
_____ win at a canter	i. regret something
_____ kick yourself	j. expect something to happen easily
_____ take for granted	k. be watching, be thinking about

A. Main ideas - note taking

Listen to the report and make notes in the table below.

	1st game	Team’s strong point	Weak points	Damian’s prediction
Barcelona				They should qualify from the group
Real Madrid	comfortable win against Bate 2-0			
Atletico Madrid		wonderful going forward Simao and Argentinian star Agüero		
Villarreal			he didn’t mention any weak points	

B. Comprehension

Which team do you think Damian believes is the strongest? The weakest?

- 1, Best chance of winning -
2. Next -
3. Third -
4. Probably will not be successful -

C. Listening and understanding through context

Listen to the second report o the English teams. Complete the sentences and explain what the missing word means.

1. "While Spanish teams may be thought of as favourites at the start of the Champions League English teams have _____ the last four with 9 out of the 16 semi-finalists being English teams."
2. "They will be glad of the away victory but will have an eye on Atletico Madrid who _____ with a 3-0 victory away at Dutch champions PSV."
3. "Chelsea, also facing French opposition, continued their _____ league form with a 4-0 home victory over Bordeaux."
4. "This group looks a breeze for the Blues, especially given that Roma, the big name on paper, were _____ by minnows Cluj 2-1 at home."
5. "Manchester United found it tough going and should have _____ by the 60 minute after a beautiful move by the Spanish side..."
6. "They should make it, but don't be surprised to see Wenger's team _____ in the group stages."

B. Comprehension

Which team is Damon most confident will progress from the group?

Season 2008 / 9 - Podcast 6 - Answers

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B. Vocabulary

Check the meaning of these words and phrases before you start listening. Match them with the meaning on the right.

Word	Meaning
<u>c</u> have the necessary tools	a. to reduce
<u>a</u> to ease	b. make it to the final
<u>g</u> comfortable	c. ability to do the job
<u>h</u> cost (someone) their job	d. perform well regularly
<u>b</u> go all the way	e. win easily
<u>f</u> be suspect	f. be doubtful, don't inspire confidence
<u>d</u> consistent	g. easy
<u>k</u> have an eye on	h. result in being fired
<u>e</u> win at a canter	i. regret something
<u>i</u> kick yourself	j. expect something to happen easily
<u>j</u> take for granted	k. be watching, be thinking about

A. Main ideas - note taking

Listen to the report and make notes in the table below.

	1st game	Team’s strong point	Weak points	Damian’s prediction
Barcelona	3-1 victory over Sporting, who are a weak team	boasts a lot of stars like Eto’o, Messi, Iniesta	Coach lacks experience poor start to La Liga season	They should qualify from the group
Real Madrid	comfortable win against Bate 2-0	Dutch players like Ruud van Nistelrooy, van der Vaart etc	players may get injuries	could go all the way, could win
Atletico Madrid	great win against PSV 3-0 away	wonderful going forward Simao and Argentinian star Agüero	inconsistent defence is weak	may qualify from their group
Villarreal	0-0 at Old Trafford against Manchester United	good mixture of Argentinian and local players good passing	he didn’t mention any weak points	dark horses

B. Comprehension

Which team do you think Damian believes is the strongest? The weakest?

- 1, Best chance of winning - **Real Madrid**
2. Next - **Barcelona**
3. Third - **Villarreal**
4. Probably will not be successful - **Atletico Madrid**

C. Listening and understanding through context

Listen to the second report of the English teams. Complete the sentences and explain what the missing word means.

1. "While Spanish teams may be thought of as favourites at the start of the Champions League English teams have **dominated** the last four with 9 out of the 16 semi-finalists being English teams."

controlled, been most successful

2. "They will be glad of the away victory but will have an eye on Atletico Madrid who **blasted out of the blocks** with a 3-0 victory away at Dutch champions PSV."

started strongly, made a great start

3. "Chelsea, also facing French opposition, continued their **impressive** league form with a 4-0 home victory over Bordeaux."

good, strong, spectacular

4. "This group looks a breeze for the Blues, especially given that Roma, the big name on paper, were **upset** by minnows Cluj 2-1 at home."

surprisingly beaten

5. "Manchester United found it tough going and should have **been behind** by the 60 minute after a beautiful move by the Spanish side..."

conceded a goal, Villarreal should have scored, been a goal down

6. "They should make it, but don't be surprised to see Wenger's team **crash out** in the group stages."

fail, lose and go out of the competition, surprisingly lose

B. Comprehension

Which team is Damon most confident will progress from the group?

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Season 2008 / 9 - Podcast 6 - Transcripts

The Champions League - Spanish and English teams

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Damian - The Spanish Teams

Spanish teams usually feature among the favourites at the start of every Champions League campaign, even though they've only provided one winner in the past six years: Barcelona in 2006. And the Catalan side will be hoping for a repeat performance this year. Though few in Spain think they have the necessary tools to do so. This is surprising when you think their team boasts such Xabi, Iniesta, Eto'o and Messi. Yet there are doubts about their coach and former star, 'Pep' Guardiola, due to his lack of experience. A 3-1 victory over a weak Portuguese side Sporting eased some of the pressure after a poor start to La Liga. And they should qualify from a group that also includes Shaktar and Swiss team Basle.

Real Madrid also started with a comfortable home victory 2-0 against Belarus side Bate, but they know there are tougher tests ahead in the form of Italian giants Juventus and UEFA Cup holders Zenit St. Petersburg. Madrid failed to make the knock out round last season, and another failure to do so could cost their manager, Bernd Schuster, his job. He relies on a strong Dutch presence in his team, with Robben, Sneijder, van der Vaart, and Ruud van Nistelrooy. Though injuries are never too far away from those players. If they get through the group they may well go all the way.

One team that won't go all the way but will have lots of fun is Atlético Madrid, back in the Champions league after an eleven year absence. They are wonderful going forward, with the likes of Diego Forlán, Luis Garcia, Portuguese winger Simão, and the Argentinian star 'Kun' Agüero, but defensively they are suspect. And they are frustratingly inconsistent. They started this season's campaign with a tremendous 3-0 away victory against Dutch side PSV, but regular watchers of 'Atléti' know that they could well lose the home leg by the same score. Group qualification at best.

Villarreal deservedly finished second in last year's La Liga race and they've started off this season's Champions League by battling for a nil nil draw at Old Trafford against Manchester United. Cilean coach Pellegrino has a good mixture of South American and local players and their short passing game will frustrate many teams this season. They will surely qualify from a group that includes Aalborg from Denmark and Celtic from Scotland. Villarreal could well be the dark horses in this year's competition.

Damon - The English sides

While Spanish teams may be thought of as favourites at the start of the Champions League English teams have dominated the last four with 9 out of the 16 semi-finalists being English teams. The same faces are here again at the start of the 2008/09 campaign, 2005 winners Liverpool, losing finalists from 2006 and 2008 Arsenal and Chelsea, and the current champions Manchester United.

Both Liverpool and Chelsea, the English teams with perhaps the most consistent recent record in the Champions league, both got off to good starts. Liverpool played away to Olympic Marseille, a team they are familiar with from last year. They didn't match their 4-0 destruction of the French team this year, but neither did they lose - painful memories of losing to Marseille at Anfield remain on Merseyside. Thanks to their inspirational star Gerrard, who scored two goals, they overcame a skillful and stubborn Marseille 2-1. They will be glad of the away victory but will have an eye on Atletico Madrid who blasted out of the blocks with a 3-0 victory away at Dutch champions PSV. This group is not the easiest but Liverpool should progress.

Chelsea, also facing French opposition, continued their impressive league form with a 4-0 home victory over Bordeaux. While the players must have been happy with the solid win, their Italian coach, Scolari was less than impressed criticising his side for giving away the ball too much - perhaps the Chelsea players felt sorry for their opponents and wanted to give them a chance. This group looks a breeze for the Blues, especially given that Roma, the big name on paper, were upset by minnows Cluj 2-1 at home. Expect Chelsea to win this group at a canter.

The other two English clubs didn't have such an easy time, and this perhaps reflects their erratic European form of recent years. Remember it was only two years ago that Manchester United failed to get out of their group. And the team from the North West of England were given a stern test at home by Villarreal. Both sides didn't field their strongest sides from the start and Manchester United found it tough going and should have been behind by the 60 minute after a beautiful move by the Spanish side ended in a back heel hitting the post - it would have been goal of the tournament and the Yellow Submarines may be kicking themselves they didn't go all out to beat a dour United side. Celtic and Aalborg also drew in their group leaving all four teams on 1 point each. But again this is one of the easier groups and Manchester United will make it to the knock out round.

Arsenal on the other hand may be worried after drawing with Dynamo Kiev away. They were lucky not to lose and with Fenerbahçe and Porto in the group nothing can be taken for granted. They should make it, but don't be surprised to see Wenger's team crash out in the group stages.