

Podcast 36 / 2008-9 Transcript

The FA Cup Semi-Finals

(April 20 2009)

Background information

The FA Cup is the oldest football tournament in the world. In the early rounds amateur and non-league sides are allowed to enter. People often talk about ‘the romance’ of the FA Cup: small teams playing bigger, more famous sides. But usually, by the quarter and semi final stages only the big team remain.

A. Listening - Vocabulary and understanding

Listen to the first half of the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Then, write the meaning of the word or phrase. (Each line = 1 word)

This weekend the FA Cup semi-finals dominate the footballing scene in England, but a look at the four (1) _____ seems to suggest that the (2) _____ has gone out of this competition. The four teams in the semis are all in the top six in the Premier League: Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal and Everton. And in the last 10 years, only one team from outside the 'Big Four' have won the trophy and that was last year when Portsmouth (3) _____ Championship side Cardiff. While we shouldn't belittle the achievement of Portsmouth in winning, and Cardiff in reaching, the finals in 2008, it did seem as though the teams (4) _____ for the Champions League or the Premier League title didn't care too much about the FA Cup. This year is very different. All four teams have reason to take these semis very seriously indeed.

Let's start with Everton. The team from Merseyside have had to overcome some (5) _____ draws to get here - beating Liverpool, Aston Villa and Middlesboro in the last three rounds. They are still in the hunt for a Champions League spot, but that seems a bit unrealistic with Arsenal (6) _____ at the moment. Winning the FA Cup could be just what they need for all the (7) _____ they have made under their manager David Moyes. They face Manchester United and there is (7) _____ between the two sets of fans either, with the rivalry between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 7 |
| 2 | 5 | |
| 3 | 6 | |

B. Listening for Comprehension

Listen to the second half of the report. Answer the comprehension questions

1. What cups have Manchester United already won this season?
2. What have they been recently? How have they been playing?
3. Are Manchester United playing away or at home against Everton?
4. In the Premier League, how many points behind the leaders are Chelsea?
5. What are Chelsea desperate to do?
6. Why is there less pressure on Arsenal than Chelsea?
7. How many times have Arsenal won the FA Cup?
8. What will the FA Cup semis and final be?

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B. Listening - Vocabulary and understanding

Listen to the first half of the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Then, write the meaning of the word or phrase. (Each line = 1 word)

This weekend the FA Cup semi-finals dominate the footballing scene in England, but a look at the four (1) **contenders** seems to suggest that the (2) **romance** has gone out of this competition. The four teams in the semis are all in the top six in the Premier League: Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal and Everton. And in the last 10 years, only one team from outside the 'Big Four' have won the trophy and that was last year when Portsmouth (3) **overcame** Championship side Cardiff. While we shouldn't belittle the achievement of Portsmouth in winning, and Cardiff in reaching the finals in 2008, it did seem as though the teams (4) **contending** for the Champions League or the Premier League title didn't care too much about the FA Cup. This year is very different. All four teams have reason to take these semis very seriously indeed.

Let's start with Everton. The team from Merseyside have had to overcome some (5) **tough** draws to get here - beating Liverpool, Aston Villa and Middlesboro in the last three rounds. They are still in the hunt for a Champions League spot, but that seems a bit unrealistic with Arsenal (6) **flying** at the moment. Winning the FA Cup could be just what they need for all the (7) _____ they have made under their manager David Moyes. They face Manchester United and there is (7) **no love lost** between the two sets of fans either, with the rivalry between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester.

1 teams in a competition

2 excitement, interest

3 beat, defeated

4 playing for, trying to win

5 difficult, hard

6 playing well

7 they don't like each other

B. Listening for Comprehension

Listen to the second half of the report. Answer the comprehension questions

1. What cups have Manchester United already won this season?

The Carling Cup and the Club World Cup

2. What have they been recently? How have they been playing?

They have been unconvincing, not playing well

3. Are Manchester United playing away or at home against Everton?

They are playing at home

4. In the Premier League, how many points behind the leaders are Chelsea?

They are four points behind Manchester United

5. What are Chelsea desperate to do?

They are desperate to have something (trophy) to show their fans

6. Why is there less pressure on Arsenal than Chelsea?

They are realistically out of the title race, they can concentrate on the cups

7. How many times have Arsenal won the FA Cup?

10 - If they win this year it will equal 11 and Manchester United's record

8. What will the FA Cup semis and final be?

Crackers, exciting

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This weekend the FA Cup semi-finals dominate the footballing scene in England, but a look at the four contenders seems to suggest that the romance has gone out of this competition. The four teams in the semis are all in the top six in the Premier League: Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal and Everton. And in the last 10 years, only one team from outside the 'Big Four' have won the trophy and that was last year when Portsmouth overcame Championship side Cardiff. While we shouldn't belittle the achievement of Portsmouth in winning, and Cardiff in reaching, the finals in 2008, it did seem as though the teams contending for the Champions League or the Premier League title didn't care too much about the FA Cup. This year is very different. All four teams have reason to take these semis very seriously indeed.

Let's start with Everton. The team from Merseyside have had to overcome some tough draws to get here - beating Liverpool, Aston Villa and Middlesboro in the last three rounds. They are still in the hunt for a Champions League spot, but that seems a bit unrealistic with Arsenal flying at the moment. Winning the FA Cup could be just what they need for all the progress they have made under their manager David Moyes. They face Manchester United and there is no love lost between the two sets of fans either, with the rivalry between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester.

Manchester United of course are still chasing the quintuple. They have the Carling Cup and the Club World Cup already in the trophy cabinet and they are top of the league and through to the semi finals of the Champions League. It would be quite extraordinary if they could win all five. Also, they have been a little unconvincing recently and a loss in the semis might have a knock on effect for their push for the Premier League title. Despite the fixture pile up, they are in it to win it and have home advantage against Everton.

Chelsea are also through to the Champions League final and are not far off the top of the Premier League, four points. Could they trump United with a treble? They won nothing last year and will be desperate to have something to show their fans at the end of the season. They are away at Arsenal and if they can go all the way they will have a quintuple of their own - five FA Cup wins.

Arsenal are in a similar situation to Chelsea - they are in the Champions League semis - but there is less pressure on them as realistically the Premier League title is beyond them. They would go equal top of all time FA Cup winners with Man United if they win the semis and then lift the trophy in May on 11 times.

The FA Cup semis and final will definitely be crackers!