



**THE  
SCOUTING  
NETWORK**

**NEWSLETTER  
MAY 2008**

**THE SCOUTING NETWORK**

Worldwide Football Scouting & Consultancy Services

[www.thescoutingnetwork.co.uk](http://www.thescoutingnetwork.co.uk)

## HOW READY ARE YOU TO MAKE A MOVE IN MAY?

If you've ever been house hunting you'll know a golden rule. It doesn't matter how slack the market might be, when good homes go up for sale they get snapped up straight away. The same is undeniably true of the summer transfer market.

This year there will be hundreds of footballers given the bad news that they are being released by their clubs; hundreds more may have turned down new terms and let their contracts run down; and even more who are released before the end of their current deal. But any manager who thinks he can sit back and take his pick of thousands of players just before pre-season kicks off will be sadly mistaken. Just like with good houses, the best footballers are signed up soon.

It's something that Bradford's Stuart McCall admits he learned to his cost a year ago when he took charge at Valley Parade as late as July. He admits: "I came in full of ambitions but by then the better players were gone, just as a for instance Walsall had got promoted and Peterborough had immediately signed their captain and top scorer.

This year from March onwards we have been tracking players and with the help of The Scouting Network been able to find out who might or might not be out of contract and we will be in a much better position to move quickly. Even then it won't be easy because teams involved in the play-offs won't make decisions on players until they know which division they will be in, and the players themselves won't know what they want to do until that is settled. But while we were disappointed not to finish in a play-off place the flip side is we do know what to expect, and we can get in a position to move quickly to make the right signings to strengthen our squad."

Ever since the ITV Digital collapse sent a cold wind of harsh financial reality through the lower echelons of the game, the movement of players during the summer has grown greater than ever. Players have shorter contracts, squads are smaller and the transfer window has also squeezed activity into a smaller time frame.

For the players it can mean a worrying summer, waiting to know whether they will find a new club. With smaller squads they will always have the fear that if they don't find a club quickly there will be less vacancies, that means players themselves are more keen to get fixed up quickly rather than wait to try to take their pick of several offers.

Meanwhile managers will know the two or three key positions they need to strengthen, and in an increasingly competitive arena it's reassuring to go away during the traditional holiday month of June knowing that their most important signings are in the bag.

To help the process The Scouting Network will again be producing their own list of players who are either released or out of contract, which will be available at the beginning of May.

TSN Managing Director Derek Bragg says: "We feel this is a valuable service and part of the one-stop shop we provide to our client clubs. More importantly it will then be backed up by a constant effort to keep the lists updated throughout the summer. Our team in the support centre will monitor all the movements, not only to add new players who have become free agents, but also to record those who are fixed up with a new club and no longer available. There are few things more frustrating for a manager than spending three days tracking down a player or his agent and then learning he's already joined somebody else.

"All the changes will automatically be registered on the database that's available for client clubs, but will also be published securely on the TSN website. We did that last year as a service and found that many clubs who made use of it were so impressed that they subsequently signed with us to take advantage of all our other services. The site is not available to the general public, but clubs who want to use it can contact us for log-in codes to our secure guest area.

"Traditionally clubs tended to wait until early June when the PFA provided their list to clubs of players who had been released, but there are many managers now at our client clubs who have realised that in what is an increasingly competitive arena, that is no longer enough. We've found that many of our client clubs are being far more pro-active, wanting to move as soon as the season finishes to firm up their plans, where we help them to get ahead of the official list by providing our own, which is the product of 12 months of careful research and analysis to make sure it is as accurate as possible."



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**ONLINE RELEASED AND AVAILABILITY LISTS – MAY 2008**



Following the success of last years rolling online list of released and available lists, TSN will again offer both client and non-client clubs access to this information on Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's at 1500 via our website [www.thescoutingnetwork.co.uk](http://www.thescoutingnetwork.co.uk)

For more information on how you can access this unique list and receive your login details, call 01527 585870 between 0800 and 1700 (Monday-Friday)



**UEFA UNDER-17 AND TOULON TOURNAMENT REPORTS**

As part of our ongoing support to client clubs, TSN will again send scouts out to the top tournaments around the world, with this month providing independent scouting assessments on players from the UEFA Under-17 tournament in Turkey, the prestigious Toulon Under-20 international tournament, plus we will also have someone covering the highly regarded Under-19 Monthey tournament in Switzerland, which include such teams as Besiktas, Falmengo (Brazil), Eintracht Frankfurt, FC Sion, Sevilla, Sporting Lisbon and Tottenham Hotspur.

To order your end of tournament reviews, please send an e-mail to: [supportcentre@thescoutingnetwork.co.uk](mailto:supportcentre@thescoutingnetwork.co.uk)



**TSN TO COVER LFE EXIT TRIALS 13/14/15 MAY**

As part of our partnership with the League Football Education (LFE), TSN will send scouts to the exit trials at Coventry City, Brentford and Sheffield United, providing individual assessments on each player who attends, with the subsequent compiled report released to all clubs throughout the football pyramid.



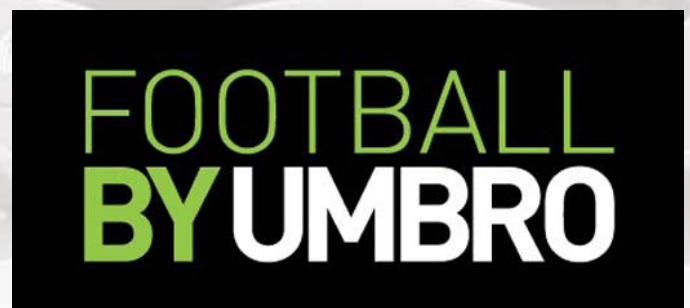
**UMBRO INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CUP**

Republic of Ireland champions Galway have signed up to take on holders Glasgow City and 46 other teams in this summer's Umbro International Women's Cup at the end of July.

With sides from Denmark and Wales in the elite section of the competition – in it's 16th season – the tournament will again have an international feel, especially with several clubs from America entered into the Senior and Recreational sections. Entries are already well ahead on this time last year, but a few places are still left to join 128 teams and 2,500 players for the tournament which is played across eight superb pitches at Manchester Armitage Sports Centre. Details are on [www.womenssoccer-tournaments.com](http://www.womenssoccer-tournaments.com)

The International Women's Cup is one of 11 UMBRO World Tournaments, a family of groundbreaking competitions around Europe – plus one in Canada – brought together through Umbro's position as the premier supporter of grassroots soccer. Each tournament delivers the very best in organisation, facilities and world class service to give unique experience and education to young players. Each World Tournament can also help arrange essential travel and accommodation to provide a professional approach to the visit.

More information about the range of exciting options available can be found on [www.umbro.com/tournaments](http://www.umbro.com/tournaments), or e-mail [worldtournaments@umbro.co.uk](mailto:worldtournaments@umbro.co.uk)



## CAN ROONEY DO BETTER?

Wayne Rooney might have been surprised to learn that Fabio Capello thinks he does not convert enough chances. And it also seemed a harsh verdict on a player who has scored 14 goals in 42 appearances for England.

The statistics, however, tend to back up the verdict of the Italian tactical maestro. Rooney, even allowing for the fact that he tends to try his luck with shots from all angles, is some way down Opta's chart of converting attempts into goals. Portsmouth's Jermaine Defoe is by far the most deadly.

Rank	Player	Club	Goals Prem 07/08	Goals to Shots %
1	Defoe	Tottenham & Portsmouth	12	27.9%
2	D Bent	Tottenham	8	20.7%
3	Owen	Newcastle	6	20%
4	Johnson	Everton	8	18.8%
5	Agbonlahor	Aston Villa	9	16.1%
6	Walcott	Arsenal	2	14.3%
<b>7</b>	<b>Rooney</b>	<b>Manchester United</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13.6%</b>
8	Crouch	Liverpool	3	10.3%
9	Heskey	Wigan	3	9.4%

Rooney remains the player that Capello, who has often used just one front striker in his teams, is most likely to build his England side around. He started him in both his first two matches and is likely to do the same in a friendly against the USA at the end of this month. And Rooney's England record justifies that. His goal to shots ratio is comparably even for Manchester United (13.6%) and England (14.1%). That's above the league average of 12.2%.

Man Utd 2007/08	Wayne Rooney	England Career
24	Appearances	42
1941	Minutes on Pitch	2958
	Goal Attempts	
11	Goals	14
<b>176</b>	<b>Mins per goal</b>	<b>211</b>
44	Shots On Target	55
37	Shots Off Target	44
<b>13.6</b>	<b>Chance Conversion %</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
	Passing	
9	Goal Assists	5

\*Opta, a partner of The Scouting Network, provide detailed statistics on all aspects of football that can help highlight tactical trends or player potential. For more information on Opta contact Mark MacCombie via e-mail on mm@optasportsdata.com or by phone on 0207 902 0612



# EVERY MONTH THE SCOUTING NETWORK NEWSLETTER WILL FOCUS ON ONE OF OUR CLIENT CLUBS

## This month – Peterborough United



Darren Ferguson is never one who appears stressed, but he's sat looking more relaxed than ever right now. Peterborough have crossed the line to end his first year as a manager with a promotion on his CV, and the young man is showing he can handle

the task of carrying the most famous name in modern management. He's already working out what will come next.

"We've got a long term plan, part one of it is out of the way and now we can kick on," he says. "It's important we start next season well and keep the momentum going and have a right good go at it. I don't think there's a great deal of difference between League Two and League One – the facts are there that teams who go up from the bottom division have generally done quite well. You only have to look at how Walsall nearly got in the play-offs this season, so we do need to add a little bit more quality in some areas but I won't be making wholesale changes."

Ferguson exudes the confidence of a man on a mission, and that's exactly how he sees the future of the club. Plenty laughed at owner Darragh MacAnthony when he bought out Barry Fry and talked about taking the club to the Premier League, to be fair Fry himself has admitted he was one of them, once he'd got the money in place, but from the moment Ferguson listened to the dreams of a 32-year-old property millionaire from Dublin he was deadly serious.

"How much did I believe his vision?" he throws back the question. "A lot, it was very attractive when I spoke to him, he's a driven man, you can see that from his own personal success and that was important to me to hear that. I'm an ambitious man myself and there's nothing wrong with having ambition, nothing wrong with having dreams and if you are not going to aim for the very top then there's no point in it at all, is there?"

"People will say I've got lucky in my first job in that the owner has a bit of money and has backed me all the way and never interfered, but at the end of the day you still have to do your job and mould the team and how you want them to play. You still have to manage the players, and we have done that well this season."

Ferguson's biggest pride comes not just from promotion, but from doing it with some style. He's found young players and moulded them.

## CONTACT US

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"It's good to see players develop," he says. "I have a lot of young players and they will get better. When you work on certain things and have plans for them and they do come to fruition then it's very rewarding. I think it's helped that I know the level, I was at Wrexham for seven years and I think five of them were at this level, my coach Kevin Russell worked at this level, we have been promoted before - him as a coach and me as a player, so I think it has made a difference. We know the level we are at, we know the players, we know what is required and the pleasing thing is we have done it playing football."



"In that respect we've been brave, I think you have got to stick to your beliefs and how you want to play, as a player I was never one to just boot it and you carry that on as a manager and make sure the players understand it as quickly as possible. I think there's not a lot in ability terms between players in League Two and the lower parts of the Championship, it's mostly between the ears and making them believe they are good enough. We tried to get them as relaxed as possible and in the end they ended up really enjoying it, especially on the days we got it right, there's nothing else they can do but enjoy it because there's some fantastic football played."

So what's been the hardest thing in a first management job? "I couldn't say anything has been torturous, at times with a big squad you have to make sure you look after the ones that are not playing and probably the hardest thing is trying to get rid of players that you don't actually want, but mostly it's been an absolute pleasure. I had a vision at the start of the season to get promoted and to do it playing football, we've done that and at times I've been stood on the side and really enjoyed it. I can think of Lincoln at home, when there was a lot of pressure on us, where we won 4-0 and it could have been ten. We just relaxed and played, then you see that you know you've got something."

There's little doubt that the young Ferguson has got something and next season may well prove he's got some more.