

Podcast Worksheet 13

## The League Cup

By Damian Fitzpatrick (January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

### Pre-Listening

#### 1. General

1. Damian will talk about the English League Cup. What is its other name?  
a. The Champions Cup b. The FA Cup c. The Carling Cup
2. Who won the league Cup last year?  
a. Tottenham b. Liverpool c. Manchester United
3. This year, which team was hammered by Arsenal in the quarter finals of the League Cup?  
a. Tottenham b. Liverpool c. Manchester United

### Listening

1. An email wished Spurs good luck in what cup?
2. By what percentage (%) are ticket sales – attendance – to the League Cup games down?
3. What does Arsene Wenger use the League Cup for?
4. What is the Cup named after?
5. Where is the 'home' of the League Cup final? Where is it traditionally played?
6. Which cup competition does the winner of the League Cup play in the following year?
7. When did the Cup start?
8. When was the 'heyday' – when it was the most popular – of the League Cup?
9. Which of these teams has NOT mention: Tranmere, Birmingham, Chester, Oxford.
10. Which city are the three remaining teams in the League Cup from?

### Key Phrase

“**The Mickey Mouse Cup**” – To call something a ‘Mickey mouse (noun)...’ means it is not serious, it’s a joke.

Answers

Pre-Listening

General 1

1

1 c 2 c 3 b

Listening

1. the Mickey Mouse Cup.
2. 25%
3. to give experience to younger players
4. its sponsor
5. Wembley
6. the UEFA Cup
7. 1960
8. the 70s and 80s
9. Chester
10. London

## Transcript

### The League Cup

Earlier this week the languagecaster site received an email wishing Spurs good luck in their semi-final game against Arsenal in the Mickey Mouse Cup. No, Disney has not started sponsoring a football trophy nor was the mail unwanted spam, it is just a reflection of how football fans feel about England's third trophy, the League Cup. And it's just not the fans whose interest is limited – attendances are 25% down compared to the FA Cup, for example – but it's also the managers. Arsene Wenger at Arsenal uses the competition to give experience to his younger players, while other managers regularly rest their better players for more serious battles like the Premier League or European competitions.

Now, the competition is generally named after the sponsor so since 2003 it has been known as the Carling Cup and all 92 teams from the Premiership and the Football League participate in a knock-out system. The final has recently been played at Cardiff but from next season will return to its spiritual home of Wembley and as an added incentive to the winners is the chance to play in the following season's UEFA Cup competition. The current holders are Manchester United and in the past three years Liverpool and Chelsea have also won the trophy, though the bigger clubs have not always been so interested in this competition.

The trophy started in 1960 as teams took advantage of their newly installed floodlights to play mid-week games and by the end of the decade it was an important part of the English football calendar. The first winners were Aston Villa and they have a good record in the competition with five victories from their seven appearances in the final though they are still not the most successful team; that title belongs to Liverpool who have won the cup on seven occasions. Along with Nottingham Forest they dominated the trophy in the late 70s and early 80s in what could be described as the heyday of the competition. Since then, lesser sides have enjoyed success with Bolton, Leicester, Tranmere, Sunderland, Birmingham, Blackburn, Norwich, Middlesbrough, Wigan and even Oxford all playing in recent finals.

This season Chelsea has already reached the final where they await the winners of the north London derby between Tottenham and Arsenal. There is little love lost between these three teams and undoubtedly a tough set of, uncompromising battles are to come in order for one of them to be champions. The League Cup may not be the most important trophy, but it is hardly Mickey Mouse either.