

Season 2007/8

Podcast 5 Worksheet

European Championships - Ireland

By Damian Fitzpatrick (September 6th 2007)

Pre-Listening (Background information)

The European Championship Finals will take place in Austria and Switzerland next summer (2008). Currently European countries are playing qualifying matches to decide which teams will progress to the finals. Here Damian focuses on The republic of Ireland's chances in group D and interviews an Irish football fan.

Group D includes Germany, The Czech Republic, Ireland, Slovakia, Wales, Cyprus and San Marino with the top two teams qualifying for the finals next summer. Of course, Germany are leading the group but which team will go through with them?

Steve Staunton is the Irish manager.

The Czech Republic's capital is Prague and the capital of Slovakia is Bratislava.

Pre-Listening – vocabulary

Before listening to the report match the words and phrases on the left with their meanings on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. bail out | a) strangely |
| 2. concede | b) to be new on the job |
| 3. curiously | c) help dramatically |
| 4. finding his feet | d) very important |
| 5. albatross around the neck | e) work well together |
| 6. crucial | f) did not improve at all |
| 7. went downhill | g) a heavy burden or weight |
| 8. to gel well | h) to allow the other team to score |

A. Listening for main ideas

Listen to the first part of the report and choose the correct result of the matches played by Ireland so far.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. Germany – Ireland | a) 1-0 | b) 1-1 | c) 0-1 | d) 2-1 |
| 2. Cyprus – Ireland | a) 2-5 | b) 5-2 | c) 5-0 | d) 2-2 |
| 3. San Marino – Ireland | a) 2-1 | b) 2-0 | c) 1-2 | d) 0-1 |
| 4. Ireland – Wales | a) 0-0 | b) 1-1 | c) 1-0 | d) 0-1 |
| 5. Ireland – Slovakia | a) 0-0 | b) 1-1 | c) 1-0 | d) 0-1 |

B. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the next part of the report and fill in the gaps with an appropriate word.

DF: So you mentioned Steve Staunton, the Irish manager, how would you (1) _____ Steve Staunton?

Brendan: Well, he was brought in initially with Bobby Robson, the (2) _____ manager, a former manager of England, who's also managed around Europe with Barcelona and PSV amongst others. But Bobby Robson got sick shortly (3) _____ and Steve Staunton was, more or less, left to manage on his own. He's really been learning (4) _____ / _____ / _____ and finding his feet and I think people are starting to think that there's light at the end of the tunnel and things are improving.

DF: Now, Ireland are on an unbeaten run at the moment.

Brendan: That's right, eight games unbeaten run at the moment, including a 4-0 (5) _____ in Denmark, which was unusual because this Irish team never normally wins away from home and this is the big albatross around the neck of the Irish football team. The last time they won a (6) _____ match away from home against a top team was Scotland in 1989 before they qualified for the World Cup Finals in 1990.

C. True or False

Listen to the next section of the report and choose whether the following statements are true or false.

1. T / F The Irish manager thinks that Slovakia are more difficult to beat than The Czech Republic.
2. T / F Brendan feels that Ireland will have a better chance of beating Slovakia than The Czech Republic.
3. T / F After this week's matches Ireland will play two matches at home in Dublin.
4. T / F Brendan feels that the goalkeeper is Ireland's only world-class player.
5. T / F Brendan fears a heavy defeat against Slovakia
6. T / F Ireland play the Czech Republic during the week.

D. Comprehension

Listen to the report and answer the questions below.

1. Where will Brendan watch the games?
2. What does he mean when he says that Irish fans can see 'light at the end of the tunnel'?
3. What is the 'albatross around the neck' referring to?
4. Does Brendan feel Ireland can qualify for the European championship finals?
5. Who are the 'Celtic cousins' and why does he refer to them like that?
6. Why does Brendan call football, 'a funny old game'?

ANSWERS

Pre-Listening – vocabulary

Before listening to the report match the words and phrases on the left with their meanings on the right.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. bail out | c) help dramatically |
| 2. concede | h) to allow the other team to score |
| 3. curiously | a) strangely |
| 4. finding his feet | b) to be new on the job |
| 5. albatross around the neck | g) a heavy burden or weight |
| 6. crucial | d) very important |
| 7. went downhill | f) did not improve at all |
| 8. to gel well | e) work well together |

A. Listening for main ideas

Listen to the first part of the report and choose the correct result of the matches played by Ireland so far.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------|
| 1. Germany – Ireland | <u>a) 1-0</u> | b) 1-1 | c) 0-1 | d) 2-1 |
| 2. Cyprus – Ireland | a) 2-5 | <u>b) 5-2</u> | c) 5-0 | d) 2-2 |
| 3. San Marino – Ireland | a) 2-1 | b) 2-0 | <u>c) 1-2</u> | d) 0-1 |
| 4. Ireland – Wales | a) 0-0 | b) 1-1 | <u>c) 1-0</u> | d) 0-1 |
| 5. Ireland – Slovakia | a) 0-0 | b) 1-1 | <u>c) 1-0</u> | d) 0-1 |

B. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the report and fill in the gaps with an appropriate word.

DF: So you mentioned Steve Staunton, the Irish manager, how would you (1) rate Steve Staunton?

Brendan: Well, he was brought in initially with Bobby Robson, the (2) veteran manager, a former manager of England, who's also managed around Europe with Barcelona and PSV amongst others. But Bobby Robson got sick shortly (3) afterwards and Steve Staunton was, more or less, left to manage on his own. He's really been learning (4) on / the / job and finding his feet and I think people are starting to think that there's light at the end of the tunnel and things are improving.

DF: Now, Ireland are on an unbeaten run at the moment.

Brendan: That's right, eight games unbeaten run at the moment, including a 4-0 (5) victory in Denmark, which was unusual because this Irish team never normally wins away from home and this is the big albatross around the neck of the Irish football team. The last time they won a (6) qualification match away from home against a top team was Scotland in 1989 before they qualified for the World Cup Finals in 1990.

C. True or False

Listen to the next section of the report and choose whether the following statements are true or false.

1. **T / F** The Irish manager thinks that Slovakia are more difficult to beat than The Czech Republic.
the manager himself curiously enough said that he felt the Slovakian game would be more difficult but traditionally the Czechs would be seen as the stronger team.
2. **T / F** Brendan feels that Ireland will have a better chance of beating Slovakia than The Czech Republic.
but I feel that they have to probably beat Slovakia and then hope to get a point against the Czechs
3. **T / F** After this week's matches Ireland will play two matches at home in Dublin.
then their next two games are at home to Cyprus and at home to Germany

4. T / F Brendan feels that the goalkeeper is Ireland's only world-class player.
He's probably one of the three world-class players that we have
5. T / F Brendan fears a heavy defeat against Slovakia
I am going for a narrow Republic of Ireland victory, 2-1.
6. T / F Ireland play the Czech Republic during the week.
and hopefully the draw then against The Czech Republic on Wednesday

D. Comprehension

Listen to the report and answer the questions below.

1. Where will Brendan watch the games?

On TV

2. What does he mean when he says that Irish fans can see 'light at the end of the tunnel'?

They have some hope again after a poor start

3. What is the 'albatross around the neck' referring to?

The fact that Ireland cannot win away from home

4. Does Brendan feel Ireland can qualify for the European championship finals?

Hopeful

5. Who are the 'Celtic cousins' and why does he refer to them like that?

Wales – they are regarded as being Celts like the Irish.

6. Why does Brendan call football, 'a funny old game'?

It is a footballing cliché, which means that anything can happen!

Transcript

Brendan: Hello, my name is Brendan Fitzpatrick, I live in Dublin and normally I would be at this week's games but I can't make it this year so I'll be watching the games on television. That's two games coming up in the next ten days, Slovakia and The Czech Republic away, both games crucial for qualification.

DF: *How would you sum up the qualification campaign so far?*

Brendan: I think it's fair to say that the Irish team struggled in the early part of the campaign. There's a new inexperienced manager in charge. The first game was away in Germany where they put up a credible performance but were beaten 1-0. Then went downhill after that when they were beaten 5-2 by minnows Cyprus and then they struggled to beat San Marino 2-1 so it was fair to say at that stage that many people were calling for Steve Staunton's head but he stayed on and they played their next two games at home against Wales and Slovakia and they won both of them 1-0. So it means they are back in the qualifying campaign if they can get four points for the next two games.

DF: *So you mentioned Steve Staunton, the Irish manager, how would you rate Steve Staunton?*

Brendan: Well, he was brought in initially with Bobby Robson, the veteran manager, a former manager of England, who's also managed around Europe with Barcelona and PSV amongst others. But Bobby Robson got sick shortly afterwards and Steve Staunton was, more or less, left to manage on his own. He's really been learning on the job and finding his feet and I think people are starting to think that there's light at the end of the tunnel and things are improving.

DF: *Now, Ireland are on an unbeaten run at the moment.*

Brendan: That's right, eight games unbeaten run at the moment, including a 4-0 victory in Denmark, which was unusual because this Irish team never normally wins away from home and this is the big albatross around the neck of the Irish football team. The last time they won a qualification match away from home against a top team was Scotland in 1989 before they qualified for the World Cup Finals in 1990.

DF: *Now they are away over the next week at Slovakia and The Czech Republic, what do you think?*

Brendan: Well, actually the manager himself curiously enough said that he felt the Slovakian game would be more difficult but traditionally the Czechs would be seen as the stronger team. So, the common perception is that Ireland need four points from these two games so one win and one draw. We'll take it wherever we get it but I feel that they have to probably beat Slovakia and then hope to get a point against the Czechs in Prague.

DF: *So do you think then overall that could be enough to see them qualify for the European Championships next summer?*

Brendan: Well, it still depends on results after that. It more or less gives them an opportunity to qualify then their next two games are at home to Cyprus and at home to Germany. After that Ireland play Wales away from home and it could be all on that final game against our Celtic cousins.

DF: *Now very briefly, who are the key players for Ireland this weekend?*

Brendan: One of the main key players for Ireland over the next two games will be the goalkeeper, Shay Given. He's probably one of the three world-class players that we have. He's been consistent in The Premiership for the last seven years and he's bailed out the country on numerous occasions.

DF: *Finally Brendan, give us a prediction for the match in Slovakia.*

Brendan: Well, I am going for a narrow Republic of Ireland victory, 2-1. I think we might concede a goal but at the moment with Robbie Keane of Tottenham and Kevin Doyle of Reading playing up front, they seemed to have gelled quite well, and I think we might just sneak a win and hopefully the draw then against The Czech Republic on Wednesday but it's going to be very difficult. Most Irish fans are pretty realistic, despite the fact that all football fans are optimists, they realise that it will be tough to get four points but, you know, football's a funny old game.