

Season 2007/8

Podcast 15 Worksheet

## England and David Beckham

By Damian Fitzpatrick (November 17th 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 England's chances of qualifying. He also asks three England fans what they think of England's chances, David Beckham, Steve McClaren and the future of the domestic game.

Bobby Robson was the England manager in the 1980s until 1990.

Jose Mourinho and Guus Hiddink are football managers.

Sean Wright-Phillips plays for Chelsea and England.

### Pre-Listening – vocabulary

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

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. hang by a thread | a) to tie, a result in which neither team wins        |
| 2. issues           | b) to not win a game (lose or draw)                   |
| 3. to qualify       | c) just be alive, a small chance                      |
| 4. away form        | d) about to be fired                                  |
| 5. drop points      | e) limits on overseas players                         |
| 6. to draw          | f) topics   |
| 7. dead man walking | g) to get through to the next stage of a competition. |
| 8. domestic quota   | h) how a team plays away from their home ground.      |

**A. Note taking**

*Listen to the whole report and fill in the chart with as much information as you can.*

	Notes
Will England qualify?	
David Beckham	
Steve McClaren	
Domestic quotas	

**B. True or False**

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

1. T / F England have a good chance of qualifying for the finals.
  
2. T / F There are no domestic league matches taking places this week in England.
  
3. T / F England beat Russia 2-1 in Moscow last month.
  
4. T / F If England beat Croatia next Wednesday they will qualify.
  
5. T / F England do not care about other games in the group.

**B. Listening - vocabulary**

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

Another suggested reason for England's (1) \_\_\_\_\_ is that there are not enough young homegrown players being given the chance to play in the Premier League. The issue of having a domestic quota in each league, (2) \_\_\_\_\_ the numbers of overseas players, is a controversial one that, frankly, smacks of desperation at best and protectionism at (3) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Tim:** I think it's (4) \_\_\_\_\_ really I don't see it as being the reason England is so poor. Maybe we should limit the number of coaches or the ... have some kind of quota system to get the coaches up to a certain standard. But we want to see the best football in our country and at the moment, finally, we are actually attracting the best football in our country and I don't see why we should stop doing that.

**Simon:** I think it's very good because British players should be playing in British teams and you look at Arsenal and they play (5) \_\_\_\_\_ football but there is hardly an Englishman on the pitch. So, I am an advocate of having maybe five Englishmen or not just Englishmen but five British players or Irish players per team. So actually I agree with that idea.

**Paul:** I think (6) \_\_\_\_\_ it's very difficult to do, there are all sorts of EU regulations which relate to this but I really hope they can and I really wish they would because I think for most football fans, of course you've got your club which you care about but also you care about the national team and you want the national team to do well. I think there is not enough opportunities for good English players. The problem is that... the Premiership has got so much money they can (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to buy the best players in from around the world so... you've got to be one of the very best English footballers to get a game so I would be very much in favour of bringing it in even though it might (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the quality of the Premiership product a little bit.

**D. Comprehension**

*Listen to the whole report and answer the questions below.*

1. What are the four main parts to the report?
2. How many of the three fans believe that England will qualify?
3. How many are in favour of having Beckham in the team?
4. How many of the three speakers are in favour of imposing domestic quotas on leagues?
5. What is Damian's opinion on this topic?
6. How do you know?

## ANSWERS

### Pre-Listening – vocabulary

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

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. hang by a thread | c) just be alive, a small chance                      |
| 2. issues           | f) topics   |
| 3. to qualify       | g) to get through to the next stage of a competition. |
| 4. away form        | h) how a team plays away from their home ground       |
| 5. drop points      | b) to not win a game (lose or draw)                   |
| 6. to draw          | a) to tie, a result in which neither team wins        |
| 7. dead man walking | d) about to be fired                                  |
| 8. domestic quota   | e) limits on overseas players                         |

### B. True or False

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

1. T / F England have a good chance of qualifying for the finals.  
**Hanging by a thread**
2. T / F There are no domestic league matches taking places this week in England.  
**No Premier League games**
3. T / F England beat Russia 2-1 in Moscow last month.  
**Lost away in Russia 1-2.**
4. T / F If England beat Croatia next Wednesday they will qualify.  
**They need to rely on Israel beating or drawing with Russia**
5. T / F England do not care about other games in the group.  
**Qualification is out of their hands**

### C. Listening - vocabulary

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

- |           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| 1. demise | 2. limiting   |
| 3. worse  | 4. ridiculous |
| 5. lovely | 6. legally    |
| 7. afford | 8. reduce     |

### D. Comprehension

Listen to the whole report and answer the questions below.

1. What are the four main parts to the report?  
**Qualifying / Beckham / McClaren / Domestic quotas**
2. How many of the three fans believe that England will qualify?  
**Only one (the first one)**
3. How many are in favour of having Beckham in the team?  
**Two of the speakers are slightly in favour**
4. How many of the three speakers are in favour of imposing domestic quotas on leagues?  
**Only one (the first one)**
5. What is Damian's opinion on this topic?  
**He is against the imposition of quotas**
6. How do you know?  
**He uses the expression 'smacks of desperation / protectionism'**

### Transcript

The final round of European Championship qualifiers take place this week and with England's chances of making the finals in Austria and Switzerland next summer hanging by a thread, languagecaster decided to focus on some of the issues that are currently surrounding the national team. With no Premier League matches to cover this week, the British media is full of stories about the real possibility of not qualifying, the roles of David Beckham and Steve McClaren in the team, as well as the controversial issue of limiting the number of foreign players in each squad. We asked a group of England fans their opinions on these matters.

Poor away form has cost Steve McClaren's men dearly culminating in that 2-1 defeat against Russia last month that has left England relying on other teams to help them qualify for next year's tournament. Even if they beat Croatia at home on Wednesday they will not make it unless Russia drop points in their game at Israel on Saturday night. So, possible but

not very probable.

**Simon:** I think Israel will draw 1-1 with Russia and we'll beat Croatia 2-0.

**Paul:** I must admit I have kind of lost a bit of interest. It's not of course down to us it's the game between Israel and Russia and... I don't know I'm not taking a lot of interest, I'm least excited about this international game that I have been for a long time.

**Tim:** I think they've left it too late this time. I don't think they will even beat Croatia.

So a mixed bag from our selection of England fans but how do they feel about former captain David Beckham's return to the team?

**Simon:** I think if they play against Croatia I'd put him on in the second half perhaps but I don't really think he's really necessary at the moment. I think in the changing room he might be useful but actually on the pitch I'd stick with Shaun Wright-Phillips.

**Paul:** Once he'd been dropped by MacClaren I think he should have stayed dropped. But since he's been brought back, perhaps it's been a short-term fix, I'm okay with it.

**Tim:** He is a step backwards really.

The manager Steve McClaren's job is under threat and he appears a dead man walking despite the fact that some of the England players have come out in support for him this week.

**Tim:** Well, he should never have been the manager of England so I don't see why... but one thing you could say is he may have learned something on the job and if you look at Bobby Robson he had a pretty rough start and by the end of it in 1990 he was... he looks like one of the best managers we've ever had. So maybe McClaren is picking up some skills I don't really see evidence of that though.

**Simon:** No, he's never been good enough and I think most English fans sort of... the same opinion. I personally would want Mourinho in the job because I think he might actually win

something for us.

**Paul:** If we could get somebody better - a Mourinho, a Hiddink - I'd get rid of him in a second. But I fear that the malaise of the team isn't so much down to him but the structure of the Premier League and the playing demands.

Another suggested reason for England's demise is that there are not enough young homegrown players being given the chance to play in the Premier League. The issue of having a domestic quota in each league, limiting the numbers of overseas players, is a controversial one that, frankly, smacks of desperation at best and protectionism at worse.

**Tim:** I think it's ridiculous really I don't see it as being the reason England is so poor. Maybe we should limit the number of coaches or the ... have some kind of quota system to get the coaches up to a certain standard. But we want to see the best football in our country and at the moment, finally, we are actually attracting the best football in our country and I don't see why we should stop doing that.

**Simon:** I think it's very good because British players should be playing in British teams and you look at Arsenal and they play lovely football but there is hardly an Englishman on the pitch. So, I am an advocate of having maybe 5 Englishmen or not just Englishmen but 5 British players or Irish players per team So actually I agree with that idea.

**Paul:** I think legally it's very difficult to do, there are all sorts of EU regulations which relate to this but I really hope they can and I really wish they would because I think for most football fans, of course you've got your club which you care about but also you care about the national team and you want the national team to do well. I think there is not enough opportunities for good English players. The problem is that... the Premiership has got so much money they can afford to buy the best players in from around the world so... you've got to be one of the very best English footballers to get a game so I would be very much in favour of bringing it in even though it might reduce the quality of the Premiership product a little bit.

DF: Wow, interesting stuff. Thanks very much.