

Podcast 33 Worksheet

The Title Race – Serie A

By Damian Fitzpatrick (March 24th 2008)

Background information

This report focuses on the title race in Italy's Serie A

A. Listening – Main point

Listen to the first part of the report and decide whether the following statements are true or false. Give a reason to support your answer.

1. T / F Last year's Italian title race was much more exciting than this year.
2. T / F The top 4 in Italy last year was 1. Inter 2. Roma 3. Lazio 4. AC Milan
3. T / F Currently those four teams occupy the same places as last year.
4. T / F Damon uses a nickname to describe Juventus.
5. T / F The Brazilian star Diego plays for Juventus.
6. T / F Juventus are five points behind Inter Milan.

B. Listening – main idea

Listen to the final part of the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

As I mentioned, last year Inter Milan finished 22 points ahead of their (1) _____ rivals. At this stage the gap is eight points. Still a (2) _____ margin, but not impossible to close, especially so when you think Inter have only won two of their last eight in all competitions. During that run, they lost twice to Liverpool and had their first defeat in

the League (3) _____ at Napoli. They could lose it, but they won't. Inter will still finish top, but will (4) _____ on another lost chance in Europe. As often seems to happen the Champions of each country are not the Champions of Europe. The final difference this season is the (5) _____ that Fiorentina and Sampdoria are really pushing hard for places in the Champions League at the expense of AC Milan. While Fiorentina's latest form has been a bit (6) _____ - their goal scorer Mutu has been out injured and they had a tough two legs in the UEFA Cup against Everton, Sampdoria have really hit form winning the last three. They also (7) _____ Cagliari and Empoli in the next two games - matches they should win. AC Milan could be playing in the UEFA Cup next year. Milan may have to (8) _____ on Roma, Napoli and Juve to take points off Sampdoria in the final three matches.

ANSWERS

A. Listening – Main point

Listen to the first part of the report and decide whether the following statements are true or false. Give a reason to support your answer.

1. T / F Last year's Italian title race was much more exciting than this year.
This year's Serie A title race is a lot more exciting than last year's.
2. T / F The top 4 in Italy last year was 1. Inter 2. Roma 3. Lazio 4. AC Milan
3. T / F Currently those four teams occupy the same places as last year.
However, there are a few big differences this time round
4. T / F Damon uses a nickname to describe Juventus.
The Old Lady
5. T / F The Brazilian star Diego plays for Juventus.
For German side Werder Bremen
6. T / F Juventus are five points behind Inter Milan.
Five points behind Roma

B. Listening – main idea

Listen to the final part of the report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. nearest | 5. fact |
| 2. wide | 6. patchy |
| 3. away | 7. face |
| 4. reflect | 8. rely |

Transcript

One thing is for certain. This year's Serie A title race is a lot more exciting than last year's. Last year Inter finished over twenty points ahead of Roma, who were followed by Lazio and then AC Milan. How is it looking this year with nine games to go? At first glance, not much has changed. Inter are top followed by Roma: same as last year. AC Milan are fifth, one off the fourth they secured last year. However, there are a few big differences this time round. The first is Juventus. Yes, the Old Lady is back in town after playing last year in the second tier of Italian football. Led by Ranieri, Juve look to have secured at least a place in the qualifying round for the Champions League and seem set to push on next year to really challenge for the title. Evidence of this can be found in their desire to sign Brazilian star, Diego, from Werder Bremen. They are only five points behind Roma in second, but even a win at Inter this weekend wouldn't be enough to finish top - second would be a fantastic finish for them though.

The second big change this year is the points difference at the top. As I mentioned, last year Inter Milan finished 22 points ahead of their nearest rivals. At this stage the gap is eight points. Still a wide margin, but not impossible to close, especially so when you think Inter have only won two of their last eight in all competitions. During that run, they lost twice to Liverpool and had their first defeat in the League away at Napoli. They could lose it, but they won't. Inter will still finish top, but will reflect on another lost chance in Europe. As often seems to happen the Champions of each country are not the Champions of Europe.

The final difference this season is the fact that Fiorentina and Sampdoria are really pushing hard for places in the Champions League at the expense of AC Milan. While Fiorentina's latest form has been a bit patchy - their goal scorer Mutu has been out injured and they had a tough two legs in the UEFA Cup against Everton, Sampdoria have really hit form winning the last three. They also face Cagliari and Empoli in the next two games - matches they should win. AC Milan could be playing in the UEFA Cup next year. Milan may have to rely on Roma, Napoli and Juve to take points off Sampdoria in the final three matches. My call for the top four places - Inter, Roma, Juve and Sampdoria.