

MLS 2008

(November 27th 2008)

Pre-Listening / Background information

This week's show focuses on the MLS – Major League Soccer as it comes to the end of its 2008 season. We look back at some of the winners and the losers.

A. Main Idea – matching information

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table below with the appropriate information. Match the teams on the left with the correct information on the right.

	Team		Information
1	Columbus Crew	A	Have won the MLS 4 times
2	LA Galaxy	B	Beaten in the play-offs by New York
3	New York Red Bulls	C	Former Fulham star McBride plays for them
4	Real Salt Lake	D	Play at home at the Home Depot Stadium
5	Chicago Fire	E	Lost in the 2008 MLS final
6	DC United	F	Best team in the Western Conference
7	Houston Dynamo	G	They are the new MLS champions

B. Main Idea

Listen to the report and write down the semi-final match ups and scores. Which team played which team – and what was the result?

Semi-final _____ 1 - 0 _____

Semi-final _____ vs _____

Final _____ vs _____

C. Comprehension

Listen to the whole report and answer the following questions.

1. Where was the final game played?
2. This was Columbus Crew's first title, true or false?
3. Which team had the highest average attendance during the regular season?
4. Landon Donovan is going to Bayern Munich, how many goals did he score for LA Galaxy last season?
5. The most valuable player of the season is from which country?
6. How many goals and assists did David Beckham manage this year?
7. What was the average attendance in the MLS last season?
8. When does the 2009 season start?
9. How many teams will play in the MLS next season?
10. Why were Barcelona mentioned in the report?

D. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the whole report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase. Then write the meaning of the word.

1. 'The Ohio side were always in control and _____ won their first ever title...'

2. 'The best eight teams then play a knock out competition at the end of the _____ season.'

3. 'Columbus is a real _____ of soccer in the States with the national team often playing their home matches there...'

4. '... David Beckham, of course, who continues to _____ the fans and the publicity...'

5. '... when the Seattle Sounders enter the league as the latest _____ club.'

6. '... season - will be hoping to do better than he did in two previous _____ in Germany...'

ANSWERS

MLS - 2008

(November 27th 2008)

A. Main Idea – dates

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table below with the appropriate information.

Team	Information
Columbus Crew	They are the new MLS champions
LA Galaxy	Play at home at the Home Depot Stadium
New York Red Bulls	Lost in the 2008 MLS final
Real Salt Lake	Beaten in the play-offs by New York
Chicago Fire	Former Fulham star McBride plays for them
DC United	Have won the MLS 4 times
Houston Dynamo	Best team in the Western Conference

B. Main Idea

Listen to the report and write down the semi-final match ups and scores. Which team played which team – and what was the result?

Semi-final **Columbus Crew 2 - 1 Chicago Fire**

Semi-final **New York Red Bulls 1 – 0 Real Salt Lake**

Final **Columbus Crew 3-1 New York Red Bulls**

C. Comprehension

Listen to the whole report and answer the following questions.

1. Where was the final game played?

Los Angeles (Home Depot Stadium)

2. This was Columbus Crew's first title, true or false?

True

3. Which team had the highest average attendance during the regular season?

LA Galaxy (27.000)

4. Landon Donovan is going to Bayern Munich, how many goals did he score for LA Galaxy last season?

20

5. The most valuable player of the season is from which country?

Argentina

6. How many goals and assists did David Beckham manage this year?

5 goals and 8 assists

7. What was the average attendance in the MLS last season?

Just over 16.000

8. When does the 2009 season start?

March

9. How many teams will play in the MLS next season?

15

10. Why were Barcelona mentioned in the report?

They are backing a team from Miami that is hoping to take part in the MLS

D. Listening - vocabulary

Listen to the whole report and fill in the gaps with the appropriate word or phrase.

1. 'The Ohio side were always in control and deserved won their first ever title...'

well merited, they were the best team throughout

2. 'The best eight teams then play a knock out competition at the end of the regular season.'

the regular season determines which teams make the play-offs.

3. 'Columbus is a real hotbed of soccer in the States with the national team often playing their home matches there...'

extremely popular

4. '... David Beckham, of course, who continues to draw the fans and the publicity...'

attract

5. '... when the Seattle Sounders enter the league as the latest expansion club.'

Latest, newest

6. '... season - will be hoping to do better than he did in two previous spells in Germany...'

times

Transcript

Columbus Crew from Ohio are the new Major League Soccer champions after beating New York Red Bulls 3-1 in Los Angeles' Home Depot Stadium last weekend before a full house of 27.000 fans. The Ohio side were always in control and deservedly won their first ever title, particularly as they had the best regular season record as well.

Of course, like other major sports in the USA, there are conferences, or divisions (a western and an eastern) as well as a play-off system in place in its football season. The best eight teams then play a knock out competition at the end of the regular season. New York had sneaked into the play-offs but then hit a run a form that saw them beat Western Conference winners Houston and then Real Salt Lake in the semi finals while at the same stage Columbus defeated Chicago Fire 2-1 despite going behind to a goal from former Fulham star Brian McBride.

Columbus is a real hotbed of soccer in the States with the national team often playing their home matches there (especially when Mexico come to play!) but though they are regarded as a strong club they still have some way to catch DC United's record of four titles.

The League has been running for thirteen years now and is generally in good health. Average crowd size is just over 16.000 with the LA Galaxy the best-supported club in the league with an average of 26.000. Considering that they are one of the worst teams in the league it must be due to something, or someone, else. That would be David Beckham, of course, who continues to draw the fans and the publicity. He had an okay season playing in 26 matches and scoring five times. He also had eight assists. 'Becks' is off on loan to Milan for a couple of months while the MLS takes a break and we wonder if he will return in March for the 2009 season.

And there will be changes in the MLS next season. Currently there are 14 clubs but that number will increase to 15 when the Seattle Sounders enter the league as the latest expansion club. There will be two or maybe three more new teams in the near future with bids from cities like Ottawa, Vancouver and a rather intriguing one from Miami as they are being backed by Barcelona. There are also talks of a possible one division, two-campaign season similar to many south American leagues sometime in the future.

Beckham's team mate at LA Galaxy, Landon Donovan is another one going to Europe, he

will be playing at Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga, and this season's top scorer - he notched 20 goals in the 30 game season - will be hoping to do better than he did in two previous spells in Germany.

The MLS player of the season was Argentinian midfielder Guillermo Schellotto from Columbus Crew which was apt as he not only played at a high level throughout the campaign, he also had assists for all three of the goals in the final last week. It will be interesting to see how he and his team mates at Columbus Crew fare in the CONCACAF Champions League next season.