

Euro 2012: Spain's Chances

Euro 2012: Spain

June 5th 2012

Today's main report looks ahead to this summer's European Championships in Poland and Ukraine and focuses on World and European holders Spain's chances.

A. Main Idea – note taking

Listen to the report and take notes under the following headings.

Qualifying	
Key Players	
The Manager	
Their Chances	

B. Listening - vocabulary

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

Qualifying

Teams sometimes _____ a dip in form after winning a major tournament but Spain followed up their World Cup 2010 victory with a _____ European qualifying campaign. They easily _____ their group with a 100% record – they won all 8 of their matches against Scotland, Lithuania, Liechtenstein and the Czech Republic.

Key Players

Where to begin? The Spanish national team almost _____ itself such is the consistency of its high-performing players. The Barca quintet of Xavi, Busquets, Pedro and Iniesta will of course be there, _____ Madrid's Casilas, Ramos, and Albiol will bolster the _____ but in this tournament they will be missing two key players: David Villa and Carles Puyol. Puyol is an inspirational figure at the back and will be sorely _____ but goalscorer Villa is probably a greater loss. He has scored 10 goals in 11 games at the previous two major tournaments – 4 in Euro 2008 and 6 more in 2010 – and though Spain do have Bilbao's Llorente and the 2008 winning goalscorer Torres in their team they will miss Villa.

The Manager

Taking over from Euro 2008 winning manager Luis Aragones could seem like a _____ chalice – surely the only way is down after such a wonderful victory? Step forward Vicente del Bosque regarded by many as a _____ pair of hands, someone who lets the players play as he trusts in their ability. After winning his first ten games in charge of *La Selección* – a national record – del Bosque oversaw the World Cup win in South Africa with his side refusing to change their passing style _____ the tournament.

Their Chances

They are the favourites to win Euro 2012 though injuries and the fact that no team has ever retained the European Championship or won three major tournaments in a row means that this competition could be their hardest challenge yet. Though their group is not a group of death it will be tricky enough with _____ Italy, dark horses Croatia and well-organised Ireland all ready to stop the Spanish. The first match is vital and if they can get something from that game against Italy then they should easily progress to the knock-out stages. After that, depending on injuries and luck, they should be there or _____ again.

ANSWERS

B. Listening - vocabulary

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

Qualifying

Teams sometimes **suffer** a dip in form after winning a major tournament but Spain followed up their World Cup 2010 victory with a **flawless** European qualifying campaign. They easily **topped** their group with a 100% record – they won all 8 of their matches against Scotland, Lithuania, Liechtenstein and the Czech Republic.

Key Players

Where to begin? The Spanish national team almost **picks** itself such is the consistency of its high-performing players. The Barca **quintet** of Xavi, Busquets, Pedro and Iniesta will of course be there, **while** Madrid's Casilas, Ramos, and Albiol will bolster the **defence** but in this tournament they will be missing two key players: David Villa and Carles Puyol. Puyol is an inspirational figure at the back and will be sorely **missed** but goalscorer Villa is probably a greater loss. He has scored 10 goals in 11 games at the previous two major tournaments – 4 in Euro 2008 and 6 more in 2010 – and though Spain do have Bilbao's Llorente and the 2008 winning goalscorer Torres in their team they will miss Villa.

The Manager

Taking over from Euro 2008 winning manager Luis Aragonés could seem like a **poisoned** chalice – surely the only way is down after such a wonderful victory? Step forward Vicente del Bosque regarded by many as a **safe** pair of hands, someone who lets the players play as he trusts in their ability. After winning his first ten games in charge of *La Selección* – a national record – del Bosque oversaw the World Cup win in South Africa with his side refusing to change their passing style **throughout** the tournament.

Their Chances

They are the favourites to win Euro 2012 though injuries and the fact that no team has ever retained the European Championship or won three major tournaments in a row means that this competition could be their hardest challenge yet. Though their group is not a group of death it will be tricky enough with **powerhouses** Italy, dark horses Croatia and well-organised Ireland all ready to stop the Spanish. The first match is vital and if they can get something from that game against Italy then they should easily progress to the knock-out stages. After that, depending on injuries and luck, they should be there or **thereabouts** again.

Vocabulary

suffer a dip in form: To not be playing very well

flawless: Perfect, without any mistakes

topped their group: To come first in the group

picks itself: The team is consistently good so there is no need to change it

quintet: Here it refers to five players (quartet is 4; trio is three)

bolster the defence: To strengthen the defence

will be sorely missed: Will be really missed

a poisoned chalice: Something (a job) that no one really wants

a safe pair of hands: Someone who can do the job well, one that everyone trusts

La Selección: The nickname of the Spanish national team

powerhouses: Traditionally strong team

they should be there or thereabouts again: They will be challenging for the title – probably make the final

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