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## Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 19:25

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Cagliari have just had the three points they lost for suing one of their players reinstated on appeal, which means that they are now off the bottom of the table, and replaced by Empoli.

The complete bottom seven in total (three to go down):

Torino 31  
Parma 29  
Catania 29  
Livorno 28  
Cagliari 28  
Reggina 27  
Empoli 26

Above that group are Siena on 35, Palermo on 36, Napoli and Lazio on 37 and Atalanta on 38.

Also stories here today that Moratti will pick either Mourinho or Prandelli as Inter's new manager for next season (but that is a telenovella that will run for a while).

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by silent macius - 26-03-2008 20:48

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hi Ursus, Maciej here.

anything new on tv schedule concerning 26/27 april match between Roma and Toro? i was supposed to remind you by the end of marach which i do right now. cheers!

btw: US beating Poland 2-0 in Kraków at the mo after set-piece goals by Bocanegra and Onyewu. it`s halftime.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-03-2008 21:42

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Ciao, Macej!

Still nothing official for that weekend, but Roma are playing on the Saturday the weekend before, so I think you are safe in thinking that the match will be on Sunday. There remains a small chance that it could be set for Sunday night, however. Though Toro-Inter the previous weekend is set for Sunday night.

If I had to bet, I would say Roma-Toro will be Sunday at 3pm, but this is Italy.

Is that Poland's first team? It is 3-0 now!

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by silent macius - 27-03-2008 08:12

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oh schade! was counting on the game to be on saturday night. cheers nonetheless.

sadly it was pretty much Poland`s best team. 3 set-piece goals and that was it. Boruc was at fault with two of them. not that i don`t understand his weakness for fish `n chips. it was my main dish during an Easter week in Eire i just got back from.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-03-2008 09:42

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Hmmm. I now see that the following week is the second leg of the Champions League semi-finals. If Roma manage to get by Man Utd, I would expect them to ask for the match to be put ahead to the Saturday.

I will write off Poland's performance as being due to overzealous Easter celebrations. Boruc sounds as if he was doing a chocolate rabbit impersonation.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by silent macius - 27-03-2008 11:00

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If Roma manage to get by Man Utd

hmmmm, still have 7-1 in mind. but it will be another reason to cheer Roma on so the game is moved to saturday.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-03-2008 16:16

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It looks like Juve will get their new ground after all.

They presented plans to the city today for a 40,000 seat multi-use arena to be built on the site of the Delle Alpi. Construction is to start in 2009 with a current finish date of 2011.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the project is that it is being primarily funded by the German sport promoters SportFive, who are paying Juve Euro 75 million over 12 years for naming rights, rights to most of the corporate boxes and other unidentified marketing rights. That 75 million will cover about two-thirds of the projected cost of the ground, with Juve financing the rest on a subsidised mortgage.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-03-2008 19:19

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Roma go down early in Cagliari, and although Totti equalises with a free kick just before the half, are unable to get a second goal, and it ends 1-1.

Inter, who are about to take the field against Lazio, now have a chance to get their lead back up to six points.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by kueee - 30-03-2008 04:43

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God Roma frustrate the living hell out of me. So many chances to put the game to bed.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by statto99 - 30-03-2008 16:05

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I switched on this afternoon to watch my beloved Parma's annual live match on Channel Five (against Juventus). I was dismayed to see the start of Udinese against Fiorentina. And then I discovered why:

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The two clubs agreed to postpone the game, as 27-year-old Parma supporter Matteo Bagnaresi was run over by a bus driven by Juve fans.

Parma have insisted it was "a tragic accident," but there are fears of crowd trouble and reprisals.

The accident happened at the Crocetta Nord motorway service station on the A1 between Alessandria and Asti.

According to reports from newspapers, the bus containing nine Juve fans was attacked and in his hurry to escape the situation, the driver accidentally ran over Bagnaresi.

The driver of the Juve bus was stopped a few kilometres away and insisted he had not even realised he had hit the Parma fan.

Terrible news, and I fervently hope that Parma fans hadn't really attacked Juve fans (or, indeed, anyone else). I've been at Parma away games and we've only taken about 50.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 30-03-2008 18:40

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We just got back from Bologna and missed all of the news, though it appears from current media reports that the "attack" was more of the typical posturing and menacing by two busses of Parma supporters who just happened to arrive at the motorway Autogrill at the same time as the smaller bus of Juve fans from Crema.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 30-03-2008 20:34

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On the field, the notable results centred on the "battle" for the last Champions League place, with Milan losing 2-1 at home to Atalanta (the Rossoneri's home form this season (4 wins, 7 draws and 4 losses) is that of a relegation candidate) and Udinese beating Fiorentina 3-1 in Udine.

The Viola are still in fourth, but are now five points adrift of third place Juve, and what had long been seen as a two-team fight with Milan has turned into a four-team tussle:

Fiorentina 53  
Udinese 50  
Milan 49  
Sampdoria 49

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by statto99 - 30-03-2008 22:46

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The exact dynamics are still hazy, as there are two different versions of events. Some eyewitnesses claim the driver was looking in his mirrors to check the chasing Parma supporters were not closing in and therefore did not notice Bagnaresi crossing his path.

Another version given by a friend of the deceased insists it was a tragic accident and had nothing to do with football.

"Matteo was near to the rear tyres of the minibus and was hit when it went into reverse. The driver did not see or realise what had happened.

"We tried shouting at him to stop, but he was probably afraid and thought we were threatening him, so he drove off."

According to witnesses at the motorway service station, there was no physical contact whatsoever between the two sets of fans.

[http://www.channel4.com/sport/football\\_italia/mar30l.html](http://www.channel4.com/sport/football_italia/mar30l.html)

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-03-2008 11:55

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In the tradition of her sterling work on the Sandri story, Spangles has the best summary yet available in English on her blog.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by statto99 - 31-03-2008 12:37

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That's an excellent piece by the Princess. Many thanks for pointing me to it, ursus.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 31-03-2008 12:39

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gosh, the first time I manage to log in to the whizzy new site and you are all being nice about me. I like this.

Just translated the Parma ultras' communication as well.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-03-2008 16:25

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In less interesting, but also less tragic, news, Empoli have fired Alberto Malesani, and yes, re-hired Luigi Cagni, who was still on the payroll because they had only fired him in November.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 11:12

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Catania buck the trend by firing their manager and NOT bringing back his predecessor.

Instead, Baldini's successor is none other that former Inter and Italy keeper Walter Zenga, which ad hoc and Vernons Pools are likely to find of interest (given Walter's stints in New England and Romania). Zenga's tenure in Sicily may be quite short, however, as they are currently tied with three other clubs for the last relegation place, and his contract only runs until the end of this season:

- Torino 34
- Parma 29
- Catania 29
- Livorno 29
- Cagliari 29
- Reggina 27
- Empoli 26

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

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Posted by ad hoc - 02-04-2008 11:20

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They're going down. Zenga ia appalling.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 02-04-2008 12:05

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I would rather Catania went down than Livorno or Cagliari, so that's fine by me.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 12:25

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If they do go down (and even if they don't), there is almost certain to be a real battle over who gets to sign their Peruvian wingback, Juan Manuel Vargas.

Vargas has been one of the genuine revelations of this season and pretty much the only reason why Catania aren't down already.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by chasbo - 02-04-2008 12:56

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Hopefully Zenga will be appalling and take Catania down. Nothing personal against Catania but it means one less relegation place for Torino to possibly take.

I think Baldini will be remembered for kicking Domenico Di Carlo up the arse earlier this season rather than any managerial achievements.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 13:08

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That will always be Baldini's defining moment, in much the same way that Carletto Mazzone's is that mad run at the Atalanta curva after his Brescia team equalised at the death (though Mazzone achieved much more as a manager than Baldini).

It would take a massive collapse for Toro to go down; they are five points clear of that scrum on 29 points and more importantly, would have to be passed by no fewer than four other teams.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by And I am the Life - 02-04-2008 13:12

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This is a bizarrearticle. I like this bit.

The last time Inter played Liverpool before this season was in 1965. Mazzola still remembers the Reds' fans singing You'll Never Walk Alone at Anfield. There, the score was 3-1. Before the second leg, at San Siro, Mazzola went up to the announcer's box and gave him an old Louis Armstrong recording of When The Saints Go Marchin' In. He said: "At the end of the game, when we've won 3-0, I want you to put this on." That was indeed the result. Could you imagine Zlatan Ibrahimovic doing the same thing now?

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It's almost like he had some kind of knowledge that the game was going to end 3-0. Spooky isn't it?

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 13:19

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It should not come as a shock to anyone who has read that piece that Guido Santevecchi is not a football journalist.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by dalliance - 02-04-2008 17:33

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I watched extended highlights of the Milan v Atalanta match and I was really surprised at the flow of the game.

Usually when one of the smaller clubs wins away at one of the top sides in Serie A it's something of a smash and grab win, but Atalanta were carving Milan open at will and created a ridiculous number of chances. They really should have been so far out of sight before Milan got back into things.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-04-2008 17:49

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That isn't the first time this season that has happened to Milan at home, and the fact that they are looking at Cafu playing a full 90 minutes now that Oddo is out for at least a month following knee surgery is an indication that it may not be the last. Their qualification for the Champions League is by no means a certainty, especially now that Udinese and Sampdoria (who don't have Fiorentina's UEFA Cup distractions) are in the mix.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 02-04-2008 22:09

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I would love it, just love it if Milan managed to not get in the CL.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by pawlu - 04-04-2008 11:20

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Not purely related to the Serie A but thought that it is best placed here: Sportitalia24 (a free to air digital tv station) are now streaming live on <http://www.sportitalia.com/>.

Personally I think that it is a good station. They show the goals fairly quickly, have detailed look at the Serie B, show a live Championship, Eredivisie and Argentine game each weekend. Also they show the Copa Libertadores.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 04-04-2008 12:10

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Nice tip.

Their half hour news roundup is also pretty good, and their Brazilian and Argentine highlight shows are even better.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Bombanero - 04-04-2008 12:23

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Are the games streamed outside Italy?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ad hoc - 04-04-2008 12:24

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It would appear so. I can certainly get the live stream here.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 06-04-2008 14:32

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Pazzini just scored a cracking goal for Fiorentina.

Thanks to the magic of Al Jazeera, I am watching three live Serie A games simultaneously right now. There may not be anywhere else in the world where this is possible. Is it even possible in Italy?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 15:01

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That was a beauty, wasn't it? The cross was quality, but the header was sublime.

With Sky Calcio's Diretta Gol service, we can watch all Serie A matches simultaneously (though I don't recommend doing that on a single television).

Paddy Vieira may finally be back to his best, as he climbs all over a hapless Atalanta defender to head home, putting Inter 1-0 up.

Cracking game in Parma; 2-2 at the half.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 06-04-2008 15:03

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Damn, I switched over at 1-0 because Lazio were so crap.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 15:29

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Vargas (see the first post on this page) is taking apart Napoli; 3-0 Catania with 25 minutes left.

Fiorentina have at least three great chances to go 2-0 up, but have either screwed them up, or been denied by the keeper.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 15:52

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Immediately after Di Michele of Torino puts a header wide with literally the entire goal at his mercy, Empoli go down the other end and score, as Giovinco threads a perfect pass that Vanucci buries in the top corner. If they hold on, they will be very much back in the mix for staying up.

Reggina with a dangerous kick at the death.  
Which they put a few inches over the bar. Oooof.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 06-04-2008 15:54

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2-0 Fiorentina. Class.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 15:55

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Empoli hold on.

Inter win 2-0 in Bergamo, with Super Mario Balotelli getting his first goal in Serie A.

Mutu gets a second for the Viola in injury time off a lovely backheeled pass. They remain four points ahead of Milan for the last CL place.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 06-04-2008 15:59

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bloody Vieira, bloody useless Atalanta.

Can we talk about how brilliant Vucinic's goal was yesterday instead, please.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 16:05

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Ha, Ha. Surely you mean your hero Paddy.

Bottom of the table:

Lazio 39  
Siena 37  
Palermo 36 (one game in hand)  
Torino 34  
Catania 32  
Parma 30  
Cagliari 29  
Empoli 29  
Livorno 29  
Reggina 27

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by chasbo - 06-04-2008 19:58

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A win today would have almost guaranteed safety but typically Torino manage to lose. We should still be safe but with Torino anything is possible.

At least Juventus are losing - forza Palermo!  
1-0 Amauri 11 mins

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 20:31

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The papers have been full of stories that Amauri and Palermo have essentially agreed terms for his transfer to Juve in the close season.

If they had any doubts, those should have been dispelled by his absolutely gorgeous curving shot into the top corner, which left Buffon flapping.

And now he's got another.

Forza Palermo.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 21:11

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And Del Piero has now scored twice to equalise for the forces of darkness.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-04-2008 21:26

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And after Juve hit the post, bar and waste a third great chance, Palermo score with two minutes left.

Palermo 3 Juventus 2, final.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 10:18

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Yet another panic-button managerial firing today, as Torino are about to show Walter Novellino the door and bring back Gianni De Biasi for the third time.

The comprehensive 3-0 defeat at Genoa on the weekend led to ultra protests at the ground, the team coach being blocked and barracked at a toll gate on its return, and similar scenes at training yesterday, all of which proved too much for Novellino to survive, notwithstanding the fact that Toro still have three clubs and four points between them and the relegation places.

To remind people of what the bottom of the table looks like:

Italy: (5 weeks left; three to go down):

Torino 34

Catania 32  
Cagliari 32  
Parma 31\*

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Reggina 30  
Empoli 30  
Livorno 29

Parma's asterisked game in hand is the away match to Juve that was postponed in the wake of the last ultra death. It will be played tonight.

De Biasi's first match with his new/old club will be at home to Inter Sunday night.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 16-04-2008 11:08

Very much looking forward to Juve's game in hand tonight. No Sissoko (injured) and laquinta has picked up a knock in training, while the excellent Zanetti is still out. Tough times for us old ladies.

A win tonight and the CL is within touching distance.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 16-04-2008 11:12

On Toro, I wonder where, if anywhere, they are going sometimes. They have recently had two of the brightest young managers in Italy in the 90s in Zaccheroni and Novellino. It is hard to see how they can attract better ones.

I think they should do enough to survive this season. I certainly hope Juve do them a favour tonight.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 11:19

Though I think that Cuper has made it somewhat easier for you by going with Reginaldo and Corradi instead of Budan and/or Lucarelli. Cuper's talking about going for the win, but the team selection doesn't really back him up there.

Cristiano Zanetti is a strange case. He was absolutely useless for Inter for an extended period, but has been reasonably impressive ever since he got to Juve and even better than that this year. It's an even more striking case than Cannavaro's transformation once he left the Meazza.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 16-04-2008 11:27

If true, I also think Cuper has bungled his selection. Maybe he thinks they won't win tonight or even get a draw and is saving them for other more winnable games (he said nervously)? It seems very odd on the face of it.

I think Zanetti is an excellent player, I rated him highly at Roma and Chievo, too, I am struggling to remember how he played for Inter, which maybe says a fair bit. I would have him in the Italian squad now.

He was an important buy psychologically for Juve I felt, during the WC, before the final penalty for Juve was decided if I remember rightly. That someone of his quality and big club/international experience was willing to play for Juve in Serie B said a lot I think.

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He has been one of Juve's very best performers this season, to me at least.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 12:45

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I think that is a pretty widely shared view, at least among my Juventino colleagues. It's especially remarkable to me because when my son and I first started watching Inter, we distinguished between C. Zanetti and J. Zanetti by referring to the former as "the useless Zanetti". If anyone could figure out exactly what in the Inter environment it is that causes this transformation into craptitude that only lifts upon leaving, they would no doubt be able to get a king's ransom from Moratti. The list is very, very, long, with Pirlo and Seedorf being too other prime examples.

What are you reading about the Amauri deal? I think he makes a lot of sense for Juve, but the Gazzetta rumour yesterday was that Giovinco was among the young players that Palermo could select as part of the transfer (in addition to the 12-15-20 million euro). That seems like an awful high price to pay, no matter how much I rate Amauri.

But then again, I think that there is a rather high chance that such stories are based on nothing more than the fevered imaginings of Zamparini.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 16-04-2008 13:17

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It is a strange one, it might be fun, for some of us at least, to come up with a list of such players in the last 10 years or so. Pirlo and Seedorf are among the very best midfielders of their generation in world football for me. A salutary warning about a policy that aimed at/ends in collecting art pieces rather than building a team.

It seems like a "done" deal for Amauri? When asked about Juve after the Palermo game the other week his smiling reaction seemed to suggest he thought so, too. I think he would be an excellent buy for Juve.

I agree with you though, Giovinco is far too high a price to pay. He really could be a very special "home grown" player and a long-term heir to Del Piero, I think in my most positive moments.

Cobolli was adamant that Giovinco was coming back, in an interview on the Juve website in January, and that they would be placing a great deal of faith in him next season.

Mind you he was also, in the same interview, saying that Juve would not be making any signings in Jan and that they didn't need Sissoko!

A list of young Juve talent farmed out never to appear again in bianconero or indeed reach their high potential elsewhere would also be quite telling. Miccoli one of the saddest examples in recent times. He's done ok, but it is a far cry from reports I read in the Italian press that he was mix between Baggio, Schillaci and/or Maradona and such like.

One of my hopes around Juve's demotion to Serie B was that it would instill some humility and a change in focus towards the importance of bringing through young players rather than just buy ready made often overrated players, often, but not always, foreign. Emerson, Vieira, even Cannavaro etc under Capello.

Giovinco is key to this I feel. Though Palladino seems to have taken a back seat recently, I am not sure off the top of my head if it exactly runs parallel to his debut for Italy recently!

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by chasbo - 16-04-2008 13:22

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Cairo did the same last year when he fired Zaccheroni. Di Biase came back to steer the club to safety after being fired at the start of the season. I expect Rosina will start games now (hooray)as Di Biase built the team around him during the promotion in 2006. Just give the ball to Rosina seemed to be the instruction and it worked.

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Will be cheering for J\*\*e even though it sickens me to do so.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by pawlu - 16-04-2008 13:54

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Torino truly is a strange club and Novellino is paying for their failure to really strengthen the side in January. At the time they made Cristiano Lucarelli and Rolando Bianchi their main targets but failed to sign any one of them.

That said, I wasn't expecting him to be dismissed because for one thing I got the impression that being a Granata to the core the fans were willing to give him time.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 20:33

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OTF, your place for Serie A tips.

6Marlets and I slag off Cuper's team selection this morning, and Juve are already 2-0 up after 30 minutes.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 16-04-2008 20:37

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Say Juve don't make the Champions League this year. Do any of their stars leave? Three seasons without CL is a long time for the Buffons of this world...

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 20:40

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Erm. Unless they somehow throw this 2-0 lead away, in about an hour they will have a 12 point lead on Milan and Samp with five matches left.

Ain't going to happen.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 16-04-2008 20:50

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Oh. Shows how long it's been since I looked at a table.

What about Milan, then? Might there be defections there? Beyond those to the Masters circuit?

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 16-04-2008 20:59

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That's why they were worried about Kaka heeding the siren calls of Real Madrid, but now that Calderon has transferred his crush to Cristiano Ronaldo, I don't think that they are that worried. Kaka will stay, Pato is too young to leave, and who else is really marketable? Oddo? Bonera? I'm pretty sure they both have contracts that extend for at least another year.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 16-04-2008 21:23

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Pirlo's only 28, isn't he? And Gattuso's only 30. I would have thought they would be the two who would be "feeling the pressure of time" and not wanting to waste time at a non-CL club.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Etienne - 16-04-2008 22:35

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It would surely destro Gattuso's self-image to leave in such circumstances, and Milan are basically built around Pirlo. They'd both be mad to leave.

Of course Juventus could lose in CL qualifying next year. I'd be willing to chip in a few euro to bribing the ref of that game.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 17-04-2008 06:58

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There have been rumours of Gattuso looking elsewhere for much of the year, but they are grounded more on money and his expressed desire to go back to Britain before he ends his career than on any sense of Milan under-achieving. This week's hypothetical destination was Bayern Munich, but it is really rather hard for me to see that happening, and not only because the idea of Rino in Lederhosen makes me giggle.

Pirlo will be 29 next month, and there hasn't been a hint of him looking elsewhere. One year (or even two) out of the CL isn't going to change that, particularly if Berlusconi loosens the purse strings now that he is back in power.

The Juve match ended 3-0, btw. In the first leg of the Coppa Italia semifinals, Roma beat Catania 1-0 and Inter (playing a B team) drew 0-0 with Lazio at home.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 17-04-2008 09:46

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After the Euros in the summer Gattuso and Pirlo (Ancelotti always seems to play Pirlo in every game) might be glad of a season without the demands of the CL!

Due to some Lemony Snicket unforeseens I missed the Juve game last night: The timings for our 5 a side league went awry and someone nicked the smart card for the telly in the sports centre.

It sounds like a routine win for Juve and Parma were toothless, unambitious and rotten? From reading the reports it sounds like Corradi played up on his own in the end. Incredible own goal.

12 pts clear of 5th place 5 games to go, I think, looking good.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by And I am the Life - 17-04-2008 10:36

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If I was an italian footballer, living by lake como, earning what pirlo or gattuso earn, I would find it very fucking hard to move to the north west of england. particularly at their time of life, and with the uncertainty as to whether or not they'd be able to make the physical step up every week.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 18-04-2008 09:08

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Was watching the excellent Sfide last evening and they had a wonderful feature on Antonio Cassano.

Some nuggets: his first thought upon scoring a (great) goal against Inter on his debut for Bari: "I'm going to be rich!"

Why did he choose Roma over Juventus: "Mum didn't like the weather in Turin."

Then there was a chat with Sampdoria striker Claudio Bellucci who has been ordered by the club to keep an eye on Cassano during games "I either go to drag away Cassano or to protect the referee!"

Brilliant stuff.

Personally, can't help liking him, even if he can be, erm, a bit petulant.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-04-2008 09:31

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Sfide really is an excellent program, and I don't get to watch it anywhere near as often as I would like to. Do you have direct access to Sky Italia in Malta, or is it broadcast locally?

I also admit to having a small soft spot for Cassano (rather like the one in his head, perhaps), but it seems to be the case that such feelings tend to be reserved for supporters of clubs for which he has not played. Romanisiti in particular almost all detest him with a passion.

Post-election euphoria and the need to avoid the reality of a fight for fifth place are conspiring to inflate Milan transfer rumours even beyond their usual ebullient state. Today's Gazzetta features them signing Frey, Zambrotta, Ronaldinho, Flamini, Shevchenko and another "world class striker", perhaps Drogba or Adebayor.

I have a feeling the silly season is going to be even sillier than usual.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 22-04-2008 15:37

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Dunno if we mentioned it before, but the Gazzetta now has an English site which has a small amount of content in, amazingly, English. Which may or may not be useful to non italophone Serie A fans.

If anyone has any comments on the site, I am in no way remotely connected to it and would not at all find them in any way useful or helpful. \*gazes at sky\*

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 22-04-2008 15:59

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And that lack of connection would in no way whatsoever have any thing to do with the fact the quality of the translations has improved notably since it was launched . . .

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

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Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 22-04-2008 16:04

Those translations are not as helpful as I had hoped. It turns out that in English, Inter are still winning and Totti is still injured.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 22-04-2008 16:06

She doesn't have editorial control . . .

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 22-04-2008 16:08

If I in any way knew to what you might be alluding then I would thank you. But of course I don't. \*wears false beard\* and Gramsci: the alternate reality site is still very much in the pipeline.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 22-04-2008 16:59

I don't think that RCS would look kindly on you moonlighting for Corriere dello Sport . . .

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 22-04-2008 17:06

haha the CdS is no more biased than the Gazzetta (or Tuttosport). Really. thought seeing as the CdS only launched a proper website earlier this year I think an english version is a long way off.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 22-04-2008 17:50

Il Giornale isn't as biased as Tuttosport. Even our recently arrived Juventino admitted that in one of his first posts.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 23-04-2008 10:08

It would be hard to find a more biased organ than Tuttosport, which is why I love it! Indeed, if I feel I need a more balanced view, I reach for Hurrá Juventus.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-04-2008 10:21

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Are you holding out hope for pipping Roma to second place, or don't you particularly care?

And where do you stand on the ADP to Euro 2008 "debate"? I'd be hard pressed to leave him at home, though if he goes, he should play.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 23-04-2008 10:52

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I definitely care, and would love to overtake Roma not least because this would mean no nervy preliminary in August. I don't think we will do it, though. Next year will be tougher, as a decent run in the CL, hopefully, will also place a greater strain on the squad, some of the key players like Del Piero and Nedved are not getting any younger.

I think that if Donadoni wants to play Toni and two wide attackers then ADP isn't the man. Though I have noted that Di Natale gets a lot closer to Toni down the middle than was the case with others, including Del Piero, in this system.

I would choose Di Natale over Del Piero on the strength of his recent performances for Italy. I haven't seen much of Udinese recently but he seems to be in good form? ADP wouldn't be a bad player to come off the bench, though, as he showed in Germany.

I, whisper it, generally think Del Piero has been disappointing for Italy when starting in major tournaments since the 1996 Euros.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-04-2008 11:39

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I find Udinese to be maddening in their unpredictability, and Di Natale fits into that context perfectly. That said, I generally agree with you about ADP having to play 90 minutes in that formation.

And you are of course correct about ADP in blue (except for that ridiculous kit with the stars that you used to wear in the Champions League).

=====

## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 23-04-2008 11:44

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I like Di Natale in azzurro. And I like the idea of Alex as supersub.

I would definitely leave Cassano at home. We can't afford the cassanate. Toni is an obvious must, and I can't see how you could leave Boriello out either. Iaquinta and Quagliarella are both good but not quite good enough.

=====

## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 23-04-2008 12:14

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I really liked that blue Juve kit with the big yellow star on the shoulder. I might have it somewhere, ahem! Only joking. I thought it a very snug fit with the CL stars.

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I like Di Natale a lot and have been impressed with Borriello's all round game, aside from the goals this season, too. I like the way he makes a half a yard of space for himself, to at least get a shot in.

I am not sold on Quagliarella in truth. He is good, but I don't see the star quality that other far more learned judges than I seem to.

I always get quite excited, and start unconsciously hopping on one leg, when I see laquinta warming up for Juve, ready to go on, if only to see Trezequet's bottom lip quiver.

laquinta is very effective and, like Keegan in his day, tends to make things happen, somehow. He is also humble and therefore a very good squad player.

I will be honest and say I have no expectations that they will go close in Austria/Switzerland. Though I have felt that way before every tournament since 1990, which I am still trying to come to terms with.

---

### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-04-2008 12:32

Quagliarella is even more inconsistent than Di Natale and strikes me as likely to be known as the Gilardino of 2007-08. I would definitely take laquinta over Mr. Q, if only because provides the only serious backup for Toni if the unthinkable happens.

Milan's apparent disdain for Borriello is one of the many enduring mysteries of the current state of affairs at Milanello.

It's a very open tournament, about half the teams can rationally believe that they could win it.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 23-04-2008 13:05

Good point about back up for Toni and the major damage if he is missing from the side. I would take laquinta, too. And I would play him instead of Trezequet for Juve but that's another story. Inzaghi!? There are still some goals in them boots?

I think of all the "big" clubs the events at Milan could be the most interesting this summer.

Pre tournament is always hard for me to gauge who I at least think is good or not, as I only really see England or Italy's competitive games live. I tend to think we may be in for another 2004 early exit.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-04-2008 13:18

Speaking of Milan, Silvio has announced that he will once again be relinquishing the presidency to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest. Should you see anyone taking that to be a significant change in the decision-making process at Milan, please let me know, as I have several bridges available for sale.

He's also begun to talk down the Ronaldinho rumours, they apparently having served their electoral purpose.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-04-2008 15:51

Livorno react to their 1-4 humiliation at home to Milan (Pippo with the hat trick) by firing their manager and

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hiring back the guy they fired in October (who is still on the payroll, etc.)

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 28-04-2008 23:28

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There were rumours that Parma were about to part ways with Cuper. Fat lot of good it would do them: for me they're going down. Along with Livorno and Torino.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-04-2008 09:45

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Firing the manager with three matches left in the season strikes me as the height of megalomaniacal presidential idiocy. But then we know that Spinelli is always looking to push the envelope in this regard.

The three teams you mention are precisely the three I would least like to see go down, which is yet another reason why it is likely to happen. Parma also suffer from having what looks like the most difficult run-in of the contenders on paper, though they may well be playing Inter Primavera in their last match rather than the first team.

Here's the bottom of the table and each club's run-in (home matches in ALL CAPS)

Catania 35  
Cagliari 35  
Torino 34  
Empoli 33

-----  
Reggina 33  
Parma 31  
Livorno 30

Catania: REGGINA, Juventus, ROMA  
Cagliari: FIORENTINA, Udinese, REGGINA  
Torino: NAPOLI, Livorno, FIORENTINA  
Empoli: UDINESE, Reggina, LIVORNO  
Reggina: Catania, EMPOLI, Cagliari  
Parma: GENOA, Fiorentina, INTER  
Livorno: Atalanta, TORINO, Empoli

Reggina are ending their season with four consecutive six pointers (they won their first on Sunday against Parma), and Empoli and Livorno each have two opportunities to make up ground on direct rivals (though on current form Empoli look much more likely to be able to actually do so).

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 29-04-2008 09:52

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For me, looking at that list Catania, Cagliari, Empoli and Reggina all have the character and fighting spirit to pull out. Parma and Torino, on the other hand, still seem to think that they shouldn't be in this mess and that magically their problems will go away.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-04-2008 10:12

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It's very hard to argue with that observation.

The fact that all three of the Viola's remaining matches are against clubs in this dogfight is just one reason why I am not confident about them holding on to fourth place (the fact that Milan aren't on the list at all and that they hold the tie-break advantage over Fiorentina are two others).

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by EIM - 29-04-2008 13:21

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It's vital Torino stay up. In recent games they've been singing 'Sloop John B' after seeing it on an FC United website. Emails have been sent between sets of supporters, and we're forging links, man.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by The\_Liquidator - 29-04-2008 14:24

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Your boys look doomed man, did you see the manner of their capitulation in Rome?

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by EIM - 29-04-2008 14:46

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Of course I didn't. But it doesn't matter, as I'm sure they carried themselves with much class and dignity.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by rowdy elements - 11-05-2008 16:10

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So both the Championship and the final relegation place will be decided next week, as Parma host Inter and Catania are at home to Roma. Fiorentina will qualify for Champions League football if they avoid defeat at Torino.

Today's results:

Fiorentina-Parma 3-1

Genoa-Lazio 0-2

Inter-Siena 2-2

Juventus-Catania 1-1

Livorno-Torino 0-1

Napoli-Milan 3-1

Palermo-Sampdoria 0-2

Reggina-Empoli 2-0

Roma-Atalanta 2-1

Udinese-Cagliari 0-2

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Janik - 11-05-2008 17:11

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Materazzi had a wonderfully eventfull game. Twice blocking on target shots from his teammates. The Cruz one in particular was a brilliant 'body-on-the-line' block, and was even odder as it came at the end of a swift counter-attack. What the hell was he even doing up there?!?!? Then came him winning a dodgy penalty, taking it himself, weakly, and seeing Manniger save well.

---

It's good to see the old Inter back. Last year was a procession, which just isn't them. This stumbling at the end is much more like it. Come next Saturday, Parma must win to have any chance of staying up, with Inter knowing failure to win could see Roma pip them. Which sets Parma-Inter up brilliantly.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 11-05-2008 17:47

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\*dizzy with overexcitement\*

that was just ace. I can't believe Inter managed to screw that up. I'm sure they'll not do the same next week... but I still have a tiny tiny glimmer of hope in my stomach.

the mentalness of the celebrations for siena's equalisers, particularly the second, was quite funny.

=====

**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-05-2008 18:06

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Absolutely classic Inter.

In addition to the Materazzi lapses accurately noted by Janik, Cruz missed four or five excellent chances, Vieira couldn't put a foot right after scoring the first and assisting for the second, Julio Cesar could be faulted on both goals, and Inter looked massively unlikely to score once Balotelli went off (having all of one's attacking hopes pinned on a 17 year old is not a good sign). And Cambiasso may be out against Parma.

But if the Viola manage to beat Torino (who are now safe) next Sunday, they will be in the Champions League and Milan will not be.

=====

**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 11-05-2008 18:26

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come on Parma!!

though I was pleased enough to see them lose today in florence, and also to see Napoli beat Milan so thoroughly.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by statto99 - 11-05-2008 18:46

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I think we're all done this time, SP. I'm hoping it'll be an opportunity to regroup rather than another meltdown to go with my Yorkshire version.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 11-05-2008 19:11

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noooo you have to believe.

(not sure I do, but still....)

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by And I am the Life - 12-05-2008 13:32

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Julio Cesar could be faulted on both goals, and Inter looked massively unlikely to score once Balotelli went off (having all of one's attacking hopes pinned on a 17 year old is not a good sign)..

Sounds like england at a major international tournament

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 12-05-2008 13:38

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There's a certain symmetry to your posts today . . .

Cambiasso did his ankle ligaments in the closing stages yesterday and won't be at Parma.

After having stopped taking bets on the title four weeks ago, the bookies here have re-opened the window, with the opening odds being 3.50 for Roma and 1.25 for Inter. I would not be surprised to see the Roma odds drop over the course of the week.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by And I am the Life - 12-05-2008 14:16

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they were the same under hoddle you know.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 12-05-2008 16:13

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Apparently, the Siena manager Mario Berretta - who lives in Milan - was threatened after yesterday's game by Inter fans and his family didn't return to their house because of fears for their safety.

Anyway, for some reason I can't take the 'non c'e piu, lo scudetto di moratti non c'e piu' ditty out of my mind.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 12-05-2008 16:22

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I hadn't heard that, but as disappointing as it is, it isn't a surprise. The booing and whistles at the end of the game were extremely loud, the Inter team coach needed an escort to get through a mob of about 200 unhappy tifosi 90 minutes later, and an Interista in Pisa has been charged with creating a public danger for throwing his (28 inch) television out his (second floor) window after Materazzi missed the penalty.

It is going to be an interesting week.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 12-05-2008 18:31

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And it starts early . . .

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Parma have just fired Cuper. Against Inter, they will be led by the manager of their Primavera side.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 12-05-2008 18:40

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oh no! oh no no nononononno

feck

\*begins to pray\*

what are they thinking?

=====

**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 12-05-2008 18:48

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I'm sure the conspiracy theorists are already going full tilt.

Ghirardi is a closet Interista who sleeps in Nerazzurro pyjamas (XXXL).

Ghirardi will soon be signing a very large contract with the Moratti family oil company.

Ghirardi is superstitious even by Italian standards and could not see how Cuper could possibly win a "5 Maggio" type match.

You know the drill.

Do you think that they will let your lot go to Catania?

=====

**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 13-05-2008 17:32

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And today's evil Interista conspiracy is . . .

that the answer to my last question is no; Spangles' lot won't be going to Catania.

The Osservatorio has barred Roma fans from travelling to Catania, while allowing Interisti to go to Parma. The president of the League (that well known pillar of rectitude Antonio Matarese) has objected to the decision as being unfair, but the authorities from the Interior Ministry (who followed strong recommendations from the local police) are sticking to their decision for now.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 14-05-2008 08:01

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god damn it. if they're going to ban us they might at least ban Inter too. grr.

=====

**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by pawlu - 14-05-2008 09:21

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SP, but that would deprive you of seeing the look on their faces when they lose the title.

Believe.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-05-2008 10:03

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The Osservatorio has called another meeting for this morning to review its decision.

I have a feeling that my "for now" above is going to prove prescient, though given the police opposition in Catania it may well be that the decision they take is to bar the Interisti from going to Parma.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Hofzinsler - 14-05-2008 10:14

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That Cuper decision is just incredible. It beggars belief.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-05-2008 10:15

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The Parma chairman spent all day yesterday defending himself for accusations that it was made to benefit Inter.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 14-05-2008 10:26

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Well, Manzo is a former AC Milan player so there is still hope.

The great story is that last Saturday, Manzo played against Inter at Primavera level. Parma lost 4-2 but three of Inter's goals came from the penalty spot. Imagine what would happen if that were to be repeated next Sunday!

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-05-2008 10:41

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To shift topics, I thought your blog post on Chiellini was quite interesting. If the Juventini are suspicious of his Viola roots; the Fiorentini consider him nothing short of the worst sort of traitor. I wonder if he would be better off going to England, where his "robust style" would look "cultured" by comparison to that many of his colleagues.

He and "his people" are obviously trying to make him more appealing through various tv appearances, charity gigs and the like, but he just ain't never going to be Paolo Maldini or Gaetano Scirea.

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### Re: Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 14-05-2008 11:09

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Cheers Ursus.

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I quite like Chiellini. Not too much frills but he does his job extremely well and can play in a number of positions. It has always astonished me that he isn't more appreciated and I very much think that if he had any alternatives, Donadoni would much rather leave him out.

What's probably more astonishing, though, is Legrottaglie's revival thanks, it would seem, to his decision to re-embrace religion and to remain chaste.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-05-2008 11:21

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Notwithstanding his treachery, Donadoni should definitely take Chiellini, especially as no one (especially himself) knows what Materazzi might do or which Cannavaro will show up.

I feel the slightest bit vindicated by Legrottaglie's renaissance, because I thought he was going to be good when he was at Chievo. Though I think that his renaissance likely has more to do with Ranieri than with not having sex for two years (a claim that I take with several mines full of salt).

The "New" Juve's ability to rescue players' careers is quite impressive. In addition to Legrottaglie, notable examples include Cristiano Zanetti and Momo Sissoko (AdP is a more complex case). When we saw them take Inter apart at the Meazza, it was striking just how much better a large number of guys were playing than they had the last time we saw them (mostly with different clubs). Just why this is, I'm not sure (though it appears that Ranieri has a secret formula when it comes to Sissoko), but perhaps they should send Trezeguet somewhere on loan for six months and then bring him back.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-05-2008 07:50

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So, the Osservatorio confirmed the ban on the Romanisti travelling and punted the decision on what to do with Inter to the prefect in Parma, who is supposed to decide today whether or not he will allow sales of tickets to people outside of Parma (this being Italy, tickets for a match being played in three days have yet to go on sale anywhere).

In other news, Ibrahimovic has gotten through two days of full training for the first time in six weeks and is currently expected to be in the squad for Parma.

There's also been a split in the Roma camp when it comes to superstitions: Totti has been saying for weeks that Inter will win the title and he's been joined by Spaletti, who has put the chances of a Roma win at 1%. This has clearly been working for them, and won knowing nods from reverse jinx fans all over the country. Then yesterday, Cicinho "guaranteed" a title for the Giallorossi (at least in the Milanese papers). He must not have gotten the memo.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 15-05-2008 08:13

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I saw Cicinho's interview and was thinking "NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO" you mustn't say that! argh without wishing to be unkind, I really hope that interisti are banned from travelling too.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 15-05-2008 09:24

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Chiellini and Legrottaglie have been very good this season. I was very worried when Andrade, who I thought was looking very good, was so badly crocked at Roma.

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It will be interesting to see what Ranieri does when Mellberg arrives. He may be tempted to shift Chiellini to full back? Also, I am looking forward to Andrade coming back at some point for humane and football reasons.

I have a nagging feeling Juve overachieved this season. The added "burden" of the CL will test the older key players such as Nedved and Del Piero and the depth of the squad and Ranieri's selections.

Still Cobolli Gigli says Giovinco is coming back for next season which is, short of signing Messi, the best news for me anyway. Let's hope they give him a proper go.

Everyone down here (Interisti apart of course) is willing Roma to win it or Inter to blow it.

If Inter do blow it it may be worth a trawl past the Inter Club in the next village to ours to see if we can pick up a TV cheap.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-05-2008 09:29

And you claim that you aren't a devotee of scaramanzia . . .

I agree; the Romanisti should be able to go to Catania, but if they are barred, I don't think that it is fair for the Interisti to turn the Tardini nerazzurro. My guess is that they will try to limit ticket sales (one per person, none sold outside the province, none sold on the day, etc.) but that a couple of thousand Interisti will make it there anyway.

Today's installment in this endlessly fascinating telenovella is that wiretaps of 2006-07 conversations between Mancini, Materazzi and a number of other Inter players and their tailor have "suddenly" come to light in connection with a criminal investigation. The tailor (who was recently barred from the Inter training ground and the Meazza) just happens to be very close to the 'Ndrangheta and very much involved in a major drug investigation (as well as already having been convicted of other offenses).

There is also a tape of Mancini chatting with the tailor's partner while the latter was "on the run" from another charge in Monte Carlo. There isn't any indication that any of the Interisti may have been customers for other than tailoring services, but it is just the kind of story to stir the sh\*t three days before the season's climax.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-05-2008 10:26

Sometimes I do get it right.

The prefect of Parma has just barred the Interisti from Sunday's match. No details yet on just how they intend to enforce that.

I wonder if Inter and the Commune will put a big screen in Piazza Duomo. Even if they do, I still think we will be watching from behind our couch.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 12:23

I don't know if we are going to be able to do a "live blog" of the final day, but there has already been some trouble outside the Tardini in Parma, where the promised 4,000 Interisti without tickets have shown up.

Although the Curva Nord promised that this would be a "peaceful invasion", it appears that some of the usual suspects (largely the neo-Fascist Forza Nuova numpties) have taken the opportunity to chuck flares, firecrackers and rocks, and have been countered by tear gas from the police. Repubblica is reporting that the referees are having difficulty reaching the ground, despite a police escort.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:13

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Vucinic put Roma ahead after 8 minutes, with a perfectly angled shot after rounding two defenders.

Empoli have gone ahead at home to Livorno, which would be enough to save them on current results.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:16

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The Inter defence completely screw up a corner, leaving Morrone open from four yards, only for Julio Cesar to save with his feet. A minute later, Budan just fails to get his head to a dangerous cross.

Fiorentina have had a number of good chances at Torino, but have yet to score.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Senyor Pirotecnic - 18-05-2008 14:28

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Spanish telly was showing Parma - Inter until they switched to bloody tennis. There seems to be a number of Inter fans in the ground, am I right?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:29

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Inter starting to look a little bit more dangerous after a slow start. Some bad fouls on both sides in a downpour at Parma.

Kalac has saved Milan twice from going down to Udinese, while Fiorentina continue to threaten at Torino.

In other matches that don't have major influence: Siena 1 Palermo 1, Lazio 1 Napoli 0, Cagliari 1 Reggina 0.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:30

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There are close to 1000 Interisti who got around the "ban".

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:36

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Udinese go ahead at the Meazza through Mesto, who beats Kalac with a powerful shot after slicing through the defence. Lots of whistles from the home support.

Atalanta up 1-0 against Genoa.

Doni with an incredible reflex save off a free kick to keep Roma ahead of Catania.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 14:51

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Half time.

If the season ended now, Roma would be champions, Fiorentina would get the fourth CL spot and Catania, Parma and Livorno would go down to B.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Senyor Pirotecnic - 18-05-2008 14:58

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You seem very calm considering your team is playing for (and throwing away) the scudetto!

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:02

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My team is Fiorentina; my son is the Interista (and very fatalistic, he thinks that the above is too positive as far as Inter goes).

Ibrahimovic is going to come on for the second half in Parma; we will see if that imparts a sense of urgency that has been strangely lacking in the first half. All of the traditional Inter demons seem to have re-appeared in the last three weeks.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:10

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Saudati blasts a penalty against the post for Empoli.

And Pato converts a Cafu cross from two yards, Milan-Udinese 1-1.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:15

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Ibra comes on and creates a chance with his first touch.

Baiocco fires wide from a good position for Catania.

The Viola, with new urgency following Pato's equaliser create yet more chances, but still can't convert.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:19

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Saudati puts Empoli 2-0 up with a great flick off the outside of his boot.

Reggina equalise against Cagliari, and Siena tie it up against Palermo.

Parma-Inter has increased significantly in intensity

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:20

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Pippo gets Milan's second, and puts Milan in the CL (for now).

Forza Viola.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:23

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Torino have a goal ruled out for a non-existent offside.

Miramoto just puts a header over for Catania, their third "pala goal" in the last five.

IBRA GOAL!

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:25

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Lucarelli on for Parma. They have to win to stay up.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:29

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Toro-Viola could be 5-3 on chances, but is still 0-0. Frey just saves again from Stallone.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:32

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Pippo falls down in the area and gets a penalty, which is saved from Kaka, and Pippo hits the bar with the rebound.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:37

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Catania is doing everything other than scoring. Two off the bar in the last five minutes, and Doni with another brilliant save off Miramoto.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:38

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VIOLA GOAL!!!

Osvaldo with a bicycle kick.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:40

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Ibra puts Inter 2-0 up, with a perfect volley off a Maicon cross.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:41

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Cafu scores in his last match for Milan.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:44

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Catania have a goal that would keep them up ruled out for a very obvious offside.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:46

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Livorno pull one back against Empoli; if they get a second, they will send Empoli down.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:47

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Martinez scores from three yards for Catania, who finally convert a chance, they have dominated since Roma lost heart after Inter went 2-0 up. Empoli are now going down.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:50

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Seedorf puts Milan 4-1 up, but a large portion of the crowd has already left.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:53

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Over at Catania.

Unless Parma score three in injury time, the scudetto is Inter's; Empoli, Parma and Livorno go down.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 15:55



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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 18-05-2008 20:35

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Congrats Ursus and Ursus minor. There's always the Coppa Italia, SP.

Glad Catania stayed up, and Milan outside Champions League.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-05-2008 23:33

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There are still numpties honking horns outside. But not very many.

I honestly hope that Roma win the Coppa; they deserve a trophy, and Spangles and the rest of her brethren in the Sud deserve to see them win something at home. And Mats beat me to what I wanted to say about Ibra. He may not show up against English clubs, but he completely changed the dynamic when he came on, and both goals were first class finishes. The spectres of the 5 Maggio will never disappear forever, but he certainly put them more than a bit further back in the closet than they were at half time.

Moratti has said that Mancini is staying; who knows if that is true or not. This team needs serious work if it is going to challenge for number 4 and (finally) do something in Europe.

Osvaldo's goal is more than worthy of the Champions League. If the gods had been laying book, I would have much preferred Silvio out of government and Milan in the CL, but since they don't exist, I am over the moon that the Viola are back in it. With some luck, that will keep Frey and Prandelli at the Comunale/Franchi for at least one more year.

I'm really sorry that Parma went down, and ursus minor is quite gutted that Empoli (his second team) went with them. In both cases, the trigger happy presidents should be looking at themselves in the mirror.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Rumpus - 21-05-2008 12:09

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Congratulations to you and yours Ursus.

You say Inter need to rebuild. Seems to me that with the traditional summer decapitation of the Nerazzurri piggy bank to come and with Mancini set to re-incarnate as another cashmered European manager, Inter could be spending with more abandon than usual.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 21-05-2008 13:23

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Inter's first order of business (after the Cup Final this weekend) has to be deciding whether Mancini is staying or not. My sense is that it is pretty much Mancio's decision at this point, and that he is genuinely conflicted, but it simply doesn't make any sense to start serious transfer talk before one knows who the manager is going to be. To give just one example, it is very unlikely that Figo will stay if Mancini does.

I also think that Moratti has realised that this good run has coincided with him taking a less personal approach to collecting strikers like Panini stickers, and that the comparatively rational policy of the last few seasons is likely to be reprised. It is also possible that next season will start to see some of Balotelli's former Primavera teammates get some time in the first team (while I would expect Balotelli himself to start at half of the games).

One threat to that is the sense (constantly fuelled by the media) that Moratti "needs" to buy the tifosi a "big present" for the club's centenary. Michael Essien would be significantly more valuable to the team than any of Ronaldinho, Eto'o, or

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Drogba.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by And I am the Life - 21-05-2008 15:13

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That balotelli looks like a potent amalgam of muscular precipitation. I think Inter should follow tradition though and give him another five years in the primavera.

They should defo give this guy a contact. What a Goal and he'll have all the chicks pouring into the stadium.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by Etienne - 21-05-2008 15:41

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If motivated, Eto'o would be an excellent signing for Inter, Drogba too. I saw the Milan derby and Cruz and Crespo were embarrassingly inept. Cruz is worth keeping for his rabbit-killing qualities, but they can't rely on Ibrahimovic alone (esp in the CL, obviously), and Balotelli doesn't seem a natural out and out striker.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by ursus arctos - 21-05-2008 16:37

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It's a question of priorities.

A motivated Eto'o or Drogba would improve just about any team, but they wouldn't be near the top of my list in terms of what Inter needs right now.

I also think Balotelli is very much a striker. He isn't an Inzaghiesque poacher or a Toni-like target man, but he's got a terrific shot and is useful with his head (for an Italian).

And he's only 17.

Aiatl is right, "old" Inter would have left Balotelli to rot in the Primavera. His getting a decent run in the first team was pretty much the only seriously positive aspect of their season in the period between the Liverpool matches and Ibra coming on against Parma.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by Etienne - 21-05-2008 16:55

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Ok, he sort of gave me the impression of being a trequartista or a winger more than anything else. But I've only seen him play 3 times, so pretty limited viewing.

Obviously Essien would be a good signing for Inter, but he'd be a good signing for anyone.

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**Re:Serie A 2007-08**

Posted by Etienne - 21-05-2008 16:57

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Incidentally, is he definitely declaring for Italy, or do Ghana still have a chance? Adding any striker more lethal than Junior Agogo to that team would be a huge boost.

And (in as far as it's possible to tell), is it in Balotelli's economic interest to declare for Italy, or does he genuinely feel

more Italian than Ghanian?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 21-05-2008 17:04

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One could see him as a trequartista (he is also excellent with corners (from either side) and quite good with free kicks), but he certainly has the physical attributes and skill to be an out and out striker; the simple fact is that he is a genuine talent and can still develop further.

Today's Serie A news is all Viola-tinted:

Ujfalusi, who was out of contract, has signed with Atletico Madrid through 2011.

Fiorentina are supposedly about to sign Melo, a 25 year old Brazilian midfielder from Almeria (who did not make a lasting impression on me the two times I saw them play this year). His recission clause is supposed to have been in the range of 15 million euro (which strikes me as high).

Balotelli has been in Italy since he was 2 and is completely Italian "culturally" (having been raised in an Italian family); I don't see him having any real interest in playing for a national team other than the Azzurri. It also is very important to Inter that he be Italian, as they are constantly being accused of being nothing but a bunch of foreign mercenaries.

Here he is with his adoptive family during a holiday:

[http://www.mariobalotelli.it/images/biografia/in\\_barca.jpg](http://www.mariobalotelli.it/images/biografia/in_barca.jpg)

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by jefe - 22-05-2008 03:25

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Juve are sending their primavera team to tour America. They play Seattle Sounders June 12th, 2 more games here as well.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-05-2008 17:17

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A team claiming to be Juve have been getting beaten by the likes of South China and Shenua Shanghai this week.

In other news, Gilardino has signed with the Viola, after having agreed to halve his Milan salary so as to preserve Fiorentina's wage structure. If Prandelli can get him back to the player he was when they were last together at Parma, the Viola will have themselves a bargain.

The Amauri to Juve saga is still dragging on, as Lanzafame (the Italian U-21 international) is balking at going to Palermo on a coproprieta deal as part of the transaction. West Ham are supposedly making goo goo eyes at him. Juve's interest in Xabi Alonso is also supposed to have cooled a bit.

Milan are being Milan, despite Silvio being in power. Galliani is now saying that Zambrotta, Drogba and Eto'o are all "too expensive" and that they don't really need Ronaldinho. They also seem to have given up on Frey (fingers crossed), and may be pipped to Nice's promising keeper Lloris by Olympique Lyon.

Donadoni is getting a bit ticked off at all the transfer talk, which has dominated his preparations for the Euros.

And the many OTFers with millions to burn will be interested to note that the Mattareses are taking offers for Bari, and have indicated that they will sell for Euro 15 million.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by jason voorhees - 28-05-2008 17:32

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by The\_Liquidator - 28-05-2008 18:08

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Come on ursus, PM me this instant. or don't I won't tell anyone.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-05-2008 18:20

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Ask our mutual friend.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 28-05-2008 18:46

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Yes a very laboured Juve out east, though Trezequet seemed to enjoy the run out and scored a couple.

In their first match Juve had only FIAT emblazoned in big red lettering on the front of their shirts, which was quite something to see.

Though this appears to have been a one off, for the FIAT Cup match with South China I think, and FIAT will continue to be understated as part of the New Holland sponsor logo.

I am a bit of a dreamer, but I hope to see Giovinco, Marchisio and Lanzafame tearing it up for Juve in the not too distant future.

I would like to see Amauri but this ceding of talented young lads and co-ownership stuff, I don't understand it , but I KNOW I won't like it.

They have been influential in getting Italy to the final of the U20 tournament (beat Japan on pens in semi)

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-05-2008 18:52

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That I can talk about.

I thought the new/old Fiat logo looked much better than the over-detailed New Holland one. It is a one off for the weird tri-club competition with Parma and Shenua, but the deal is that the Fiat Group gets to choose which one of the brands they want to promote, and I wouldn't be surprised to see New Holland give way to another in a year or two.

Giovinco and Lanzafame are clearly dying to play for your lot, and I'm a bit troubled by what they will do once they are allowed to do so.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 28-05-2008 19:55

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They are special young players from what I have seen. Giovinco will definitely get a good chance next year (I think/hope - I am not privvy to the decision making process at Juve I hasten to add),

How, if for example, Lanzafame is co-owned by Palermo does that work? I have never really understood it

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by jamzinho - 28-05-2008 20:54

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Ursus, how/where do you see Gilardino fitting in at Fiorentina? Is anyone likely to leave?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-05-2008 21:40

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I have a feeling that Osvaldo is gone if someone (Tottenham? A Spanish club?) is ready to pay for him. Prandelli has said that Vieri will be better next season, but for all the faith I have in Prandelli, I think he's blowing smoke there. The question then becomes if the Viola play both Gila and Pazzini or only one of them; my guess is that they will try both and see how it works, but that if it comes down to a "if Gila and Pazzini are both drowning situation", Prandelli will go with Gila. Where Jovetic fits into this (should he be signed), I don't know. In this context, it is worth noting that I have always had my doubts about Pazzini and would actually rather sell him than Osvaldo (but my last name is not Della Valle).

Sixmartlets, coproprieta works fine as long as the two clubs are in agreement as to what to do with the player (for whom he plays, who pays what percentage of his salary, etc.). Those deals are made on a season-by-season basis, and if the two clubs can't come to an agreement, there is a sealed bidding procedure (the famous "buste" or "envelopes") in which both clubs submit a bid for 100% of the player's registration to the Lega, with the highest bid winning. If Lanzafame really dreams only of playing in black and white, he should be going to Palermo and not toying with West Ham, as his chances of being a Juve player are much higher if he doesn't go to England.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 28-05-2008 22:27

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Thanks Ursus I can understand that.

I hope, selfishly, that he doesn't go to West Ham as I cannot stand them.

Juve should keep all of him in my opinion, even if it means a No for Amauri now.

Worryingly, yesterday or the day before Gazzetta dello Sport and Tuttosport both stated that Juve are very keen on Riise! Go figure. I'd like Alonso though.

It is a giddy time though and will only get worse in the next few weeks and months.

I love the way the Italian sports papers have always provided team graphics near to and during the close season showing the likely formation/players for clubs in the next season or post transfer window these days. Always including a number of wild transfer targetees. It's all very exciting.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by jamzinho - 29-05-2008 23:03

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Ursus, I see you mentioned on the La Liga thread that the Italian press are mooting a swap deal between Barca and Inter for Eto'o and Ibrahimovic.

Since news broke yesterday of mourinho's imminent appointment, I've been thinking about potential signings, and how he would shape the Inter team. One player I thought of immediately who I thought he wouldn't work with was Zlatan, but I could for some reason see Eto'o playing in his system (and of course Drogba).

Any chance it might actually happen?

Are the Italian press also speculating on who else will get the chop straight away at Inter?

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 30-05-2008 06:58

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Being the Italian football press, they are speculating wildly on everything (even on what the Special One is likely to wear on the touchline).

I would be shocked if Ibra went anywhere. His agent was quoted last night as saying that a swap was "possible", but I take that as just typical agent stirring. Mancini has gotten a (to me) surprising amount of support from the tifosi, and getting rid of Ibra would really start things off of the wrong foot. Ibra has also been quite enthusiastic about Mourinho's arrival.

As to departures, all of the focus has been on arrivals, and my sense is that no decisions of that sort will be made until they have a better idea of who is coming in.

According to reports, Jose has been very impressed with Zanetti, Maicon and Cambiasso, which shows that he's been paying attention.

In other Serie A transfer news:

Milan have acquired the half of Boriello's registration that Genoa had, and have re-signed Abbiati from Atletico Madrid. Dida, who has repeatedly refused to terminate his contract, is now their third keeper and risks becoming the Brazilian Winston Bogarde.

Samp have acquired Cassano's registration from Real Madrid and will only owe the Merengues something if they sell him to another club.

Liverani will be leaving the Viola, and is most likely to end up at Palermo.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 30-05-2008 09:45

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Don't forget to mention that Lazio have sent Rolando Bianchi back to Manchester City. Guess who wants him now? Wolfsburg who are quickly building an Italian enclave wherever in Germany they happen to be (having signed Zaccardo and Barzagli).

On to something different, the former Juventus coach Paulo Amaral died last month. Did a bit of research for a piece on my blog and was surprised to discover that he was a really fascinating man.

He was on the coaching staff of the Brazil sides that won the World Cups in 1958 and 1962 - officially as the physical trainer but unofficially he was the one who prepared the team tactically. He was also one of the first to adopt a zonal marking system. Quite sad who forgotten he was in the end.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by Lodzubelieveit - 30-05-2008 22:20

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Teamtalk, getting all lyrical on a Friday night, say when the world starts to shine like you've had too much wine, that's Amauri ...

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-05-2008 11:17

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While the Gazzetta gets ready for Mourinho Mania by devoting its first four pages to the fact that Jose, Moratti and three

other Inter representatives had lunch at le Tour d'Argent in Paris yesterday (without a single quote or a note of what they ordered).

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by jamzinho - 31-05-2008 19:26

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On the subject of Inter, Goal.com says of Gazetta...

### Mourinho Demands Hamsik As First Signing

According to the Gazzetta dello Sport, Jose Mourinho has given Inter President Massimo Moratti the list of four players he wants to buy this summer, and at the top of this list is Napoli sensation Marek Hamsik.

The Gazzetta says that 'The Special One' has already notified Moratti of the four players he wants to sign ahead of the 2008/09 campaign.

Top of the list is Napoli midfielder Marek Hamsik. The 20-year-old joined the Partenopei last summer from Serie B side Brescia and was an absolute revelation this season...

...The three other players Mourinho wants to sign are Udinese's Gokhan Inler, Sevilla winger Diego Capel, and Arsenal's Aliaksandr Hleb.

Genoa's Abdoulay Konko will be the only player desired by Mancini that will arrive, joining from Genoa.

Another article claims that Diarra from Real Madrid is on his hit list, whilst he has instructed Moratti to sell Ibrahimovic...

The 'Special One' is said to agree with those who believe that Ibrahimovic fails when it comes to the big games, particularly in the Champions League, a competition that Mourinho has been brought to Inter to win.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-05-2008 20:35

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The amount of garbage is truly staggering.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 01-06-2008 00:19

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so far as the Soros thing goes, I have just been ignoring it all in the vain hope it might go away. but it obviously isn't going to. argh.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-06-2008 17:54

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Bologna make it back to A by beating Pisa at home.

Lecce, Albinoleffe, Brescia and Pisa will contest the playoffs for the one remaining place.

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## Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-06-2008 09:47

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Lecce and Brescia won the first leg of their promotion playoffs; second leg this Sunday.

In transfer news:

Livorno and Italy keeper Amelia has signed for Palermo, but it has otherwise been rather quiet.

The Gazzetta is reporting this morning that Inter is offering Stankovic (who is clearly gone, having nailed his colours to Mancini's mast) and 25 million euro to Atletico Madrid for Kun Aguero. If Mourinho pulls that off, he truly is special.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 06-06-2008 14:29

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Lecce's goal was a peach by Tiribocchi. Albinoleffe, on the other hand, were desperately unlucky when they saw Chiellini hacked (litterally) in the box. Not only did they not get a penalty but he was sent off for simulation. Three minutes later, Brescia scored the winner.

That said, perhaps it is the karma that they've sent out. A day from the end of the season they sacked coach Giustinetti after the fantastic season they've had. The man they replaced him with is the wonderfully monikered Armando Madonna.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-06-2008 14:55

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I'm pretty sure it's going to be Lecce and Brescia, who are also the two clubs most likely to stand a chance of surviving in the top flight (though either would struggle).

Albinoleffe are just too small to make a go of Serie A, and while Pisa are not, going from C1 to A in consecutive seasons is a very serious challenge for any club.

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by pawlu - 06-06-2008 22:19

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For different reasons I've got a soft spot for all four clubs so it will be pleasing and disappointing at the same time no matter the outcome.

One thing though: how miserable is it when not even the play-offs are screened on TV?

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### Re:Serie A 2007-08

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-06-2008 22:22

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There's a local channel that is carrying the Brescia matches on pay per view for 10 euro a pop, but it is very, very sad.

It should be better going forward, as the League has agreed to sell the rights for Serie A and Serie B together.

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