
Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 04-07-2008 05:06

Now that the fuss for the disappointing showing at Euro 2008 has died down, the focus is slowly shifting towards the next Serie A season.

Juventus have been possibly the most active club signing Amauri from Palermo and Knezevic from Livorno as well as being linked to a host of other not least Xabi Alonso who has been on the 'verge' of signing for the past three weeks now.

A surprising feature of their transfer strategy has been the willingness with which they've been getting rid their young players. A year back the likes of Rafaele Palladino, Davide Lanzafame, Cristiano Paro, Domenico Criscito were being mentioned as the future of the club, now they've all been sold. Something that cannot be said of Tiago with no one apparently interested in him no matter how hard Juve try to pimp him.

Inter have been surprisingly quite, with their only notable arrival being that of Jose Mourinho. They've been linked to quite a few players - Frank Lampard and Riccardo Quaresma in particular - but haven't really made any serious moves.

The opposite applies to AC Milan. They started off well by getting Mathieu Flamini and then were linked with Ronaldinho in Berlusconi's usual pre-election ploy. The 'deal' promptly fell through once Berlusconi was elected and since then they've been linked to a number of top level strikers only to drop their interest as soon as they are told that they're going to cost them anything more than a fiver. They have signed Marco Borriello from Genoa, even if they don't seem to enamoured with him.

AS Roma have permanently signed Mirko Vucevic along with Chelsea favourite John Arne Riise. Napoli have discovered that buying Argentines makes their fans happy so have been focusing on that, although the arrival of Cristiano Maggio will be a good one.

The summer has also been livened up by the fans' protests at Atalanta where they weren't too happy at the return of Cristian Vieri who the claim two years ago used the club to regain full fitness before going off to Fiorentina. Similar protests have been going off in Turin after the news of the club's potential interest in Inter's Dejan Stankovic.

Finally, the Lega and FIGC have agree to allow one more non-EU player (extra-comunitario) to play in the Serie A. Takes me back to the eighties when each summer there would be talk of whether clubs would be allowed any more foreigners.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 04-07-2008 06:46

Ah, very glad someone started this.

Though you have somehow omitted the club that virtually all observers (including those much more impartial than I am) consider to have had the most successful mercato to date.

Fiorentina: Gilardino, Vargas, Melo, Jovetic. Now all they have to do is agree extensions for Frey and Mutu (though if Corvino is actually able to convince Roma to part with Perrotta and 13 million euro for the latter, I will be happy to drive Mutu to Trigoria).

The future is bright. The future is purple.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pengedragon - 04-07-2008 13:16

another viola fan here

any word on any uk tv deals next season now that channel 5 have dropped their coverage ?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 04-07-2008 13:32

The opposite applies to AC Milan. They started off well by getting Mathieu Flamini and then were linked with Ronaldinho in Berlusconi's usual pre-election ploy. The 'deal' promptly fell through once Berlusconi was elected

<http://soccernet.espn.go.com/news/story?id=553566&sec=europe&cc=5901>

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 04-07-2008 13:44

Fiorentina: hope springs eternal!

Palladino and Criscito are probaly not quite good enough for Juve, he said somewhat arrogantly. Sorry.

Lanzafame's is a comproprietà deal so if he does the business in Palermo I hope he will still end up a Juve man one day soonish. It will benefit him playing regularly, if he does, of course.

I think Juve may have sent him out on loan this season, like they did with Marchisio and Giovinco last season, but wanted Amauri very much so had to make a different type of deal. Hopefully.

Matteo Paro, I personally liked quite a bit when given a good run in serie B by Juve and I was disappointed he went.

Giovinco and Marchisio are back and should get a proper chance this season, if Cobolli Gigli is to be believed. I hope so, especially Giovinco, as I am very keen on Juve starting to give young'uns a good go in numbers.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 04-07-2008 14:14

Palermo have been the most active though in Seria A, losing the likes of Amauri, Barzagli, Zaccardo and replcaing them with Liverani, Lanzafame and a host of others.

Surprised Barzagli and Zaccardo ended up in Wolfsburg, did they get a major injection of cash this summer? I heard they are after Di Natale aswell. Apperently Barzagli picked them over his hometown club Fiorentina.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by SamLKelly - 04-07-2008 14:22

pengedragon wrote:

any word on any uk tv deals next season now that channel 5 have dropped their coverage ?

They've done WHAT?! They were even quieter about that than when they bought the bloody thing last year!

After one season? Are you sure? What are we meant to do with our Sunday afternoons now?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pengedragon - 04-07-2008 14:54

yes, definitely true

hopefully someone will pick it up soon

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Hofzinsler - 04-07-2008 15:03

Celtic have been linked with a move for a young Roma left back, Vitornio Antues. Is he any good?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 05-07-2008 05:56

Aren't Setanta going to screen it now?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 05-07-2008 10:27

Milan have never really been very sure what to make of Marco Borriello have they. I think there is a mentality at the club that he's not really their sort of player - i.e. pretty to look at with a bit of elegance with Inzaghi given an honourable exemption for his long service.

I'd reckon they are probably a little bemused at his progress and probably not all that enthused they are pretty much compelled to recall him and give him a shot. Expect him to be a regular on the bench next season except for Coppa Italia matches and then sold on next summer when his name is still strong enough to command a decent fee.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-07-2008 19:07

DingDong, Wolfsburg are controlled by Volkswagen, which has again decided that that building a successful football club is a relatively cheap way to "build their brand", especially outside of Germany. And Luca Toni's success at Bayern has made Italians the flavour of month in the Bundesliga; thus the exodus to Wolfsburg (which is pretty much nothing but the VW headquarters and factory).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 06-07-2008 19:12

Is it wolfsburg or Duisburg that is the centre of calabrian mafia activity in germany? I can vaguely remember an article about how for some reason the Italian team felt compelled to base their 2006 wc training camp in a city where a large number of calabrians were gunned down at dinner.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Nico Rijnders - 06-07-2008 19:51

pawlu wrote:

Aren't Setanta going to screen it now?

Setanta in the UK? Don't think anything to that affect has been announced, has it?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-07-2008 20:38

aiatl, it's Duisburg.

And the executions were more than a year after the World Cup.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 06-07-2008 20:47

There wouldn't have been any point going there after everyone was dead i suppose. I was talking to someone from the next village over from san luca (?) at a party about four or five months ago. What an exciting life they lead in the south of italy.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 06-07-2008 20:58

You have an interesting circle of friends.

This particular feud, which allegedly dates back to an episode of egg throwing during the traditional procession on the patron saint's name day, has been going on for more than 30 years, and has now claimed several dozen victims.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 06-07-2008 21:18

never mind all that, the guy with him was from catanzaro (?) and he was very surprised when I started talking to him about crucial penalties denied and scored in the early eighties.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 07-07-2008 06:34

As I said, you have an interesting circle of friends.

It must have been have your accent that threw him, as dodgy penalties and organised crime are pretty much all that Catanzaro is known for in the rest of the country.

One of the club chairmen down there was blown up a couple of months ago when he tried to start his car. It's a "challenging" area for outsiders.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 07-07-2008 12:57

I was thinking more of the one that catanzaro were denied on the last day of the season back in 82, shortly before liam brady knocked in one that won juventus a league, while roma were being denied blatant penalty after blatant penalty.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 07-07-2008 13:02

A year back the likes of Rafaele Palladino, Davide Lanzafame, Cristiano Paro, Domenico Criscito were being mentioned as the future of the club, now they've all been sold.

These players are ridiculously highly rated in football manager. Criscito is so highly rated that a couple of years in, he won the european footballer of the year in the one game that I played. There's a player called nocerino who I suspect isn't as good in real life. There's a little midget called giovinco (whose name escapes me) that has been on loan there this season, and he's rated as one of the best young players in the world.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 07-07-2008 13:04

So was I, but it isn't the only one.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 07-07-2008 16:03

I'm currently mulling over whether to get a Roma seasons ticket or not, but looking at my finances it's not looking very likely. It's a shame, but then I can always go to the big games like a massive glory boy and watch Cisco Roma fuck about uselessly in Serie C2 (fourth division) every Saturday.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 07-07-2008 16:25

aiatl, I have no idea what they are like in Football Manager, but Giovinco and Nocerino are among the top five rated young Italians in real life. Giovinco in particular is thought to have the potential to be very special, and showed more than a few flashes of that while on loan to Empoli last season. He is a midget, but so was Zola.

T_L, PM for you.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 07-07-2008 17:12

Replied.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senyor Pirotecnic - 07-07-2008 17:16

The_Liquidator wrote:

I'm currently mulling over whether to get a Roma season ticket or not, but looking at my finances it's not looking very likely.

I thought they were dirt cheap?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 07-07-2008 18:07

Yes, yes they are. But when you don't have a job you kind of have to prioritise.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Etienne - 07-07-2008 18:14

Maybe Lazio might be cheaper?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sharon - 07-07-2008 18:17

Inter

From the outside they seem to be one of the giants of Italian football, spoken of warmly by most of the ex-players that I've heard. They've won the last 3 titles and have a rich, cash-generous owner.

But an Italian journalist said he couldn't understand why Lampard would want to leave Chelsea for Inter. That Mourinho wouldn't last a season.

I've seen them variously described as being in a in a state of permanent chaos, a lunatic asylum, a basket case, the worst run club this side of Newcastle.

Why in particular are they so disdained?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 07-07-2008 18:24

because they got caught buying all of their european success?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sharon - 07-07-2008 18:43

And that would single them out because?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by EIM - 07-07-2008 18:47

The_Liquidator wrote:

Yes, yes they are. But when you don't have a job you kind of have to prioritise.

Yeah. And buying something that'll give you free entertainment for the best part of the year comes out pretty high on any list.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 07-07-2008 19:02

no they actually bought the referees in their three European cup semi finals in the mid sixties. Now they're suffering the karma or something.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 07-07-2008 19:56

Welcome sharon.

One should take aiatl's views on Italian football with several mountains of salt.

That said, he is correct about Inter having bribed referees in the 60s. Though as you say, that hardly makes them unique in Italy.

My guesses as to why your contact said what he did:

- 1) he's Juventino;
- 2) he's Milanista;
- 3) he's Romanista;
- 4) he's one of the (many) Italians who believe that Inter have somehow betrayed the homeland by playing very few Italians; and/or
- 5) he's thinking of Inter circa 1995-2000.

I would be willing to bet a significant sum of cash that Mourinho will last more than one season at the Meazza.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sharon - 07-07-2008 22:53

Thanks ursus. Like I said my sources were only various Italian journalists from all the well known Italian newspapers, and it's stuff I've read since Mourinho joined so they're definitely talking about the current Inter, as they see it anyway.

Now I don't see the Italian media so maybe all the big Italian clubs get an equal whack, but I haven't seen others attracting the same sort of ridicule. Maybe they do and I've missed it. Milan tend to be talked about in hushed tones as a well-oiled machine, ultra professionally run. Juventus attract flack but for other well known reasons.

So there's nothing about the current Inter set-up to you that would justify these comments? Or make them any more insanely run than any other football club.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 07-07-2008 22:57

I think if you can find a list of players signed by massimo moratti, and put them alongside the money he paid for them, and then compare it to what he won before Juventus got got doing the second type of bold thing, then I think you should have your answer.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Hieronymus of Hesselink - 08-07-2008 00:02

Saying that Internazionale have "won the last three titles" in Italy is technically correct, but essentially meaningless for the most part.

They were given the 2006 one because Juventus were caught bribing referees, and they won the 2007 one while Juventus were in Serie B and Milan began the season eight points down (which should have been a lot more) and subsequently ploughed all resources and energies into the Champions League. None of which was Inter's problem, but it still meant that it hardly went down as a title win dripping in glory. As Serie A hat-tricks go, you would have a difficult job comparing it to Il Grande Torino or Capello's Milan.

Incidentally, given Inter's own comprehensive history of bribing referees, I would be strongly disinclined to believe that they have been wholly innocent of corruption-related jiggery pokery over the last decade themselves. Maybe I am being unfair to them, but then, that's one of the problems of engaging in large-scale and systematic cheating -- once you do it, then people tend not to trust you or take you seriously thereafter. (See also: Juventus themselves, Porto, Mike McCurry.)

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 08-07-2008 01:34

there is no way on earth that massimo moratti could bribe a referee without getting caught immediately. And even if he did give a referee a load of cash, there is no way that the ref would follow through. It's not like he'd be afraid of the chinless spineless daddy's boy.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-07-2008 05:54

Sharon, I live in Milan and have season tickets to Inter (though I support Fiorentina), and my view above stands. For virtually all of the 80s, 90s and early 00s, Inter were a source of constant amusement for Italians who did not support them and a source of constant pain for those that did. There is an entire literature of several dozen books devoted to their psychoses and those that they inspire in their tifosi, but ever since Calciopoli, the club has been run in a significantly more professional fashion, and Moratti has drastically reduced his penchant for collecting strikers like Panini stickers. One need look no further in that regard than the fact that he got rid of Alvaro Recoba after paying him something approaching a million euro a goal for close to a decade.

Hieronymus, it won't surprise you that I think you are being unfair. The 2006 scudetto was definitely "cardboard" (to use the local term), but 2007 was won on the field in a dominating performance against everyone they were allowed to face (except Roma at the Meazza). They finished 33 points ahead of Milan, so it's hardly as if the penalty made a significant difference.

As to suggestions that they are cheating, in addition to the somewhat valid point that aiatl makes, one has to realise that Inter are under tremendous scrutiny, as roughly two-thirds of the country would like nothing more than to bring them into the muck from which Juve and Milan have recently emerged. I do think that they have on occasion benefited from the kind of calls that "big clubs" get in many countries, but would honestly be shocked to find out that they have engaged in more than that since Calciopoli.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 09-07-2008 08:20

Ganja, if he's still around in some guise, will be pleased to know that Billy Costacurta is being touted as the main candidate to take over as manager of Pisa in the Serie B.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 09-07-2008 09:41

The_Liquidator wrote:

I'm currently mulling over whether to get a Roma seasons ticket or not, but looking at my finances it's not looking very likely. It's a shame, but then I can always go to the big games like a massive glory boy and watch Cisco Roma fuck about uselessly in Serie C2 (fourth division) every Saturday.

Is DiCanio still with Cisco Roma?

Or does he go to Lazio games on the Curva now that he has left or are all the Lazio Ultras still protesting against Lotito?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-07-2008 09:45

Di Canio retired this spring.

I don't know if he goes to Lazio, but would guess that he has some connections with the groups that are boycotting the club in an effort to get rid of Lotito.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 09-07-2008 10:25

ursus arctos wrote:

Di Canio retired this spring.

I don't know if he goes to Lazio, but would guess that he has some connections with the groups that are boycotting the club in an effort to get rid of Lotito.

Oh right, wasn't sure what happened him. Is that protest still going on or has it faded recently? Looks like Lotito won't leave anyway, am I right in saying that most Lazio fans actually think he is doing a decent job? Obviously the Ultras are pissed off because he stopped their influence in regards merchandising and other areas within the club.

I see they missed out on Amoruso but have finally signed Carizzo from River, do you know how much that cost them? The only clip I've seen of him he looked rubbish.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-07-2008 10:49

Spangles pays much more attention to Lazio than I do, but my sense is that there is still a significant portion of the more vocal support that wants Lotito gone. A large part of that arises from the economic reasons you mention, though there is another element that believes he is not spending enough (such element not having learned anything from the Cragnotti experience, it appears). In any event, I do think that there is a substantial base of more bourgeois fans that appreciates what Lotito is doing, but that element of Lazio's support has always been rather fair-weather (at least when compared to Roma).

As to Carrizzo, the saga has lasted more than a year now and the fee has always been a bit vague, but what I've read has it in the range of 8-10 million euro. He has actually been very good for River Plate (Sam Kelly will attest to that), and quite a few Argentines think he should start for the national team (especially given Abbondanzieri's recent lack of form).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 09-07-2008 11:21

My hope is to see Mourinho put his personal stamp on this chestnut:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr3hdGJK6rw>

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-07-2008 11:34

Ah, the first Italian song that ursus minor learnt all the words to . . .

This is going to be a highly entertaining season.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 10-07-2008 09:02

This is highly amusing (though perhaps less so if one supports Chelsea).

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by blameless - 10-07-2008 10:42

I liked "unfriend Lampard on facebook".

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 10-07-2008 10:51

That was also my favourite bit.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 10-07-2008 13:41

And one of the summer's transfer telenovellas appears to have reached its conclusion.

Mancini (the Brazilian winger) from Roma to Inter for 13 million; a four year contract worth 3.5 million.

It will be interesting to see what Roma do with the money (Inter had been trying hard to get them to take players in exchange, but they insisted on cash) and whether Lampard and Quaresma follow Mancini to the Meazza.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 10-07-2008 22:42

I've always been a little less than sure about Mancini to be honest, though this deal at least shows the fee gap between England and the rest of the planet.

I'm assuming €13m rather than £13m ? If so then that's a good deal compared with the €17m valuation being bandied around here for that no mark Stuart Downing.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by jefe - 11-07-2008 00:48

Since there's now a 08-09 thread, fwiw Juventus sent their primavera squad to tour the Pacific Northwest like Milan did last summer, and they got thoroughly beaten by Portland, Seattle, and some club team from Eugene, Oregon last month. They scored maybe 1 goal, if that.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 11-07-2008 08:50

Mancini is the very definition of the term 'salad'.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Bombanersson - 11-07-2008 09:06

Sharon's view is shared by the Juventino I see most days, and it gets RIGHT on my tits. He does not just think that Inter are involved in corruption, he thinks that Inter are responsible for the misperception that Juve were involved in corruption. 'veeery powerful peeeeeople' is my least favourite phrase, when talking to Italians about football.

EDIT-sharon's view does not get on my tits, being much more measured than the paranoid delusions I hear on a regular basis.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 11-07-2008 09:18

Bombanersson wrote:

Sharon's view is shared by the Juventino I see most days, and it gets RIGHT on my tits. He does not just think that Inter are involved in corruption, he thinks that Inter are responsible for the misperception that Juve were involved in corruption. 'veeery powerful peeeeeople' is my least favourite phrase, when talking to Italians about football.

EDIT-sharon's view does not get on my tits, being much more measured than the paranoid delusions I hear on a regular basis.

In times like this, a quote by the late, great Beppe Prisco comes to mind: after I shake hands with a Milanista, I wipe them clean. After I shake hands with a Juventino, I check whether my hand is still there.

Always makes me chuckle.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 11-07-2008 09:21

In the meantime, some 200 Atalanta ultras stood waiting outside the club's offices while Christian Vieri was being presented to the media. When they failed to do much damage to his car as he rushed through, they vented their anger on a couple of journalists who were filming everything.

Apparently, they didn't want him back for the over-exhuberant way with which he celebrated scoring against Atalanta last season.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-07-2008 10:18

Poor Bobo. Always so misunderstood . . .

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 15-07-2008 08:34

Messina have dropped out of Serie B due bankruptcy and looked fucked. But the team to replace them, Avellino, are also having financial difficulty. Are alot of teams in Serie B in financial trouble at the moment or is it just at Messina?

With Bologna now in Serie A I struggle to think of any team in Serie B that would get an average crowd above 15,000. It must be difficult for the teams to survive, with no obvious "big teams" in the division I'd say the TV money is fairly shit aswell.

Are Bari still playing in the San Nicola? That used to hold 50,000 plus, not sure what type of crowds they get now but I doubt its more than 10,000 per game.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Bombanersson - 15-07-2008 08:43

Avellino were supposed to sign Cheyne Fowler if they stayed in Serie B. Either this was an attempt to let him down gently after a two week trial, or they will have more financial backing in B than C and might be able to sort out their financial difficulties if they are given a reprieve.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-07-2008 08:47

Quite a few teams in B are in financial difficulty, as wages continue to rise while revenues fall. In addition to the general drop in attendances, they all suffered from the idiocy of not having a television contract last year.

That said, Messina are a bit of a special case. They are another example of the risks of "living the dream". When the Franza family that had funded their rise to Serie A (the one that controls one of the ferry lines and has significant political influence) pulled the plug, there was no one willing to absorb that level of losses, and it looks very much like the club is gone.

There's a great site on Italian attendance data here, and you can see that the only current Serie B club that averaged over 10,000 last season was Pisa. This season will be a struggle for everyone (and yes, they still don't have a tv contract for this year, either).

Finally, yes, Bari still do play in the San Nicola, which is football's exemplar of Italy's "cathedrals in the desert". They averaged 3,773 last season in a ground that holds almost 60,000 (but has never been full for a football match. The Matereses put the club up for sale for 15 million euro this spring, but haven't had any takers (an article about that).

Italian football outside of Serie A is not at all healthy (and Serie A has its own issues).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Nico Rijnders - 15-07-2008 09:39

I don't suppose anyone knows any more about UK TV rights for next season?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 15-07-2008 11:07

ursus arctos wrote:

Quite a few teams in B are in financial difficulty, as wages continue to rise while revenues fall. In addition to the general drop in attendances, they all suffered from the idiocy of not having a television contract last year.

That said, Messina are a bit of a special case. They are another example of the risks of "living the dream". When the Franza family that had funded their rise to Serie A (the one that controls one of the ferry lines and has significant political influence) pulled the plug, there was no one willing to absorb that level of losses, and it looks very much like the club is gone.

There's a great site on Italian attendance data here, and you can see that the only current Serie B club that averaged over 10,000 last season was Pisa. This season will be a struggle for everyone (and yes, they still don't have a tv contract for this year, either).

Finally, yes, Bari still do play in the San Nicola, which is football's exemplar of Italy's "cathedrals in the desert". They averaged 3,773 last season in a ground that holds almost 60,000 (but has never been full for a football match. The Matereses put the club up for sale for 15 million euro this spring, but haven't had any takers (an article about that).

Italian football outside of Serie A is not at all healthy (and Serie A has its own issues).

Thanks for the reply ursus. Thats incredible about Bari's San Nicola, and I presume the council own the stadium aswell. Surely they should just demolish the stadium, sell the land to developers and build a new smaller stadium? But obviously its in the hands of the local council so maybe its easier said than done.

I remember the last time I saw the San Nicola on tv was when Juve played their last game of their scudetto-winning season a few years back, when Viera and Ibra were with them. It looked fairly full that day, full of Juve fans, but maybe not to capacity. It must be demoralising for the Bari players playing in such a huge stadium with barely any fans each week, and I presume the Ultras stay in the area behind the goal (which is a good distance from the pitch), further adding to the emptiness of it.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Impact Substitute - 15-07-2008 11:37

ursus arctos wrote:

Finally, yes, Bari still do play in the San Nicola, which is football's exemplar of Italy's "cathedrals in the desert". They averaged 3,773 last season in a ground that holds almost 60,000 (but has never been full for a football match.

Really? So, it wasn't full for the 3rd & 4th place play-off at the 1990 WC or the 1991 European Cup Final?

I suppose Marseille v Red Star might not fill it, but surely Italy v England was a full house?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by chasbo - 15-07-2008 11:57

http://www.channel4.com/sport/football_italia/jul15f.html

23 year old Gionata Mongozzi killed in car crash earlier today when he collided head on with a lorry. RIP

Is it me or does Italian football have more than it's fair share of car crash fatalities?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-07-2008 11:58

I've looked this up before.

RSSSF has the attendance for Italy/England as 51,000; San Nicola holds more than 58,000 (Wiki has 58,248, the Stadium Guide 58,300, Bari's website 58,270).

The football attendance record is actually for the match that Ding Dong remembers. Juve clinched the 2005-06 scudetto they were ultimately forced to forfeit there (the Torino Olimpico having been suspended for a reason I forget, perhaps trouble at a Juve/Toro derby), but it wasn't full then either.

The problem with selling the land to developers is that there is no demand for development there. The stadium sits like a space ship in the middle of olive groves. It is genuinely difficult to describe how surreal it looks in person.

Just in case anyone has forgotten why the San Nicola exists; the Matarreses own AS Bari and the largest construction company in the region (which just happened to build the stadium). And in yet another amazing coincidence, Antonio Materrese just happened to be the president of the FIGC and a member of UEFA's executive committee during the 1990 World Cup (he's now president of the Lega Calcio and was also a long-time member of the Italian Parliament).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 15-07-2008 15:18

chasbo wrote:

http://www.channel4.com/sport/football_italia/jul15f.html

23 year old Gionata Mongozzi killed in car crash earlier today when he collided head on with a lorry. RIP

Is it me or does Italian football have more than it's fair share of car crash fatalities?

I think Italy has more than it's fair share of car crash fatalities. Though you mightn't think it from the newspapers, the UK has very safe roads compared to the rest of Europe

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-07-2008 15:30

Some EU statistics that tend to support aiatl's point.

Italy has the most fatalities of any EU member state in 2006, more deaths than Germany (which has a considerably larger population) and significantly more than France, the UK or Spain.

That said, the new EU states (especially Poland and Romania) look to me to be worse in per capita terms.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 15-07-2008 15:33

Those statistics should really be per 100,000 km travelled. By that measure you were 16 times as likely to die in a car crash in Ireland in 1973 as you are today. We keep hearing what a terrible nightmare our roads are, but compared to when we joined the European union Driving is incredibly safe. Part of the reason that we keep beating ourselves up over our road safety statistics is because we compare ourselves to the UK rather than Greece.

There is a large, and largely unquantifiable rise in Irish road traffic accidents due to the large number of Eastern

European immigrants between the ages of 20-30. This has been the cause of huge controversy because very few figures exist (as many drivers operate outside of the tax insurance driving licence system) but also because the govt won't release many of the figures. The 'debate' has become a repository for anti polish etc sentiment, but that only explains the part of it. My flatmates think that the standard of polish driving is pretty poor, and since they're from krakow, I doubt their particularly anti polish.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 15-07-2008 15:38

I wonder if any reports mention that the reason lots of Italians die in car crashes is because they drive like fuckheads and don't care whether they're pissed while doing so?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-07-2008 15:49

I consider that a given.

I also strongly agree with aiatl' that it should be a per distance driven measurement. I have a feeling that there may be political pressures against them issuing data calculated that way, as well as being data collection issues in certain countries.

I'd also agree with his flatmates about Polish drivers, especially when faced with cars that actually have some power.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 15-07-2008 16:23

edited for redundancy

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 15-07-2008 16:54

To go back to the point about the financial difficulties of lower division clubs, it very much looks like Spezia (who were relegated from Serie B last season) are about to follow Messina into liquidation.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 25-07-2008 12:18

I see where Avellino are back in Seria B due to Messina's collapse. Can anyone remeber the last time the team line-ups for Seria A, B and C were decided purely by the previous seasons football results? I'd say it must be a good few years anyway.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 27-07-2008 07:08

The Italian U19s were tonked yesterday in the final against Germany, despite playing most of the second half against 10 men.

Today it is the turn of the national beach soccer team in the World Cup final against Brazil. Not too keen about this fragmentation of the sport but the interest of Diego Armando Maradona Jr caught my attention. I really feel for the kid who has become a footballing version of a circus freak. He never had a chance.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dogbeak - 27-07-2008 09:21

Is George Weah's lad still playing anywhere?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by silent bob - 28-07-2008 13:41

There is a large, and largely unquantifiable rise in Irish road traffic accidents due to the large number of Eastern European immigrants between the ages of 20-30. This has been the cause of huge controversy because very few figures exist (as many drivers operate outside of the tax insurance driving licence system) but also because the govt won't release many of the figures. The 'debate' has become a repository for anti polish etc sentiment, but that only explains the part of it. My flatmates think that the standard of polish driving is pretty poor, and since they're from krakow, I doubt their particularly anti polish.

there is certain amounts of idiots who like to drive under the influence but many of them remained here or came back after somehow surprisingly unsuccessful spell in the UK/Eire.

i wouldn't say polish drivers are better/worse than anyone. high rate of fatal accidents here might be mostly due to state of road infrastructure. on most roads when you want to overtake you risk crashing with opposite cars or trees which are on the right hand side or hard shoulder as they say in the US. trees are there cause we care about landscapes more than one's life.

been to Eire in March and all polish (in their late 20s/early 30s) say the irish are just too polite on the road. everyone is giving way to everyone. which might be dangerous in fact cause instead of driving through a crossroad they tend to let in the others from sideways to join the traffic.

see, we polish aren't used to such thing, you can wait for hours to join the traffic or cross the road as a pedestrian here.

also one guy told me that there wasn't such thing as a driving licence exam in Ireland like 20 years ago, they just given licences to everyone cause there were not much cars on the roads anyway. this might influence the quality of irish driving says he.

but he lives in Cork which might be a clue to everything.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-07-2008 14:29

Ding Dong poses an interesting question, which I will try to research once I overcome my rather grievous jet lag.

If one goes down as far as Serie C (particularly C2), I would tend to think that it has been at least ten years since a season was untainted by "administrative" points deductions, promotions, relegations or exclusions of one sort or another. They are just considered a fact of life here.

Those interested in the Serie A fixtures will find a complete pdf file here. When making travel plans, keep in mind that two matches are played on Saturday evening and one on Sunday evening, with the selection of the relevant matches generally taking place at one month intervals.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by jefe - 29-07-2008 01:47

Maradona jr scored italy's last, to no avail in the final. ESPN2 actually aired this at 1AM last night.

Also, pm for ursus.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 29-07-2008 08:35

Mourinho says he wants to trim down the squad at Inter, some rumours today are linking Burdisso with a few English teams like Spurs and Newcastle, along with Fiorentina.

I don't think it would be wise to let him go now though due to the injuries in defense, better off trimming down the forward line and waiting until January to get rid of Burdisso. Never been really impressed by him, although he is very versatile along the backline and sometimes in midfield.

Out of the forwards the obvious contenders to leave would be Crespo and Cruz, not sure what Mourinho thinks of Adriano yet but I hope he gives him a (final) chance to prove himself.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 29-07-2008 08:56

Mourinho has been making similar noises since he joined. He is very big on having a relatively small (c. 25) squad of quality players who can all be expected to make a contribution, rather than Inter's usual cast of thousands.

That said, Moratti isn't inclined to give players away, and it would not surprise me if they start the season with a larger squad than Jose thinks is ideal. Adriano will definitely be given a shot, and the major problem with off-loading Crespo is his wages.

Burdisso is inconsistent even for an Inter player. He was suprisingly impressive the season before last, particularly with his heading of the ball (both in defence and on set pieces), but seems never to have really recovered from his post-Valencia suspension. He is also very definitely more comfortable in the centre than as a fullback. Fiorentina's interest is as best lukewarm (and that was before they signed Comotto and Zauri); the English suggestions sound very much like the default ones here for a player of that quality.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 30-07-2008 10:24

Milan won the Trofeo TIM last night with penalty shootout wins against Inter and Juve, and Carlo Ancelotti was caught giving the finger to a group of Juve fans ...not that he gave a shit

"Yes I did raise my little finger and it was my response to the ignorant people. With hindsight I think that I would do the same thing. There's no need to look for video evidence because I'm not scared to admit what I did."

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Hieronymus of Hesselink - 30-07-2008 10:29

I'd almost forgotten Ancelotti managed Juventus for a couple of years at the turn of the decade.

His Wikipedia entry says he won the 1999 UEFA Cup with Parma -- but wasn't he managing Juventus when they lost 3-2

at home to Man United that season?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 30-07-2008 11:03

Hieronymus of Hesselink wrote:

I'd almost forgotten Ancelotti managed Juventus for a couple of years at the turn of the decade.

His Wikipedia entry says he won the 1999 UEFA Cup with Parma -- but wasn't he managing Juventus when they lost 3-2 at home to Man United that season?

I was living in Turin for most of the 98-99 season and it is only a slight exaggeration to say I was one Ancelotti's very few friends among Juve watchers. The insulting banners at matches when it was not even 100% certain that he would take over from Lippi were very disappointing. The biggest problem was his Milan past, though some warbled on about his time at Parma too.

I thought he did an excellent job, a team in decline after its recent success and seemingly traumatised or rendered inert by Lippi's long-drawn out departure early in the season. he said he would go at the end of the season but that rarely works.

That Ancelotti got a side in some disarray to the CL semi final, indeed 2-0 with an away goal in hand in the second leg is to his credit whatever else happened. Del Piero injured, Zidane gradually lost form or interest that season and Davids had niggling injuries. The then endless search for "replacements" for Montero and Ferrara let in Tudor and often Juliano, decent players but prone to errors through lack of concentration I thought.

2 second places including the infamous last day shambles in the ocean at Perugia.

Whilst I was aghast to lose to Milan on pens in the 2003 CL final, I was pleased for Ancelotti who was widely denigrated as a poor sub for Lippi, and not just among Juve fans or the Turin press, but generally. That 2003 final was a real slap in the face to his many doubters.

Which of course persists today. He is quality and comes across as a very decent fella and I would choose him over Lippi, indeed I hoped Italy would go for him this time. Of course Lippi is tops too.

I could only watch the Juve-Inter game in last night's tournament. It seems that the bad blood between a few of the more ignorant Juve fans and Ancelotti continues.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 30-07-2008 11:49

sixmartletsandaseagull wrote:

Hieronymus of Hesselink wrote:

I'd almost forgotten Ancelotti managed Juventus for a couple of years at the turn of the decade.

His Wikipedia entry says he won the 1999 UEFA Cup with Parma -- but wasn't he managing Juventus when they lost 3-2 at home to Man United that season?

I was living in Turin for most of the 98-99 season and it is only a slight exaggeration to say I was one Ancelotti's very few friends among Juve watchers. The insulting banners at matches when it was not even 100% certain that he would take over from Lippi were very disappointing. The biggest problem was his Milan past, though some warbled on about his time at Parma too.

I thought he did an excellent job, a team in decline after its recent success and seemingly traumatised or rendered inert by Lippi's long-drawn out departure early in the season. he said he would go at the end of the season but that rarely works.

That Ancelotti got a side in some disarray to the CL semi final, indeed 2-0 with an away goal in hand in the second leg is to his credit whatever else happened. Del Piero injured, Zidane gradually lost form or interest that season and Davids had

niggling injuries. The then endless search for "replacements" for Montero and Ferrara let in Tudor and often Juliano, decent players but prone to errors through lack of concentration I thought.

2 second places including the infamous last day shambles in the ocean at Perugia.

Whilst I was aghast to lose to Milan on pens in the 2003 CL final, I was pleased for Ancelotti who was widely denigrated as a poor sub for Lippi, and not just among Juve fans or the Turin press, but generally. That 2003 final was a real slap in the face to his many doubters.

Which of course persists today. He is quality and comes across as a very decent fella and I would choose him over Lippi, indeed I hoped Italy would go for him this time. Of course Lippi is tops too.

I could only watch the Juve-Inter game in last night's tournament. It seems that the bad blood between a few of the more ignorant Juve fans and Ancelotti continues.

Apparently that section of the juve support didn't focus solely on Ancelotti according to the man himself....

"Luckily it was a little isolated group who would have been better off at home. They also had abuse for Jose Mourinho, Gianluca Zambrotta, Marco Materazzi and Dejan Stankovic".

Sulley Muntari made his first appearance for Inter last night but missed a penalty, I presume Mourinho bought him as back up to a central midfield pairing of Zanetti, Viera and Cambiasso as he isn't really a winger.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 30-07-2008 18:54

I thought he did an excellent job, a team in decline after its recent success and seemingly traumatised or rendered inert by Lippi's long-drawn out departure early in the season. he said he would go at the end of the season but that rarely works.

some of the inertness might have been down to the raids that shut down their open medicine cabinet which catapulted Juventus from the fittest strongest team in Europe to a bunch of old men.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 31-07-2008 10:54

And I am the Life wrote:

I thought he did an excellent job, a team in decline after its recent success and seemingly traumatised or rendered inert by Lippi's long-drawn out departure early in the season. he said he would go at the end of the season but that rarely works.

some of the inertness might have been down to the raids that shut down their open medicine cabinet which catapulted Juventus from the fittest strongest team in Europe to a bunch of old men.

All the more credit to the man! Though they did finish 8th or 9th in 98/99 if I remember rightly.

You will of course find that some dedicated weight training will do wonders for the physique.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 31-07-2008 16:49

Juventus came sixth, three points off third. It wasn't that bad a season, admittedly they were 16 points off the top though.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 31-07-2008 17:03

Some current miscellany, partially occasioned by the fact that I had the chance to read the entire Gazzetta on the plane up from Rome this morning:

Boriello injured a knee in training and will be out for two months, thereby putting a rather large hole in Milan's front line. Paloschi's pending loan to Torino is off, and Inzaghi will likely see much more time than was initially anticipated.

Fiorentina got thumped by an "out of this world" Barcelona last night, but got very good performances from Melo and Jovetic and a better than average one from Gilardino. Mutu and Koldrup, on the other hand, were pants. Prandelli held up his hands and said "my teams are always ugly this early in the pre-season".

As noted on the Romanian thread, Inter are looking for defensive cover, as Materazzi isn't really ready, and Samuel, Chivu and Cordoba are still recovering from their injuries and are not expected to be at full strength by the start of the season on 31 Aug. In addition to Radoi of Steaua, they are supposedly considering Matteo Ferarri (who Roma would be willing to offload) and Ron Vlaar of PSV.

The latest in the seemingly endless list of Roma transfer targets is Djibril Cisse.

The draw for the Coppa Italia ensured that Roma and Inter cannot play for the trophy for the fifth consecutive year, as the bracket has them meeting in the quarters if they each win their first match (they come in in the round of 16).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 31-07-2008 17:23

And I am the Life wrote:

juventus came sixth, three points off third. It wasn't that bad a season, admittedly they were 16 points off the top though.

I thought they did worse than that. It was a strange one in many ways.

They had to qualify for the UEFA Cup via the Intertoto that next season. Thrashed by Real Betis I think it was in the Uefa Cup quarters.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 01-08-2008 16:46

ursus arctos wrote:

The draw for the Coppa Italia ensured that Roma and Inter cannot play for the trophy for the fifth consecutive year, as the bracket has them meeting in the quarters if they each win their first match (they come in in the round of 16).

Thank fuck for that, five years in a row of the same finalists in any competition is too much.

Ursus, are the ties up until the final still played over two legs? I know the final is now a one leg affair at the Stadio Olimpico but surely they should make the rest of the rounds one-legged aswell in order to increase the popularity of the Coppa.

I never understood why every game was played over 2 legs, it just favours the strong teams and reduces the chance of an upset.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-08-2008 17:08

Still two legs from the round of 32 through the semis, I'm afraid. Your last sentence answers its own question.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Lodzubelieveit - 03-08-2008 20:51

Just come across this, and it brought back great memories of probably my most memorable match ever from Serie A. Outstanding performance from Pagliuca, they grab a coupla goals, sendings off, disallowed goals, gesticulation and all the works, and good old Samp for the title. Magic!

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 04-08-2008 09:10

One of my most frustrating afternoons that one.

I was watching that game on Sky in Walter Smith's pub The State just off Sauchiehall Street after lengthy cajoling of the barman to put it on at all - no-one else was the slightest bit interested. I couldn't even get the sound on.

So I'm sitting there in an increasingly agitated state as Inter battered Samp but couldn't score. Meanwhile the other people in the bar think I'm a lunatic throwing odd shapes in front of a silent television.

I went through the same rigmarole a week or two later watching this game below, though this time there was an old guy beside m who gradually got interested such was the exceptional quality of the first half goals flying in.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fv0Pc8v3ebE>

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 15:14

A good roundup of the latest idiocy from Italian football administrators from pawlu's consistenly excellent blog.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 05-08-2008 17:43

incidentally, the Coppa Italia final is not fixed at the Olimpico but held at a venue to be drawn out of a hat each year at or around the QF stage, iirc. Obviously from a relatively limited pot.

the rebranding of Serie C1 & 2 is hilariously pointless

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 17:49

I don't think that anyone is going to pay it any heed whatsoever (the papers certainly haven't so far).

It will be like the PR types at Telecom insisting that it's the "Serie A TIM".

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 17:56

And our judicial correspondent reports:

"ROME, Aug 5 (Reuters) - Italian champions Inter Milan have been ordered to pay a Napoli fan 1,500 euros for "existential damage" caused by banners calling Naples the "sewer of Italy" displayed at San Siro last October.

Italian news agencies said on Tuesday that a Naples court had ordered Inter to pay the fan, identified only by initials, compensation and legal costs for insults which refer to a refuse crisis that left garbage rotting in Naples' streets.

"Ciao cholera sufferers!" read another of the banners seen at the Oct. 6 game which the fan's lawyer, Raffaele Di Monda, said had made his client feel "indignant and deeply hurt".

Inter, who won the game 2-1, had already been punished by the Italian league with the closure of the sections of San Siro where the banners had been shown for the following home match.

The club fought against the lawsuit arguing that the Naples court did not have jurisdiction."

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 05-08-2008 17:58

"Ciao cholera sufferers" is f-ing priceless.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-08-2008 18:03

It isn't original.

I think Spangles' lot may have been the first to use it.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 05-08-2008 18:28

oh we sing all sorts of horrible things at them

"Neapolitan, dirty African, sooner or later we'll stab you" is my particular favourite, I must say

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 05-08-2008 18:41

It's not offensive when it's arch-ironic!

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 05-08-2008 19:09

it's not exactly arch-ironic when half a dozen of them get stabbed outside the ground after the game

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 05-08-2008 19:49

Depends how they were stabbed, doesn't it? If they were stabbed by actual Africans, for instance...

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 07-08-2008 15:07

You haven't spent much time in the Curva Sud, have you?

In other news, the Italian players' association has announced plans to delay the kickoff of the opening matches in Serie A and Serie B by 30 minutes in protest against the football authorities' recent limitations on squad sizes in the "Lega Pro" (fka Serie C1 and Serie C2). The association claims that the limits have resulted in approximately 300 former professionals losing their jobs.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sharon - 09-08-2008 09:32

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CG0rJzp4teU>

Is this sort of stunt common in Italy? I can imagine his reaction if an English journalist had approached him with a pair of scissors.

There was a story the other week about a 'comedian' pretending to be Moratti who rang Stankovic to tell him he was no longer a part of the club and the team. Stankovic put down the phone and wept.

It wasn't long before Stankovic's phone rang again with the charlatan revealing that it was all a big joke, leaving the player somewhat confused.

It was later revealed that the pretend Moratti was in fact one of Italy's top comedians, Fiorello.

Nevertheless, it made Stankovic shed some tears as he genuinely believed the prankster, having, of course, no idea it was a joke at first.

"It was a mimic. He mimics perfectly the voice of Moratti" explained the now laughing Serb.

Carlo Cudicini's mrs. (I think it's on youtube), she's on a plane and thinks the pilot's conked out and she's sobbing with fear about her imminent certain death* only to get the regulation 'surprise!' reprieve. I think murder is justifiable at that point. I vaguely recall other racy stunts involving footballers. They're a bit more hardcore with their pranks aren't they.

*I may have exaggerated this from memory.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-08-2008 10:03

This kind of stuff is absolutely common practice here.

There are several tv shows that basically do little else, and Fiorello (who hosts the most popular radio show in the country) has such "crank call" gags as a central part of his schtick. Fiorello is also one of the country's most high profile Interisti, so he would have taken a special interest in winding up Stankovic.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 21-08-2008 11:16

Ex-Roma President Franco Sensi passed away but I see where Adriano Galliani was verably abused and had water thrown over him at the funeral, I think Massimo Moratti got a bit of abuse aswell. What was the reasoning behind that? Did Sensi not get on with both men or was it just the fact that they are major figures for both the Milan clubs?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 21-08-2008 13:42

Spangles blogged about this and will know more, but my sense is that Galliani was singled out because of what were perceived as anti-Roma machinations when he was president of the Lega Calcio.

I haven't heard that Moratti got the same treatment.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-08-2008 19:00

It looks very much like one of the real telenovellas of the summer will end with Shevchenko returning to Milan, on terms as yet undefined.

He's supposed to be here on Monday for a medical, with both the two clubs and the player having already agreed terms.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 23-08-2008 19:51

THAT oughtta bring the mean age back down around where it should be.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by jefe - 23-08-2008 20:04

First Lazio and now Catania are somewhat at least interested in Oguchi Onyewu, either on loan or as a full transfer from Liege (his contract runs out after this season). But aren't they both seriously broke?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dogbeak - 23-08-2008 20:08

i knew lazio were bad these days but.. oguchi onyewu? the man's a clown.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 24-08-2008 06:41

Last night's entry of the Serie A teams that aren't in European competition into the new and improved (but still unsatisfactory) Coppa Italia was marked by the elimination of three Serie A clubs, all of whom went down at home to lower division rivals. Palermo lost to Ravenna (Serie B), Lecce went out to Salernitana (Serie B) and Chievo were

eliminated by Padova (Prima Divisione (aka 3d flight). Torino and Catania both needed extra time to dispose of Brescia and Parma, respectively.

The "Supercoppa" is tonight, with Jose Mourinho making his Meazza debut against Roma.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 24-08-2008 11:23

Inter have been incredibly defensively tight during their pre-season haven't they ursus ?

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 24-08-2008 12:55

As in not giving up a goal in any ninety minute match. The only one they've conceded was scored by laquinta in one of those three teams/each playing 45 minutes against each of the other two nonsense "tournaments".

Especially impressive given the fact that they essentially haven't had any of their regular centre backs available. Cambiasso has really been doing an excellent job back there.

The family comes home from Slovenija tonight, so we won't be going to San Siro, but I really can't wait to see them play a real game.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 24-08-2008 15:34

Is anywhere in the UK showing the Supercoppa?

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 24-08-2008 15:46

myp2p.eu is your best bet I would say

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 24-08-2008 17:33

Ursus or anyone else, can you tell me anything about Mathias Cardacio? Watching him play right now (AC Milan v. Sporting de Gijon).

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 24-08-2008 18:58

And Milan have just lost 2-0 to Sporting (no Kaka, no Ronnie). Toothless would be the word. And woeful possession. Seedorf and Brocchi played like they were actively trying to sabotage them.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 24-08-2008 19:08

1-0 Inter. Many chances leading up to that one.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 24-08-2008 19:09

Christ, Riise just missed a sitter.

Good to see Baptista in there, too.

And it's jarring to see Mancini on the field with Roma wearing blue.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 24-08-2008 19:18

I have a bad feeling me buying a season ticket might have coincided with Roma getting substantially worse. Seeing as Spangles' friends already threatened to ban me if they lost the last time I was there, it's not something I want to think about.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 24-08-2008 20:41

De Rossi scores from 25 yards out with a shot that Julio Cesar should have done better with. Mexes then misses a hopeful punt from Julio Cesar, allowing Balotelli in to score. And then in the 90th, Roma get a corner, Vucinic shoots, and Ibra steers it by his own keeper. In the 91st, Ibra is free in the area and falls over his own feet.

Better than your usual Mickey Mouse trophy.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 24-08-2008 21:07

Doni manages to get his fingertips to two excellent free kicks from Balotelli in the first 15 minutes of extra time. Still 2-2.

Totti has come on for Roma, his first realish action since going down late last season.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 24-08-2008 21:39

Inter win 7-6 on penalties.

After Stankovic hits the bar, Totti does the same with the fifth kick. Julio Cesar then saves from Juan, and Zanetti wins Mourinho's first "trophy" in Italy.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-08-2008 00:09

Man, I was called away and missed the rest of the match. Sounds like it was eventful. From what I saw both teams looked a sight better than Milan today, but I guess it's apples and oranges.

Balotelli's good isn't he?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 06:19

The lad's a bit special, yes.

He forced three first class saves from Doni in extra time, and took his penalty extremely well.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 08:28

Looks like Sheva intends to stay a while:

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-08-2008 08:40

What's he doing handling his own bag, he could pull something. He's not a spring chick anymore you know.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 09:13

I presume the bag belongs to "la Pazik". We all know who wears the pants in that relationship.

The other possibility is that he's got Serhiy Rebrov in there.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-08-2008 10:19

Biggest fucking suitcase I've ever seen. (Unless Shevchenko is smaller than I thought.)

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 25-08-2008 10:35

I only caught it from the second half on last night, but it was a cracker.

Pizarro was excellent, I thought.

Roma made a mockery (small- it is early yet!)of my "they will struggle to make the CL places this season" prediction.

Though on the second half showing they have addressed one of my concerns by buying Baptista, who played much better than I would have thought.

Inter I gather were excellent first half.

Great to see Totti back.

Seedorf was excellent in the Birra Moretti 3-wayer in Naples the other night. Giovinco has some good moments, and Napoli looked to have a few good'uns too. Amauri though continued his relatively lacklustre preseason.

I have to say I enjoy the 3-way 45 min a game tournaments. Great to hear and see Anna Tatangelo sing at any anytime.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 11:08

The 3-way tournaments are diverting, and a nice way to get to see a number of players in a short period, but they aren't really football.

Totti isn't anywhere near match fit; I doubt that he will start next weekend. And if I were Spaletti, I would be quite concerned that Mexes was exposed on more than a few occasions last night. Mourinho must have been livid with his team for both Roma goals, but the positive thing from a Inter perspective was that the team is clearly taking on his tactical advice; they are moving a great deal more off the ball than they did under Mancini. Muntari also did a reasonable Michael Essien impression, and Balotelli was nothing short of electric.

This should be a great season.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 11:10

Milan have just signed Philippe Senderos on loan, with an option to buy.

That's the defence sorted, then.

Or maybe not.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 25-08-2008 11:35

I tend not to think of friendlies per se as real or proper football.

I think the 3 way tournaments serve more of a purpose than simple diversion though. Aside from being good cash earners I imagine!

It helps to give more players a go and not to overextend them in pre-season. I tend to think they offer a good balance in terms of preparation. There are perhaps too many of these tournaments, but that is another argument.

I really like them. Given the soporific nature of so many 90 min friendlies I find the 45 min 3 way tournaments more stimulating in some senses.

As ever it is up to the player(s)to get what they need out of them: 45 mins of competitive football is as good as ambling through a 90 min friendly in terms of preparation.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 25-08-2008 11:44

ursus arctos wrote:

Milan have just signed Philippe Senderos on loan, with an option to buy.

That's the defence sorted, then.

Or maybe not.

You are joking Right?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 11:46

A number of good points there. I think that I am probably unfairly biased by the relatively soporific Trofeo Tim, which is very early, always the same "Big 3", almost always decided on penalties, and never really draws a crowd. Napoli's inclusion makes the Moretti better by definition.

I am also generally anti-friendly, but have to say that I've been impressed by Inter's schedule this season and by their (and Roma's) approach to the SuperCoppa last night.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 25-08-2008 12:32

ursus arctos wrote:

A number of good points there. I think that I am probably unfairly biased by the relatively soporific Trofeo Tim, which is very early, always the same "Big 3", almost always decided on penalties, and never really draws a crowd. Napoli's inclusion makes the Moretti better by definition.

I am also generally anti-friendly, but have to say that I've been impressed by Inter's schedule this season and by their (and Roma's) approach to the SuperCoppa last night.

Yes, terrific last night, it had the feel of a cup final which was great. Did you go?

I do agree with you about the overfamiliarity of it being the same three sides, and the greater interest in the Moretti one due to Napoli's involvement. Esp. living down here..

I think, overall, I find my concentration lacking for 90 min friendlies for much of preseason. The 3 wayers sort of fill a void w/o overloading me, which is a personal thing.

I quite like friendlies, for one of the reasons you mentioned earlier, it gives one a chance to see more, esp young/fringe players.

Aside from Giovinco who I have a HUGE football crush on, Juve's 19-year-old Swede, Ekdal has really impressed me in preseason. My biggest anxiety for the season in Italy is not so much how well Juve go, but how much of a go Giovinco esp., but also young lads like Ekdal, De Ceglie, Rossi, Marchisio get.

Maybe it's age but I am not driven by the scudetto or CL for Juve this year, at least.

It's quite a first game next week at the Artemio Franchi , a real departure given the general trend for the so-called big ones to play smaller clubs in the first few weeks.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 12:50

aiatl, I'm kidding about the defence being sorted, not about the signing. With all due respect to Bruno and ppv, Milan's current transfer campaign is one of the most mind boggling of recent times (especially if you don't consider Flamini to be part of it).

Didn't go last night Martlets, the family was coming back from Slovenija, but it was definitely more contested that your average Coppa Italia quarter-final.

I'm afraid the Viola are going to be flat after the Slavia game (no matter what the result). And the ticket shambles won't help. Won't keep me from screaming at the telly, of course.

Giovinco is a bit special. I like musing about an Azzurri team with him in the middle, Chiellini and Gamberini at the back and Balotelli and Rossi up front. If only Gigi could play until he was 50.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Hieronymus of Hesselink - 25-08-2008 12:52

ursus arctos wrote:

The other possibility is that he's got Serhiy Rebrov in there.

He could fit Andriy Husin inside that fucking thing.

Are we any closer to finding out how much money (if any) Chelsea got for him?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 12:56

Nah, with both the Abramovich and Berlusconi machines being sworn to silence, it's going to be tough.

The best I can do is that likely got something, but not very much. The story arc here has been that Milan wanted it to be a loan, which Chelsea turned down, then that Chelsea wanted 15 million euro for a transfer, which Milan rejected out of hand. I'd be surprised if they paid double figure millions.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Hieronymus of Hesselink - 25-08-2008 13:00

It'll leak out into the public domain in a few years, I'm sure.

Call it twenty quid, a tenner for cash?

Can't believe Milan have signed Senderos, even on loan. Are they trying to deliberately finish outside the European placings as some sort of extremely complicated tax dodge?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 13:09

Agreed; it will take time, and there may also be "future considerations" in the form of Kaka, yachts or quality time with "starlets".

The only rational explanation I've seen offered is that all of these signings are Silvio's personal choices and that we are re-entering a period in which he is telling Galliani and his other "football people" that he knows best, having proved his worth by managing the Edilnord company team to a league title back in the early 80s.

Or maybe there's a reality show angle.

The weird thing is that they've sold more season tickets than Inter for the first time in a while.

I do wonder if their being out of the Champions League has something to do with it, though. They may be counting on still being able to do decently in a weaker league, and to capitalise on others being distracted by the CL.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 25-08-2008 13:10

well, why don't they just go right ahead and give him baresi's shirt, or maybe Maldini's? jesus, what are they doing?

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 25-08-2008 13:13

Good call, I'd like to see something similar in terms of the make up of the Italy team sooner rather than later.

I was a bit peturbed to see so many of the "old" guard still starting in Lippi's first game last week. Though that's probably unfair given that the Olympics had only just finished for Italy.

They proved not good enough in Austria/Switzerland I fail to see how they will be 2 years down the line. Though I suppose they have to qualify first and it's not my neck on the line.

The genius in goal is worrying me with crosses these days.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-08-2008 13:19

I'll make sure Prandelli knows that.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-08-2008 13:58

With all due respect to Bruno and ppv, Milan's current transfer campaign is one of the most mind boggling of recent times (especially if you don't consider Flamini to be part of it).

Yo, you don't see me dancing and singing. Perhaps they're counting on the home grown talent + Pato to save the day.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 25-08-2008 14:37

Meanwhile at Palermothere is talk that Zamparini wants to get rid of Tulio De Melo having just bought him from Le Mans this summer. Don't know if its a knee-jerk reaction to their Coppa Italia loss against Ravenna which I'm sure left Zamparini fuming. It seems they haven't done too well pre-season having lost important players like Amauri, I can see

them languish mid-table for most of the season and going through about 5 managers.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-08-2008 06:30

Zamaparini was apoplectic at the Coppa loss, whistling his own team and leaving the ground at half time. It's going to be another one of those seasons for the Rosanero, I'm afraid.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 26-08-2008 15:12

Example no. 14,872 of Serie A nonsense.

Negotiations between the league and the free to air broadcasters over the rights to this season (yes, the one that starts in four days) have broken down, with the result that (barring a deus ex machina) there will be no free television highlights or radio commentary for the opening set of matches.

The radio "multiplex" collecting live reports from each of the grounds ("Tutto il Calcio Minuto per Minuto") has been an essential part of Italian culture at least since the end of the war, and it is nothing short of outrageous that it won't be on this weekend (especially given that many people will still be at the beach).

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by augustwanderers - 26-08-2008 15:14

television controlling football...jeez.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 27-08-2008 10:35

Has collective bargaining started yet with the TV rights or is it next season? How much of a difference is it going to make? I see where Serie A teams have outspent their La Liga counterparts overall this summer by more than £100m (£310m)so far and aren't far behind the premiership either (£15m difference). I was quite surprised by those figures as I presumed the La Liga teams would of outspent the Italians.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-08-2008 10:38

Supposed to come in from 2010. Exact details still to be worked out (a big surprise, I know).

BTW, if Real Madrid get Cazorla and Villa that comparison will no longer be valid.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-08-2008 10:50

And speaking of transfer spending, Roma have just spent 14-15 million euro to bring in Jeremy Mendez (aka "the next Zidane" Mark IV) to the Olimpico.

I also expect Inter to sign Quaresma for 20 million plus before the deadline.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by I Draghi Viola - 27-08-2008 15:02

I've just heard a rumour that Setanta have got Serie A coverage for the coming season.

After checking their listings for the next week, there are 2 slots (one on staurday and one on sunday) advertising European football - matches unconfirmed.

Should both be available for Serie A then it would mean that they would probably show Inter Milan on the saturday and Fiorentina v Juve on the sunday (here's hoping and praying!).

Apparently James Richardson confirmed that Setanta do have the rights for the coming season on his show last friday.

If anyone knows anything to the contrary, please let me know!

Forza la Viola - Contra Tutti!
100% AntiJuve

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-08-2008 15:07

Benvenuto Draghi.

I hope that you picked an auspicious day for your first post. I am a bit concerned about Slavia.

The only thing I can say about your question is that Richardson did not confirm that on last Friday's podcast. It was mentioned that no one had the rights as of yet.

The RAI situation I mentioned above is likely to have an impact on non-Italian broadcasters, as they usually use the RAI International feed.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-08-2008 05:18

Woo hoo.

Viola in "il Champions".

And Juve luck into the second pot due to Schalke's capitulation against Atleti.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by I Draghi Viola - 28-08-2008 07:51

Hopefully we'll avoid some of the big guns but having said that I wouldn't mind drawing a British team to save me having to go to Italy to watch them!

Does anyone know of any UK based Fiorentina supporters clubs as i've searched the web and can't find any mention of one?

Also, I'm going to watch Siena in October and need to get some ticket info. Have tried the website but to no avail and was wondering if anyone had any idea of how to obtain them.

Forza la Viola - 100% Antijuve

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-08-2008 08:59

Do you mean Siena at home? It is never difficult to get tickets there except (potentially) for Juve and (definitely) if the Osservatorio has put restrictions on travelling fans.

On the supporters' club, there is supposed to be one in Oxford, but I can't find any contact information and wonder if it has gone dormant. I would suggest that you contact either the Coordination Centre (if you have Italian) or the quite active Viola Club New York (if you don't) and see if they can help you.

BTW, just a friendly note to say that people generally don't use "signatures" on here (even when the sentiments expressed are shared by virtually everyone).

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 28-08-2008 09:07

I remember in the old days of Football Italia on C4 there being a Viola Club in London and C4 filming Zeffarelli and the rest of the members watching their latest defeat at the hands of Juve on the TV.

It might be worth buying the Football Italia magazine if it is still going in the UK and checking the ads there.

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by I Draghi Viola - 28-08-2008 09:38

Cheers for the tip Ursos.

I've checked the Viola Coordination site already but there are no links or contact information.

Think i'll have to send them an e-mail and see if they have any details.

I'm hoping to go to Siena v Catania at the end of October. Unfortunately I booked before the fixtures were released in the vain hope that Fiorentina would be at home that weekend, a schoolboy error as it turns out!

In reading the Arsenal v Fiorentina (CL) programme, there was feature on the London branch of the Fiorentina supporters club but despite numerous searches, nothing shows up.

Thanks for the advice.....

=====

Re: Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-08-2008 09:50

Contact list for the Coordination Centre.

Barring more nonsense involving the Catanese supporters, you will be able to walk up to the (other) Franchi and buy tickets on the day for Siena/Catania; there will be loads available.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by I Draghi Viola - 28-08-2008 09:57

Cheers Ursus.

I've sent an e-mail to the Coordination Centre so hopefully will hear something shortly.

I'm staying in Empoli and the Empoli stadium is not 500 metres from our hotel. Just a question of convincing the missus that the Empoli - Pisa derby would be preferable to the Uffizi!!!!

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Bogzilla - 28-08-2008 13:18

And speaking of transfer spending, Roma have just spent 14-15 million euro to bring in Jeremy Mendez (aka "the next Zidane" Mark IV) to the Olimpico.

Hmmm,

Be interesting to see how this one turns out. There's a lot of talent there, but that's a fairly steep price.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 30-08-2008 06:32

If I'm allowed a bit of self-promotion here, I've just finished my Serie A team-by-team previews on my Italian football blog.

There are also the previews of ten of the Serie B teams, which kicked off with a 1-1 draw between Parma* and Rimini, on here. Hopefully, I'll be able to finish off the previews of the rest of the Serie B teams early next week.

Any comments, criticisms and feedback more than welcome.

*Parma played well yesterday and looked good, especially now that they've taken Alberto Paloschi on loan from Milan

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 30-08-2008 11:43

I like that Paloschi kid, he's got spunk.

Scored on his first touch after being on the pitch less than a minute at his Milan 1st team debut, was hysterical.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sharon - 30-08-2008 13:21

Can someone translate this please.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzXsO0i1K2s>

(I think he's dissing England and saying any league that has him in it is de facto the best).

I read this article as bit of throwaway filler, has it really caused a fuss in Italy?

<http://timesonline.typepad.com/thegame/2008/08/serie-a-the-ret.html>

<http://www.goal.com/en/Articolo.aspx?Contenutold=838286>

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 31-08-2008 10:22

I am FUCKING excited about today.

Ovunque tu sarai
Non ti lascerò mai....

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 31-08-2008 13:57

Non mi basta mai...

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-09-2008 12:39

Somewhat surprised to see that there isn't any commentary on the Napoli ultras' visit to Rome, which continues to be one of the lead stories up here.

The establishment press is falling over itself with reports of their excesses (commandeering a train, casuing half a million of euro in damage, setting off firecrackers and flares in Termini, wrecking the buses put on to take them to Olimpico, sending at least four railway workers to hospital, etc.), while the Napoli president, press and local politicians continue to insist that it was all due to Trenitalia's incompetence, anti-Southern bias and the aggressive attitude by the Roman authorities, compounded by the heat. Cue the Justice Minister threatening to throw the book at those who have been arrested and a desperate rear-guard action by the football authorities trying to avoid ground closures and across the board bans on travelling support.

Liq has a first hand account from inside the Olimpico here.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 02-09-2008 15:28

Yes, much handwringing here as Ursus says. Don't know what to say really, chaos from start to finish it seems.

They really are a piece of work those Napoli boys. The TV pics of their antics through the day made them look pretty fearsome, which unfortunately they are.

I will say I wasn't in the slightest bit surprised that they gave it the large one on their outing to Roma.

They have banned them from all away games now, I hear. This was the first time they'd been allowed to travel to Roma for a while, 2001 I think though I may be wrong about that. Though they have only recently returned to Serie A.

I didn't comment earlier Ursus because as you can see I just go round the houses with it and it all gets a bit wearing.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-09-2008 15:59

The two elements of the situation that I find the most interesting are:

a) DeLaurentis' implicit support of the muppets (or at least his resolute unwillingness to denounce what they did). To me, this has echoes of Cragnotti and Irreducibili at Lazio and the sad saga of the Barra Bravas at many Argentine clubs; and

b) the complete disconnect between the reports of the Roman authorities and Trenitalia on the one hand, and those of the Napoli prefect on the other hand.

These guys are not boy scouts:

http://www.corriere.it/Fotogallery/Tagliate/2008/08_Agosto/31/NAP/19.JPG

http://www.corriere.it/Fotogallery/Tagliate/2008/08_Agosto/31/NAP/15.JPG

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 02-09-2008 16:38

This is a nightmare for DeLaurentis who often (he appears to be asked about it often by the media) makes great play about what the club means to the fans and the city itself, which isn't unusual in itself for an owner, but often has wider political and social resonance at Napoli.

This is a big opportunity for him to really cut the wheat from the chaff and make a big stand, as these guys do him, the club and the city no favours of course. That he appears not to be is perhaps telling, and does suggest that the Napoli ultras have more sway than is healthy.

It is far more damaging for him not to condemn this lot than to defend them on the face of it.

While football fans the world over have sometimes gotten a rough deal in terms of the blame for any trouble being laid at their feet, the events of Sunday seem to suggest otherwise in this case. What is the masked pillock at the back of the group at Termini holding? It isn't a souvenir of the Coliseum.

The commandeering of a train and assaults on railway staff suggest a scant regard for citizens of their own city. 11 out of 14 (or similar figures, my little daughter was shouting while the news was on)carriages were wrecked on one train. It also suggests that any pretext was going to set them off on Sunday.

No doubt the Roman authorities did their best to treat them in the manner that they have become accustomed, though I am sure they didn't need asking twice.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 02-09-2008 17:28

Their links to the Comorra might just have something to do with it.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 02-09-2008 18:12

The_Liquidator wrote:

Their links to the Comorra might just have something to do with it.

Undoubtedly it has. Of 17 Napoli fans arrested for an attack on Roma fans at the Montepulciano Nord (Siena) autogrill last May half had previous in terms of links to the Camorra. It's possible the other half were simply unknown to police, given that too many young'uns (and old 'uns) are caught up in the particular fruits of the economy in that city. Or they

might just like a ruck.

Including selling cocaine for the clans of Pianura, Quartieri Spagnoli and Capodichino. This they allegedly do outside the San Paolo on match days and on away trips. One wouldn't be surprised if their violent tendencies are used in other ways too. During the recent refuse disturbances it is said to use a recent example.

However, given the national gnashing of teeth of Sunday's outing it is, as I said in the earlier post, far more damaging for him not to denounce them publicly than to defend them on the face of it. As you may have already gathered from your short time in Italy the face of it counts for a great deal, and can sidetrack many an effort at root and branch change.

While my anger got the better of me earlier on, and it is naive of me to think he can make a big stand in terms of extricating the club from such influence in a trice, his, as far as I know at the time of writing, refusal to denounce what they did hints at something even more rotten than I thought.

They know the game and his denouncement of violence by Napoli fans would I think anyway be accepted as a piece of realpolitik. Assuming this episode of Goodfellas rings true to the nth degree.

Of course, one shouldn't see the dark hand of the Camorra everywhere when talking about Napoli as there might be less salacious reasons for DeLaurentis's behaviour, football related violence by fans of the club or indeed other matters relating to the city's denizens.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 02-09-2008 19:49

Excellent points.

The Justice Minister has recommended a season-long travel ban for Napoli supporters, while (one of the) police unions has recommended a general ban on travel for "several months". Still no official decision as far as I can tell.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 02-09-2008 20:49

yes, I saw that on the news tonight. Interestingly, the episode at the autogrill I mentioned above came at a time when Napoli's fans were banned from attending away games!

Maroni, with great relish no doubt, is sending a team down to the "dark continent" to root around and uncover the reasons behind Sunday's events in Naples and Rome and those responsible. Let's hope they make some headway and come up with something tangible, though they might be wary of finding out too much or too worried about making it back!

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 02-09-2008 21:09

Ursus, forgot to say 1-1 honours even on Sunday night. Decent game I thought. Juve had the chances to kill it off before Gila's very good goal at the end.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-09-2008 12:27

We were in Switzerland over the weekend and didn't get to see the match, but I was quite thrilled with the result. If Prandelli is able to get Gila back to his Parma form, that will be a major plus for both the Viola and Italy. I can't remember him scoring a goal like that for Milan.

In less pleasant news, Well, the Osservatorio has confirmed the season-long ban on Napoli's travelling support proposed by Maroni, as well as halting ticket sales for Napoli-Fiorentina in anticipation of the game being limited to season ticket holders or being played behind closed doors.

They've also banned the Milanisti from travelling to Genoa in light of the long standing antipathy between the two sets of ultras going back to the death of a Genoa supporter more than a decade ago.

Stories from La Repubblica and La Gazzetta.

They've also closed down a number of lower league matches in your neck of the woods, Martlets. Is there a sense that things are getting worse down there? I recall quite a bit of nonsense at matches in C2 and D at the end of last season.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 03-09-2008 15:15

Potenza, which I notice is on the list, is 30 mins away by car. It is our provincial capital. We also have Melfi 10-15 min drive away in Serie C2 C, otherwise we are poorly served for clubs in this part of the Basilicata. Though Napoli is only 1.5-2 hrs away depending on what sort of car you have.

To be honest, there has always been a lot of nonsense this way down the years. Whether it is worse or not I don't know. Some of the younger ones here go to watch Melfi on occasion but many people have Sky or like me go to the bars to watch Serie A on a Saturday/Sunday, which is great fun.

We will make Melfi this year though. We were planning a trip to Napoli too, but it's now going to be a nightmare with tickets for sometime so I doubt we will bother.

While up to a few years ago, some would go to watch Napoli and there would be the odd trip organised or private trips to watch Milan, Inter or Juve most of that generation (mine) has fallen off attending live games.

The local inter village stuff is often pretty fearsome, and many a village gets banned from the league for a period then goes back in. Though this is as often due to player as supporter unrest and usually no sponsorship or finding someone to train the buggers. Il mitico, Pinuccio Pappagallo is the man to spearhead the team this year, Though he is often the cause of a dust up or two.

Ours is due back in this year after a 3 year hiatus, partly due to many of the then team getting banned, no-one willing to take the onerous task on and little or no sponsorship.

I hope it does as I enjoyed watching them on my visits in the past. The carabinieri always pop in from time to time and always for the final part of the match.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-09-2008 15:36

It was Potenza that caught my eye.

We get next to no news about "southern" lower division football up here other than results, and what do we get tends to be about punch-ups, pitch invasions and club presidents having their cars blown up.

It's nice to hear that it isn't all what the northern media find it politically and commercially expedient to feature.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Nico Rijnders - 03-09-2008 15:49

sixmartletsandaseagull wrote:

We will make Melfi this year though. We were planning a trip to Napoli too, but it's now going to be a nightmare with tickets for sometime so I doubt we will bother.

Perhaps you could resurrect your San Paolo plans next Easter, when you may be able to provide much needed local guidance to some possibly vulnerable looking out of towners. Things may have calmed down a bit by then.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 03-09-2008 20:32

Nico: if it has and you do, we should.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 03-09-2008 21:03

Unfortunately, this is descending into the predictable farce.

The police are claiming that at least 200 of the clowns who trashed the train have prior convictions, and strongly pushing the idea of serious Camorra connections. On the other hand, DeLaurentis is using the "lunatic fringe" argument, bleating about how fundamentally unfair a ground closure (even for a single match) is to the "good people and families" that come to the San Paolo, and threatening to up stakes and sell the club unless the sanctions are reduced and the central government "takes responsibility" for the problem.

What a country.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 04-09-2008 08:47

Zamparini strikes again.

Palermo have fired their manager after a single match. Davide Ballardini (who has managed a different team in each of the last four years, twice being sacked before Christmas) takes over from Stefano Colantuono.

Since the turn of the millenium, Palermo have only finished the season with the manager who started it once.

And la Gazzetta was kind enough to publish a handy clip 'n save guide to the 27 managers that Zamparini has sacked since he first bought Venezia 20 years ago (name of the new manager in parentheses):

VENEZIA:

1988/89 Cerantola (Fabbri)
1989/90 Pasinato (Sabadini)
1991/92 Zaccheroni (Marchesi)
1991/92 Marchesi (Zaccheroni)
1992/93 Zaccheroni (Maroso)
1992/93 Maroso (Zaccheroni)
1994/95 Ventura (Maifredi)
1994/95 Maifredi (Geretto)
1994/95 Geretto (Ventura)
1994/95 Ventura (Rossi e Geretto)
1995/96 Marchioro (Bellotto)
1996/97 Bellotto (De Vecchi e Fontana)
1996/97 De Vecchi e Fontana (Bellotto)
1998/99 Novellino
1999/00 Spalletti (Materazzi)
1999/00 Materazzi (Spalletti)

1999/00 Spalletti (Oddo)
2001/02 Prandelli (Buso)
2001/02 Buso (Magni)

PALERMO:

2002/03 Glerean (Arrigoni)
2002/03 Arrigoni (Sonetti)
2003/04 Baldini (Guidolin)
2005/06 Del Neri (Papadopulo)
2006/07 Guidolin (Gobbo e Pergolizzi)
2007/08 Colantuono (Guidolin)
2007/08 Guidolin (Colantuono)
2008/09 Colantuono (Ballardini)

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by marsupialman - 04-09-2008 11:59

Inter line-up against Samp: Julio Cesar; Maicon, Cambiasso, Materazzi, Maxwell; Zanetti, Stankovic, Muntari (Crespo 71); Figo (Jimenez 71), Ibrahimovic, Mancini (Balotelli 64)

I do admire the way Mourinho sets out his teams. Clear, consistent and always built for purpose. You can look at them and get an instant understanding of what each player's role in the team is. And that's surely a big part of his success isn't it? That ability to let ensure that each member of the team knows exactly what they should be doing at every moment, and that they have the right mix of talents to be able to perform his role.

I love his honesty as well. Couldn't get Lampard, fine, they buy Muntari. Mourinho is happy to let everyone know that Muntari was second choice (rather than claiming he was the real target all along, which we've seen countless managers and chairmen do) and draws a line under the issue, leaving the player free to get on with his job and try and cement a place in the team.

Of course, Jose is still capable of being an absolute pint of cockpiss in public, as his attack on Ranieri demonstrates. But I think that if you were one of his players or a member of is staff, you couldn't help but feel utterly devoted to the man, due the stength of his management and technical skills.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Senor DingDong - 05-09-2008 16:53

Surprised to see Inter couldn't get rid of Crespo before the deadline, now he isn't even in the Champions league squad, was it a case of him rejecting clubs or did Inter not get any offers for him?

As for Palermo, I predicted Zamparini would go through 5 managers this season earlier in this thread as more of a joke than anything but I wouldn't put it past him now. Thats quite some list he has accumulated.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 05-09-2008 18:26

Ranieri started the spat with Mourinho, Jose just responded in kind and then quite a bit more too !

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 05-09-2008 18:28

I'm no fan of Mourinho but his record shows that he's a better manager than Ranieri, or at least more of a winner.

Ranieri should have chosen someone else to pick on.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 05-09-2008 18:53

Inter's inability to unload Crespo was primarily due to their being unwilling to pick up the lion's share of his considerable wages while he was playing for someone else (and to a lesser extent, uncertainty over Quaresma and a refusal to send him to a direct rival like Roma).

He'll most likely be gone in the January window unless they have injuries up front and/or Adriano suffers a relapse.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-09-2008 11:32

The other shoe has dropped at Napoli.

In addition to the season-long ban on their support travelling, they have just been ordered to close their curva for every match through 31 October.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 08-09-2008 15:03

I've just been reading about Stefano Borgonovo's disease and all this bickering about who is to blame for the train incidents, why, what Lippi did wrong against Cyprus etc all pales into insignificance.

It is amazing that someone who was obviously so strong could end up this way at just 44.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 08-09-2008 15:12

Grazie mille.

I've been thinking about posting something on Borgonovo for the last couple of days and just couldn't find the words. You've done a better job than I ever could have.

The range of guesses (and that is all they are) as to why ALS is hitting Italian footballers so hard (as you note, 8 times as frequently as would be expected) is really quite amazing.

Not only the usual ones like doping (though the near absence of the disease among cyclists and athletes would seem to discount that) and long term stress on the body and immune system (more likely, perhaps, particularly given a tendency for players to play while injured during Borgonovo's ear), but also such seemingly bizarre theories as one based on the kind of pesticides that are used on pitches here. I began to take that last one more seriously when I read that the second most susceptible set of workers in Italy (after footballers) are farmers.

I'm definitely going to try to go to the benefit match on the 8th, and will donate even if I can't make it.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Floating Tramp - 08-09-2008 23:18

Surprised Crespo was not able to get a move away. What with Real Madrid AND Barca both looking for a quality forward. They could've afforded his wages and taken him on a season long loan.

Shame that such a fine striker has wasted away for the last 3-4 seasons.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 09-09-2008 08:57

Barca were only looking for a striker if Eto'o left, and Madrid are wary of Italian-based players after being burned by Cassano (and arguably Cannavaro).

The thing with Crespo is that he will only move if he can be pretty much assured of being in the first XI, and that just isn't going to be the case at virtually all of the clubs who can afford his wages. He was upset about being left out of Inter's Champions League squad, but the reality is that he was unlikely to play in that competition for anyone else (with the possible exception of someone like Fenerbache).

There's a bit of a Catch 22 with him, as it is quite clear to me that he is most effective when playing regularly, yet his less than inspiring performances in a secondary role only make it less likely that he will get a long run in the first team.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Floating Tramp - 09-09-2008 21:36

ursus arctos wrote:

Barca were only looking for a striker if Eto'o left, and Madrid are wary of Italian-based players after being burned by Cassano (and arguably Cannavaro).

The thing with Crespo is that he will only move if he can be pretty much assured of being in the first XI, and that just isn't going to be the case at virtually all of the clubs who can afford his wages. He was upset about being left out of Inter's Champions League squad, but the reality is that he was unlikely to play in that competition for anyone else (with the possible exception of someone like Fenerbache).

There's a bit of a Catch 22 with him, as it is quite clear to me that he is most effective when playing regularly, yet his less than inspiring performances in a secondary role only make it less likely that he will get a long run in the first team.

I doubt Crespo can be classed in the same category as Cassano (highly troubled footballer, mentally bereft at the time) and to a certain extent Fabio Cannavaro (had reached the pinnacle, came into a chaotic defence and was recovering from a long campaign).

Look at Crespo's scoring record. Even playing second fiddle he's been potent. Checked and it's 20 goals in 57 games over the last two seasons at Inter. Also 24 goals in 64 games for Chelsea. Hardly a player who struggles when he's not a first choice regular.

I think he'd just have expected to play more games. Which looking at what Real Madrid have (or lack thereof) I'd say he'd have got more games and been more prominent than he'd have been at Inter, where as you say, he wasn't even included in the Champs League squad.

All Barca'd have to do is pay his wages, no transfer fee. BUT, I did forget how much money they spent so yer right, Eto'o needed to go for them to buy. And i'm not sure they'd have chosen Crespo to be the lone saviour.

I still think he's got a lot to give. And I sustain my argument that he'd have been useful at Real Madrid. AND Crespo would've gone.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 10-09-2008 06:22

Tramp, Real Madrid are not rational when it comes to transfers. They are currently on a Dutch kick, having abandoned their temporary fascination with Italians.

And I have seen every home match that Crespo has played for Inter and stand by initial statement; statistics can be misleading. Though if you want to look at last season; he scored four times in 19 Serie A appearances, a very significant dropoff from his 14 in 30 the year before. Full stats here.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Floating Tramp - 10-09-2008 08:04

ursus arctos wrote:

Tramp, Real Madrid are not rational when it comes to transfers. They are currently on a Dutch kick, having abandoned their temporary fascination with Italians.

And I have seen every home match that Crespo has played for Inter and stand by initial statement; statistics can be misleading. Though if you want to look at last season; he scored four times in 19 Serie A appearances, a very significant dropoff from his 14 in 30 the year before. Full stats here.

Last season he played even less games and made even less starts. Cruz finally established himself ahead of him.

I've saw him a fair few times playing for Inter too. Last season he began to wilt a bit but he's still shown enough for me to know he'd make a substantial contribution to most clubs.

And as i said, he'd have a more prominent role. Which is one of the keys.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 10-09-2008 08:09

Why do you think he would have a more prominent role at Real Madrid than Inter?

He's hardly going to start ahead of Van Nistelrooy or Raul; I would expect him to run into many of the same issues that Saviola has faced there.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Floating Tramp - 11-09-2008 00:12

ursus arctos wrote:

Why do you think he would have a more prominent role at Real Madrid than Inter?

He's hardly going to start ahead of Van Nistelrooy or Raul; I would expect him to run into many of the same issues that Saviola has faced there.

Cos Raul plays off the front man, coming in from the flank. Saviola's not an out and out goalscorer. He'd get more appearances from the bench at the very least. But also, with van Nistelrooy's bones beginning to creak, he'd get more starts.

Not saying he'd be a first team regular. But i can see him getting more games and being more needed. Have you seen how Real play? Lordy, what makes La Liga exciting, i guess..

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 11-09-2008 09:24

In other news, the Interior Minister has released the results of the authorities' analysis of the Napoli supporters who bought tickets for the Roma match (this is the first instance I can recall of them actually doing something with the names that one is required to give when buying a ticket).

Of the 3096 travelling supporters:

810 had police records (not necessarily convictions).

Of those, the charges against:

419 related to property crimes;

260 related to drug related offences;

70 related to arms related offences (i.e., bombs, or illegal gun possession); and

50 related to various Camorra and/or Mafia-related offences.

Lovely bunch of lads, then.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 13-09-2008 19:25

Inter tied at 1-1 with Catania going into the half, Muntari red carded for touching Tedesco's face, sending him sprawling. A near brawl as the players leave the pitch.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 13-09-2008 19:46

Burdisso was just kicked in the head diving for a ball, John Terry style, looked to be unconscious for a minute there. Back up now.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by The_Liquidator - 13-09-2008 20:24

What exactly is a property crime?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-09-2008 06:09

a) the Roma defence (sorry, couldn't resist);

b) I think the idea is anything that involves theft or damage of property, so robbery, burglary, vandalism, perhaps certain kind of fraud or obtaining things under false pretenses.

The Burdisso thing was scary; we were worried that he had swallowed his tongue. Muntari has selflessly forgiven Tedesco for his dying swan routine, but I think the clown should be banned for simulation. Muntari was very good while he was on, and Vieira had his best game for Inter in more than a year.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 14-09-2008 09:32

Results are fairly modest so far though. What piece of the jigsaw is missing ?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 12:32

Cordoba? Ibrahimovic blowing too many chances? Cambiasso and Zanetti got subbed in during the 2nd half out of consideration for their return trip from S. America. They always make a huge difference.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 13:08

mourinho started very slowly at chelsea as well.

His first games at chelsea were

1-0 man utd
1-0 Birmingham
2-0 Crystal Palace
2-1 Southampton
0-0 Aston Villa
0-0 Tottenham
1-0 middlesbrough
1-0 Liverpool
0-1 Man city.

The football they played was really nothing to write home about. Some of those games were really wretched to watch. Then Robben started to get into the team, and they scored 4 goals in six of their next nine league matches.

The difference with then and Inter was that he had much better players at chelsea, particularly in defence. Inter seem to have a lot of injuries at centre half.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 13:28

If Milan's 1st half play against Genoa is any kind of forecast, it's going to be a very long season.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by dalliance - 14-09-2008 13:37

Not that long, probably to Xmas really.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 13:42

Outstanding goal by the Viola (Mutu finish) to go up 1-0 at the vacated Curva.

Edit: partly vacated anyway.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 13:43

Milan being roundly outplayed, down 1-0.

Ronnie and Sheva yanked at the half, replaced by Seedorf and Borriello.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pengedragon - 14-09-2008 14:11

great play from lavezzi there for napoli's equaliser

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:30

Napoli up 2-1, continuing my likely slide into zero correct predictions this week.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pengedragon - 14-09-2008 14:30

and napoli lead

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pengedragon - 14-09-2008 14:31

oh

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 14:35

here, I thought boriello had fucked his knee. It would appear that he's playing today.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 14:51

Diego Milito has just won a penalty by tricking maldini with A cruyff turn and he's just knocked home the penalty.

Is ancilotti fucked?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:51

He is, to little effect, though more of an impact than Shevchenko. And Diego Milito has just converted a penalty given away by Maldini, so Milan will apparently go down 2-0.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:52

sorry, cross posted. I suppose Ancelotti could at last be fucked, not that it's his fault.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:54

Kaka looks completely out of sorts. Ambrosini, Favalli, just awful. Zambrotta, labored.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 14:55

Galliani really looks like a pantomime baddy doesn't he. Did silvio find him in central casting.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:57

Incidentally Diego Milito is an extremely good player, I watched him with interest when he was at Zaragoza. Fond memories of a 6-1 win over Madrid in the Copa del Rey where he scored 4 times.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 14:58

And I am the Life wrote:

Galliani really looks like a pantomime baddy doesn't he. Did silvio find him in central casting.

See I get the impression that he's a sweet guy somehow. Done in by that hang dog face.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 15:08

I find it very unlikely that Silvio's right hand man is a sweet guy.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 16:01

As long as you don't cross him?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by And I am the Life - 14-09-2008 16:07

whatever I know about his stewardship of milan and the league, it would appear that you have to be more worried about him seeking you out to cross you.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 19:05

laquinta and Amauri look to be a threatening partnership for Juventus. Two big lads with considerable skill, getting quite a few chances against Udinese.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Lodzubelieveit - 14-09-2008 19:07

I'm chuffed to see that Ivan Juric was playing for Genoa - a nice guy, and the only professional footballer ever to buy me a beer. Seemed a bit weedy, mind.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 14-09-2008 19:08

AIATL, I guess it's the Uncle Fester thing.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 14-09-2008 20:28

And Amauri gives Juve the victory with about 20 minutes left.

Add me to the group that thinks that Galliani is actually a decent sort who knows something about football, but who has been caught in a classic Faustian bargain.

It will be interesting to see if Ancelotti lasts through the UEFA Cup matches against Zurich. The knives are definitely out, but the problem has always been that top managers simply don't want to work with Silvio.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 19-09-2008 16:08

Some miscellaneous updates:

Milan have just announced that Andrea Pirlo's thigh injury is significantly worse than expected and that he will be out for a period of 6 to 10 weeks.

Earlier, Juve had reported that Trezeguet will be out for at least a month.

And the Viola are trying to get the city of Florence interested in a futuristic new stadium that would incorporate a "football theme park" and commercial facilities.

It would also look like a paramecium:

http://www.gazzetta.it/Fotogallery/Tagliate/2008/09_Settembre/19/stadio/01.jpg

The Viola's chances of winning back-to-back Champions League titles are better than those of this being built in the foreseeable future.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 19-09-2008 16:16

As long as they put the orange tiles on top I think it would be fine.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 19-09-2008 17:05

Would go well with the purple, certainly.

The Gazzetta is now saying that Trezeguet will be out for 3 to 4 months.

And it looks like Inter's appeal against Muntari's red card has been rejected, which means that he's out of the Derby.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 19-09-2008 17:33

ursus arctos wrote:

The Gazzetta is now saying that Trezeguet will be out for 3 to 4 months.
quote]

I feel bad now, come back soon you know we all love you!

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by SpanglyPrincess - 20-09-2008 15:09

wonders about use of "we all"

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 20-09-2008 16:12

How good are Napoli, really? Any opinions?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 20-09-2008 18:05

I doubt they'll challenge for a CL spot this year but I can certainly see them in Europe again next year. They were good enough to beat Udinese 5-0 last season, and obviously good enough for Benfica this week and Fiorentina last, though they've just lost their star striker (Lavezzi) for a couple weeks. I think they're technically very good but more importantly they're play like they really want it. How good they are *really* depends on how far they go, obviously, so nobody really knows yet.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 21-09-2008 10:34

I think Martlets meant "all Juventini".

Spangles' lot finally win a game.

Napoli beat Udinese like a drum twice last season, and are genuinely good. I would have them odds on for a UEFA Cup place, though if they lose a couple of matches at home the fanatical crowd that has been an advantage could turn into a detriment quickly. They also are not very deep, and will struggle if it with a spell of Inter- (or Roma-) like injuries.

Like Fiorentina, they have done their homework in the transfer market and come up with some very under-priced jewels like Lavezzi and Hamsik.

Though Lavezzi is indeed for two weeks now.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 22-09-2008 17:08

Ursus, what's the word in El Pibe de Oro joining Inter Milan?

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-09-2008 10:13

Moratti has been conducting what the gossip rags here would call a "flirt" with Maradona for the better part of a year now. The last time Diego was here, he had lunch at Moratti's house.

I don't think that there is any substance to it, but it may be that El Pibe's populist streak appeals to Moratti's sense of noblesse oblige. Or it may just be a way for him to try to get an option on Kun Aguero (or the Aguero/Maradona fille child to be born later).

Moratti has been pining after Messi for years (much as his father pined after Pele during a period when Santos and the Brazil FA wouldn't let him out of the country), but if he has finally realised that Barca won't sell Leo, I can see him deciding that Kun is the perfect replacement as a crush object.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-09-2008 10:02

Milan derby looking interesting as AC Milan continued to improve yesterday (beating Reggina 1-2 with a fine Pato winner on a fine setup by Kaka) while Inter were lackluster against Lecce (late winner from Cruz, 1-0). Roma got thumped by Diego Milito & Genoa, 3-1. They looked fairly shit at home against a hapless Reggina last weekend despite winning that one comfortably enough. Reggina put up a tougher fight in Reggio Calabria for Milan, who may now have more momentum going into the derby. Haven't heard any word on Borriello's apparent injury (he was subbed out 2d half which allowed Andriy Shevchenko to scamper about for a while to no effect).

All in all Milan are looking much scrappier thanks mainly to Gattuso's quick return after the wrist injury. Flamini nearly got sent off yesterday, not sure he's fitting in very well yet.

Amauri scores again for Juve who are nonetheless held by Catania 1-1.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by Nil Arshavin - 25-09-2008 10:07

I watched a bit of the Inter game last night. They didn't look good in the spell that I saw.

For those who don't know, betfair show Italian games live (there was a choice of 5 games last night on their website). I think you just need an account with them to view the match. It has english commentary too. On the website it says it works globally apart from inside Italy.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by sixmartletsandaseagull - 25-09-2008 10:13

Juve disappointing overall last night. Though I refuse to be too downbeat as Ranieri did start with De Ceglie, Marchisio and Giovinco, and Marchionni. Hopefully the result won't put him off giving them fairly regular starts! I also forget how young Chiellini is given how imp't he has become to the team, though his error ultimately cost Juve the equaliser.

Catania played well, especially early on.

Giovinco, I am happy to report, set up the goal and played pretty well and looked to the manor born to use a Penelope Keithism.

Cracking last 20 once the equaliser had gone in, Juve hit the bar twice in the same attack, then a miraculous save from the keeper, a couple blocked on or close to the line, and other good opportunities squandered. Phew! If only they'd done that at 1-0 and killed the game off rather than mess about.

Hey Ho! Pleased for Napoli (again) and Borriello.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-09-2008 10:17

Inter wasted quite a few chances and were denied by the woodwork at least twice, but Lecce weren't really trying to score and the Nerazzurri did seem to have their minds on the Derby. As usual, Mourinho was not afraid to shake things up at half time, and Cruz proved yet again that he is deadly coming off the bench.

The less said about the Viola's performance in Rome the better. And Roma are back in "crisis" after a combination of their injury-ridden squad and some horrific refereeing resulted in them going down 3-1 in Genoa.

It should be a good Derby, though I don't like them this early in the season, nor do I like them the weekend before a Champions League match.

=====

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-09-2008 10:41

ursus arctos wrote:

The less said about the Viola's performance in Rome the better.

Still, that first goal by Mauri was pretty cool looking. (I'm glad that's not the side Milan saw last time.)

It should be a good Derby, though I don't like them this early in the season, nor do I like them the weekend before a Champions League match.

Bitch bitch bitch. I can't wait, as usual.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-09-2008 10:56

Of course the Champions League bit doesn't apply to your lot . . .

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-09-2008 10:59

It was high time the UEFA Cup raised its profile for a season.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 25-09-2008 11:01

You might want to wait until you've actually qualified for the group stages to say that . . .

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by BrunoMaggiore - 25-09-2008 11:28

I'll have the perfect comeback just as soon as Milan qualify for the group stages.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 30-09-2008 15:19

In the latest example of managerial recycling (an essential part of Silvio's committment to the Kyoto Protocol), Francesco Guidolin, formerly of Palermo (on 4 separate occasions) has replaced Gigi Cagni at Parma.

Parma, who were relegated on the final day of last season, are currently 14th in Serie B with 6 points from as many games, 7 points adrift of suprise leaders Sassuolo (who were just promoted from C1).

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by pawlu - 30-09-2008 21:03

The funniest story that Ive heard this week is that a group of Japanese tourists wanted to watch Roma play last Sunday but were unable to do so. The reason: as Atalanta fans were banned from watching the game the order was that tickets could only be sold to people coming from the Lazio region.

This was interpreted as an exclusion for the rest of the world so these poor souls couldn't buy a ticket (at least, not from official sources), perhaps in case of some Japan based Atalanta ultra coming over to cause havoc.

Re:Serie A 2008/09

Posted by ursus arctos - 01-10-2008 05:24

I've heard of that happening to non-Italian individuals here, though not to organised groups (who usually have access to "unofficial" sources). The Osservatorio's rules in these situations are often nonsensical on their face.

=====