
Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by Bo! Seleção - 06-07-2008 22:09

Thought I'd get into the spirit, even thought I've vowed not to read a single sports newspaper until August.

My one to watch for next season is Sporting Braga. They were sh1t last season due to a succession of awful managers. However, the squad is superb, strong in all areas and they've made some great signings already, like Paulo César from Leiria. On top of this they've got, in my opinion, the finest manager in Portugal, Jorge Jesus. This guy will whip players like Jorginho, Wender and César Piexoto into shape (all three of whom really could play at the highest level) and I really beleive Braga will finish in the top three next season and I'd go so far to say that they could win the league.

The reason I say this is because Porto go into the next season without Paulo Assunção, who signed for Atletico Madrid today, and I think his absence will take the tripe-eaters a season to adjust to. If they lose Lucho too, then I think they'll be a far weaker Porto side than in previous years. The loss of Assunção should make me happy, but I honestly believed Porto could become European champions with him in the team, his leaving will be the catalyst that prompts the disintegration of a great team of players. However, every season I say that Porto will struggle because of a great player they've lost, last year it was Anderson and Pepe, yet they win their first 8 matches and the season is usually over by December. So, don't trust a word I say in this respect. One purchase Porto have made is that of Benfica midfielder Cristian Rodriguez- Far more a political coup than anything else, he was one of Benfica's best players last season but I don't think it's a huge loss for Benfica.

Sporting Lisbon have made some interesting purchases, most notably the perennial underachiever Helder Postiga. There's a good chance he could form an impressive partnership once again with Derlei, who looked back to his best at the end of last season. They've also bought Marco Canneira, I'm assuming to play centrally rather than at left back because the young Argentinian Grimi looked great in that position and it seems like AC Milan are willing for him to stay at Sporting. I think a lot depends on whether Moutinho and Veloso stay or go for Sporting. Moutnho will be hard to replace but they'll find another Veloso. One of them will have to be sold to balance the books. The longstanding problem with Sporting is their dodgy keeper, and with Rui Patricio in between the posts, I'd say a top 3 finish is the best they can hope for.

Benfica are hoping to secure the signature of Pablo Aimar tomorrow. They've already signed ex-Sportinguista Carlos Martins, who I think will be a great addition to the team. An unspectacular player who can do the one thing Benfica needs. supply a decent cross. They've also signed some guy from Real Madrid called Balboa and a French Algerian called Yebda, but I've got no idea what they're like. Hopefully we'll see a far more confident Di Maria in the next season, he started showing flashes of superb brilliance at the end of last year but the men behind the scenes obviously still don't trust him completely. It'll be an interesting test for the new Spanish manager Quique Flores, he was seen by many to be the natural successor to Rafa Benitez at Valencia but was sacked for a string of boring displays and disappointing results. He definitely has talent at his disposal at Benfica but will he be able to stop the never-ending rot that makes Benfica such a black hole for young talented players? I don't believe so and I think Benfica will struggle again to finish in the top 3.

The other team of note are Guimarães, who will be playing in the Champions League this year. I think they'll find it hard to repeat last years amazing season but a finish in the top 5 and Europe should definitely be expected.

Overall, I think this season's campaign will be far closer than last year's and I really hope that Braga will fulfil the promise I believe they have.

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by And I am the Life - 06-07-2008 22:44

jorge jesus is a fucking great name. Balboa is a small black guy that I confused with royston drenthe the first couple of times I saw him. he seems pretty dynamic. (he plays for equatorial guinea internationally. aren't they that micro state that simon mann was trying to overthrow?)

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by Bo! Seleção - 06-07-2008 23:13

For some reason it's never occurred to me but you're absolutely right, Jorge Jesus is a great name. Jesus is quite an unusual surname in Portugal too.

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by cubillas - 07-07-2008 11:18

When are the fixtures published Bo!?

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by Bo! Seleccção - 07-07-2008 12:31

I think it's tonight.

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by chasbo - 07-07-2008 20:16

Always look out for Guimaraes result after Bolton there in 2005. Nice place with friendly locals who didn't appear to mind 2000 Boltonians turn up and drink vast amounts of Super Bock. I think bewilderment is the best way of describing it.

Fingers crossed for a repeat of last season's heroics.

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by Bo! Seleccção - 07-07-2008 22:10

Eis o programa completo da 1.^a jornada:

E. Amadora - Académica
V. Guimarães – V. Setúbal
Naval - Marítimo
Leixões - Nacional
Sporting - Trofense
Boavista * - Sp. Braga
FC Porto - Belenenses
Rio Ave - Benfica

Jogos entre os «grandes»:

2.^a jornada (31 Agosto)
Benfica – FC Porto

4.^a jornada (28 Setembro)
Benfica-Sporting

5.^a jornada (5 Outubro)
Sporting-FC Porto

17.^a jornada (8 Fevereiro 2009)
FC Porto – Benfica

19.^a jornada (22 Fevereiro 2009)
Sporting – Benfica

20.^a jornada (1 Março 2009)
FC Porto – Sporting

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by Bo! Seleccão - 07-07-2008 22:11

Looking at the above, the season could be all over for Benfica by the 5th game.

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by jamzinho - 23-07-2008 08:58

I've just read on the Romanian thread that Football Portugal Podcast favourite Claudio Pitbull has followed Peseiro to Rapid. Do you know if anyone wanted to keep him in Portugal?

Have Porto lined up any replacements for Quaresma and Assuncao?

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by ad hoc - 23-07-2008 09:02

Not sure about those two, but they have signed Rapid's Cristian Sapunaru to fill the hole left by Bosingwa's departure. (I forgot that transfer in my summary of players leaving Romania)

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Re:Portuguese Football 2008/9

Posted by steveeeeeeeee - 23-07-2008 13:16

jamzinho wrote:

I've just read on the Romanian thread that Football Portugal Podcast favourite Claudio Pitbull has followed Peseiro to Rapid. Do you know if anyone wanted to keep him in Portugal?

Have Porto lined up any replacements for Quaresma and Assuncao?

I think every club would've liked to have him but Porto were reticent to let him play for a competitor (i.e. Benfica or Sporting) and were also unwilling to farm him out for next to nothing like they did the previous season. Utterly magnificent player, however he looks like someone you'd see down Hackney Marshes on a Sunday morning smoking a fag and drinking Lucozade before kick-off.

Sapunuru doesn't look anything special on the YouTube clips I've been watching ad hoc. They seem to have paid a lot for him when you take into consideration the quality of Pitbull. Is he any good?

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