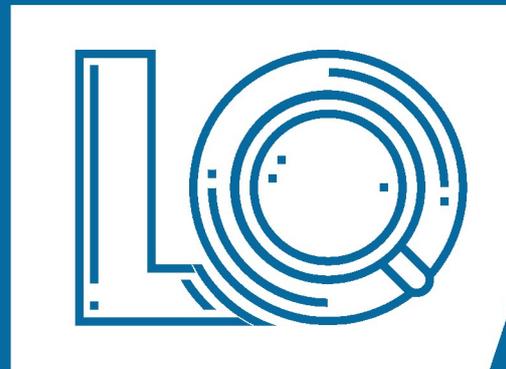


# LATTE

## QUARTERLY



Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training, Everything FM | **Issue Twelve**

# Editor's Note

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LQ12 is here to close out our contribution to the FM22 cycle. We've taken time in this edition to pay homage to the beauty that is the global game. The international game of football has brought so much to the table and naturally that filters down through Football Manager also.

Diego Mendoza introduces us to *Luis Vázquez* through his save with Al Faisaly of Saudi Arabia. Read about the striker's journey across the globe and the impact he's had on Diego's game.

Recently I've gone out of my comfort zone and taken up a season in a league that is completely brand new to me. I discuss the Canadian Premier League in *Lesser Loved Leagues*.

*The International Game* perhaps sums up this issue very nicely as FM Rensie, Rock's End FM and Guido Merry discuss playing FM and creating content in their non-native tongue.

FM Eadster and FM Grasshopper sum up their network game in *The MLS Save*. Pros, Cons and something about 'diaper chat'...?!

Finally, we round out the issue with another LQ Book Review. FM Stag talks about his reading of *Tears at La Bombonera* by Christopher Hylland and how this can relate to playing Football Manager.

Sit back, grab a LATTE and enjoy

fmadventure

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## LQ Issue Twelve:

**Luis "El Carpintero" Vazquez**

By Diego Mendoza

**The MLS Save**

By FM Eadster and FM Grasshopper

**Lesser Loved Leagues**

By fmadventure

**LQ Book Review: Tears at La Bombonera**

By FM Stag

**The International Game**

By FM Rensie, Rock's End FM and Guido Merry

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### Luis "El Carpintero" Vázquez Diego Mendoza

A lot of planning often goes into both mine and plenty of people's Football Manager saves. Be it endless research into a club prior to release or studying a particular tactical style, we've all done it in that quest of the perfect save. Often though, once into the depths of a save, things don't always work out as you first planned. Sometimes the perfect save comes about completely by accident, and this is one of these times.

#### **How did the save come about?**

On a cold and wet evening back in February, a well known Blogger and Twitch star set off a chain of events that would change my life forever. I mean who not only signs a Goalkeeper as one of their designated players but also spends \$10m in order to make it happen? It naturally provided quite the discussion point amongst the FM community with various opinions being shared about goalkeepers. I'm not one to just have an opinion without having something to back it up and as such I wanted to delve into a bit more outside of what I was seeing in my B36 save. As such I decided to play a couple of seasons in a league not renowned for its goalkeeping, Saudi Arabia.

Al Faisaly had been one of my options for FM22 before deciding on B36, mostly because I love the kit and in real life they were struggling (they've actually just been relegated). The perfect team to see how important a goalkeeper was as I'd no doubt see plenty of action.

A slight tactical variation and some better foreign players I went on my way and we actually played some quite good football with Julio Tavares scoring plenty as a big burly striker. Then another twist of fate happened, just before Christmas Julio Tavares got injured for 5 months. I only had Saudi striker Mohammed Al-Saiari as a replacement so I had to dip my toes into the transfer market and sign a short term foreign replacement. With no money in the bank I needed to find someone on loan. I had agreed a deal with a Brazilian complete forward but he rejected and with time running out I needed someone. That someone was an Argentine target forward who although wasn't spectacular attribute wise, looked like he might be alright in the short term. I made an offer and he accepted a loan deal until the end of the season.

I gave him the vacant no.9 shirt and the rest, as they say, is history.



## Meeting Luis

Luis Ismael Vázquez was born in April 2001 in Recreo, Santa Fe. He started his career with Patronato before Boca Juniors snapped him up as an 18 year old back in 2019. In real life he broke into the first team in 2021 and has played 60 times for Boca, scoring 12 goals, including a goal in the Copa de La Liga Final in 2022.

Attribute wise he wasn't good enough to play as a Complete Forward but given what I'd seen Tavares do before he was injured, I thought that his more familiar position of Target Forward would still fit in with our tactical style. We were playing a short passing game, building up from the back but with an extremely quick left back and right winger we were then switching to being more direct in the final third. This was producing a lot of crosses into the box which Tavares had thrived on, using his strength and aerial presence, to score plenty of goals. He'd also been quite keen to drop deep and link up with the rest of the team, creating space for our wingers to then exploit.

The tactic was working well and we were second in the league so I didn't want to change anything drastically. A target forward would focus on those two things that I'd picked out as being integral to our tactic so I decided to set Luis' role as a Target Forward - Attack. His strongest role, according to my coaches, was to be on support duty but as a lone striker I wanted him to be direct and aggressive when we were attacking, to replicate what Tavares had been doing.

# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

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## Saudi Arabia

Luis made his debut in a Cup match against Al Orobah, scoring 2 goals. An excellent start but against a club two divisions below, he'd have tougher tests ahead. His first league match came against Al Fayha in the derby and he scored 2 more goals, as starts go I was impressed. Then we played Al Ta'ee and he went one better and scored a hat trick! Not only did he score 3 goals but he also won 19 out of 21 headers, securing a 9.8 rating. What kind of player had I found? 7 goals in your first 3 games for the club had me very excited.

15 games later and he'd scored a further 22 goals, securing a first ever league title for Al Faisaly and a winner in the King's Cup Final to secure an unbelievable double. 29 goals from 18 games is an incredible return and I don't think I'd had a goalscorer as prolific as that since Colidio or Villalva.

I'd completely forgotten about goalkeepers now, this save was going to be all about Luis Vázquez. Boca Juniors accepted a loan extension and now it was all about how many goals could he score in this second year?

Well firstly he'd need a support cast as after all you can't be a good goalscorer without having the right players to create those chances for you to finish? With some of the foreign players I inherited moving on, I stuck to my favoured approach of bringing in Argentine players. This save was going to be fun and about Luis scoring goals so why not bring in some former Football Manager wonderkids to make it interesting? In yet another twist of fate I'd come across Javier Pastore and Pablo Piatti playing for Elche in real life and decided to take a look to see what they were doing on my save. Both were available and I thought why not? It'll be fun. Both arrived for nominal fees in pre-season and would take up their positions in the heart of midfield and on the wing. I still had a bit of transfer budget left and decided to go for a more recent wonderkid who I'd had on my Albirex save a few years ago, Juan Sforza. Through some shrewd negotiations I managed to convince him a trip to Saudi was a good idea. So there I had it, The Luis Vázquez support act, my new numbers 10, 27 and 19.

# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

Here's how we lined up in Season 2.

Did it work? Yes beyond my wildest dreams.

Luis played 49 games in season 2, he scored an incredible 71 goals, had 10 assists, 22 POM and won an incredible 587 headers. He was well supported by his fellow Argentines as the goals flowed and Al Faisaly raked in the silverware. A League and Cup double alongside an AFC Cup and Arab Champions League title turned Al Faisaly into the team of Asia. Could we wrap up the AFC Champions League the following season to maintain our dominance and put Luis Vazquez amongst the gods of Asian football?

No sadly not, two first half goals against Suwon Bluewings were ultimately too much for Al Faisaly and we slipped to a 2-1 loss in the Final. Luis also had an off day, the only blot on an exemplary copy book.

Luis however picked himself up from this early disappointment and focused on bettering his numbers from the 2022/2023 season. Now 71 goals in a season is not an easy target to better, would it be just a one off? No. By now you'll have come to expect that Luis is not the sort of player that disappoints and although he actually he scored 6 less league goals than in 2023 however a brace against Al-Nassr in the King's Cup Final gave him 72 goals for the season, bettering his prior season's numbers by 1 goal! The season was not all about goals though as his all round game made massive strides and he weighed in with 21 assists, 11 more than in the previous season and he won 739 headers.

In two and a half seasons he had really produced some quite incredible numbers and this hadn't gone unnoticed within the FM Community, fate was about to intervene again.



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## Spain

Most of you will be familiar with Dan Gear of Bolivia fame and he is someone that I have had plenty of interaction with over the years. He's a man I respect, especially for never being afraid to challenge things and people. Dan had obviously been keeping a close eye on Luis' progress, hoping that maybe one day he could be to him what Bruno Miranda was back in Bolivia. Seeing his incredible numbers he asked whether he could replicate it in a top league.

This got me thinking about my next move. Normally I'd be playing a save that focused around the success of the team but what if I did something different and focused on making one player as successful as possible?

I didn't want to leave everything I had done at Al Faisaly so I came up with a plan to add a Mendoza offspring to a club in Europe and loan Vazquez, Sforza and new signing Alan Velasco to that team. I would prove Dan Gear wrong or more I had to for my own pride and respect. The question was who would be a good fit for Mendoza's babes?

I already had Spain loaded so it made sense to look there first. It was only then after a conversation with the other half of GnG, FM Grasshopper, about Luis Vazquez's similarities with Martin Palermo that a clear favourite emerged. Villarreal.

Luis Mendoza, one of Diego's twenty nine sons, inherited a squad that had just finished fourth under Didier Deschamps. Aside from exciting wingers Samuel Chuckuweze and Yeremy Pino, Centre back Pau Torres and a Football Manager legendary goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli, there wasn't much to get excited about in the squad. Regular goalscorer Gerard Moreno was the wrong side of 30 as were stalwarts Capoue, Mandi and Aurier. The first task was to bring Luis Vazquez, Juan Sforza and newly signed Alan Velsaco on loan from Al Faisaly. Although my coaches didn't necessarily agree, I wanted to see whether all three could cut it in La Liga, having really impressed me in Saudi.

The plan for season one was really to maintain that 4th place finish, make a good account of ourselves in the Champions League and ultimately see how many goals Luis could score. Could he step up to a higher level?

It only took Luis two games to score his first goal for Villarreal, an excellent left footed volley against Athletic Bilbao and it would be the first of many. Now the goals didn't flow as freely as they had in Saudi Arabia but that was to be expected, Luis was coming up against some of the best defenders and goalkeepers in the world. He did continue to score and finished his first season with 39 goals from 47 games. Villarreal bettered their previous season result with a third place finish after some last day drama but were a bit disappointing in Europe despite a memorable win against Man City, thanks to a Luis Vazquez goal.

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He did however have an awful lot of shots, far more than any other striker within the league. This prompted me to do a bit of self analysis, which you can read on my blog, using the fantastic analytical spreadsheet produced by Adam aka FM Stag. 39 goals from 377 shots doesn't sound as impressive when you look at it as a percentage. He'd also acquired the nickname of El Carpintero due to his sheer love of woodwork. What I wanted to work out is how I could improve Luis' conversion rate of 10% and turn him from being the 3rd best goalscorer in the league, to the best.

This little bit of self appraisal led me to deciding that I needed a new playmaker who had the technical ability to produce a better quality of ball, both from open play and set pieces, for Luis to finish. That man was Colombian, Juan Fernando Quintero.

To quote John "Hannibal" Smith, "I love it when a plan comes together". The introduction of an enigma like Quintero was the catalyst to an incredible season for Villarreal and more importantly Luis Vazquez. Luis scored 48 goals and 13 assists from 52 appearances as he led Villarreal to a first ever League and Cup double. Quintero finished with 34 assists and 5 goals.

A truly remarkable second season and Luis Vazquez had more than answered Daniel's question as to whether he could do it at the highest level. Then that thing called fate turned up again, Luis was finally called up to the national side. The World Cup was a month away...

## The World Cup

The way this season was going I had to see if I could win the World Cup and make Luis Vazquez immortal. Could he really do it?

With only two games to prepare for a World Cup not being ideal, I knew what my plan was, give the ball to Luis and see if he scores. As such I picked a squad that I felt gave me the best opportunity to do that. Luis naturally scored on his debut against South Korea and then hit 2 against Nicaragua. Surely he was going to have a great time against the defences of Uzbekistan and Ukraine? Well believe it or not he is actually human and was a bit disappointing against both as we scraped through with a few scrappy wins. In fairness to Luis, the whole team was a bit disappointing and struggled to produce anything half decent for him to finish. Getting out of the group gave us a 2nd round match against Japan.

We came alive and swept the Blue Samurai aside 4-0, Luis getting his first goal of the World Cup. Maybe this was to be our turning point and glory was on the horizon? We'd face the Germans next.

Midway through the first half a cross made it into the box and Luis made no mistake in putting Argentina into the lead, sending Mendoza HQ wild. We huffed and puffed but couldn't get a second which inevitably led to the Germans scoring an equaliser, sending the game to extra time. Again despite going close, Argentina couldn't score that decisive winning goal. It'd be penalties...against the Germans. The story ends here right...?

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Of course it doesn't, we only went and beat the Germans on penalties! Luis was going to win the World Cup!

He wasn't. The Germany result had come at a cost and against Portugal we looked tired. We conceded an early goal through a defensive mistake and despite our best efforts nothing would go in at the other end. Luis had given everything but he was a shadow of a man as he was replaced in the 72nd minute. The infamous World Cup fitness impact had taken its toll. His replacement Lautaro Martinez fared no better and Argentina crashed out of the World Cup. The dream was over...for now.

## Tactical Analysis

If you're still with me, the commentary so far has all been about how amazing Luis Vazquez is and what an incredible journey he's had so far, but why?

I think I could write a whole piece about my tactic and how Luis is the key to its success but I'm going to try and give a top level summary.

The first area to start with is the obvious, why does he score so many goals? Well I often think this and the first area is his ability in the air, especially from set pieces. At both Al Faisaly and in his second season with Villarreal he was receiving balls from two set piece experts, Pablo Piatti and Juan Fernando Quintero. His ability to not only get in front of the defender at the front post, but also use his Ronaldo-esq jumping ability to meet the ball crossed into the box, brings him a lot of his goals. His jumping ability however would be useless without his anticipation. He is so good at knowing exactly where the cross into the box is going or when to jump to maximise the time and space he has to head the ball at goal.

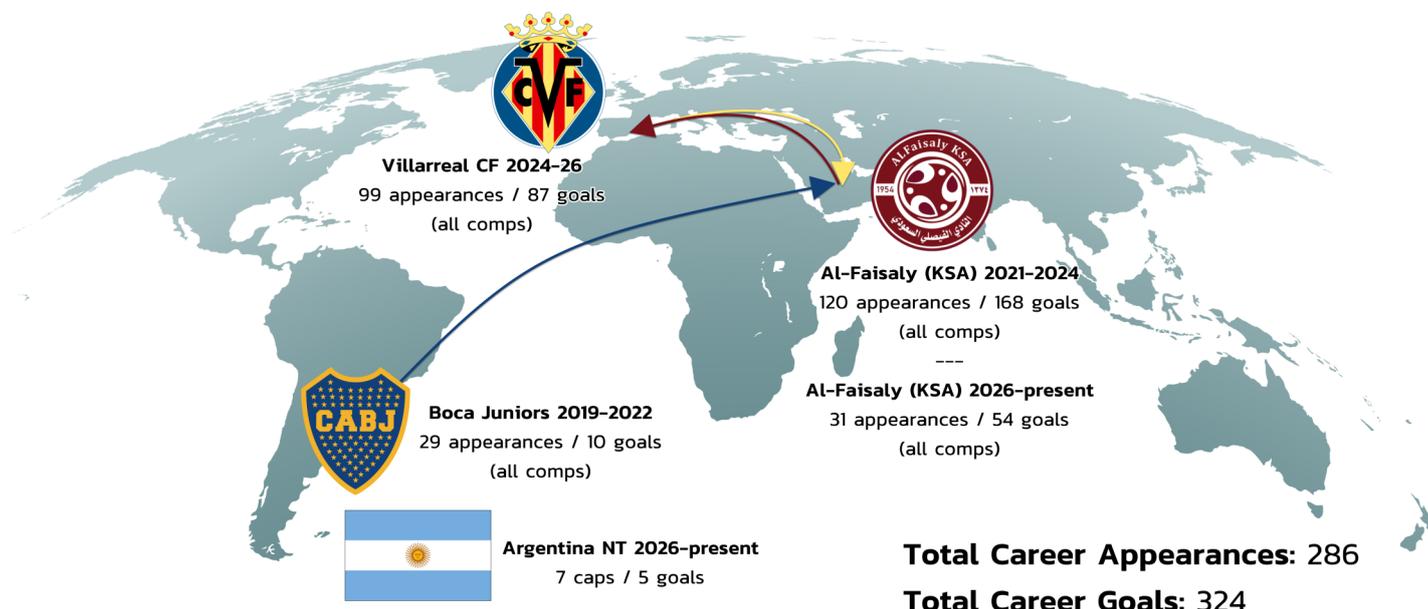
He is not just about heading the ball, he is well known in Saudi Arabia for scoring many a perfect hat trick and his ability with both feet is also another reason he scores so many goals. Be it in the box or outside the box, his ability to shoot with both feet makes him a nightmare to defend against as you can't be sure showing him onto one side is better than the other.

He scores a lot of goals but as a target man he also offers a lot more to the team. He of course has the ability to win the ball in the air against centre backs, should the option to play out from the back be too risky. He is also quite often seen dropping back to pull defenders out of position and free space for our wingers to exploit from our playmakers passes. Or even better still receive the ball and turn from goalscorer into playmaker. With over 50 assists in his career this is a good illustration of how much more he offers to the team than just goals.

At 25 though there are still areas he can improve on, specifically his conversion rate and shots on target rate remain often below 20% and 50% respectively. Now this is offset by the sheer number of shots he gets to make and thus goals he scores, but it is something that he can and has improved on. He's also not the most technically proficient player and the above rates would improve if he were able to improve his technique.

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Either way he strikes fear into the hearts of many a defender around the world as he makes his way into the box. Be it bulldozing his way into a packed defensive wall or exploiting the space behind a high defence, or creating for others, Luis has shown that he has it all and I am well and truly smitten.



## Future Plans

I guess for a player that's seemingly done it all at the age of 25, what does he do next? Well for now after his two seasons in Spain and the World Cup I decided to return to Saudi Arabia and have a crack at beating his record of 72 goals in a season. Once that is done I'm unsure where to take him next. Part of me would like to have another crack at getting him a Champions League winners medal. Now the easiest way to do that I think would be a return to a top league, be it Serie A, Bundesliga or even, dare I say it, the Premier League. A transfer to the MLS could also be a possibility if it were more goals and titles I was after.

The sentimental side of me though would like him to be able to eventually play for Panathinaikos and lead them to glory. He can then return to Argentina in his mid to late 30s and lead his first club Patronato and maybe add a few final trophies to his collection.

This feels more like a dream than reality but who knows, we will just have to see where fate takes him next.



## Lesser Loved Leagues – fmadventure

If you caught sight of Issue Eight of Latte Quarterly you will have read my article on Running From FM. For the benefit of anyone who hasn't caught up on the back catalogue, here is the brief explanation. Running From FM was an idea cooked up between myself, FM Grasshopper and FM Rensie in Summer of 2021. We were in the midst of COVID "lockdowns" and working from home was a big part of last summer – we came up with the game that we could play through a season in FM and use the results to encourage us to get out each day and run – running a set distance according to whether the match for that day was a win, draw or loss. The activity side of the game was great fun but perhaps the best part was the social aspect as we'd get together (virtually, of course) once a week and play through the matches for the next 7 days. We had some great chats along the course of the month – about work, about home life and naturally about the save.

### Choosing a Club

This time around we made the decision to split off and work through our own saves for the month of July. The process of choosing a league was fairly simple – I wanted to find a league with as close to 31 games as possible so that I would have a match for each day. Last year it was Poland and Wisla Krakow – I really enjoyed managing in a league I had never played with before so decided to do similar this year. I opened up a new career save and looked at the available leagues... Canada? I honestly didn't even know the Canadian Premier League was in the game. A quick internet search showed it to be a league of 8 teams, playing each other 4 times = 28 games. That fitted pretty nicely indeed. I had some very vague knowledge of teams in the Canadian football system as there had been a few Northern Irish players who moved across to join FC Edmonton.

With the league selected, the next step was to choose a club. I'll be truthful here and say that I didn't spend too long deciding. Atlético Ottawa is a club owned by Atlético Madrid – a fact which may seem quite obvious. Could I implement a Simeone style of football to become successful in Canada's Capital City?

To put a lot of this into context, we should consider reputations. The FM22 Editor shows me that the Canadian Premier League has a reputation of 90 (from a maximum 200) – this is equal to that of the Under 17 World Cup or the Korean FA Cup. For domestic top division comparison, you would be putting them on a par with the Liga Nacional de Guatemala. Atlético Ottawa have a club reputation of 3950 (from a maximum 10000) this is equivalent to that of part time Cliftonville of the Northern Irish Premiership or to give a professional full time comparator, the beautifully named, Mountain of Fire and Miracles FC who ply their trade in the Nigerian Premier League. Ottawa are the 2nd lowest reputation side in the league, Forge FC being the highest with a reputation of 4600.

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## The League Format

The league runs within the calendar year, as many American leagues tend to do.

As I mentioned, the league operates on a 28 game season format. Each team plays 14 home games and 14 away games as they play each of the other 7 teams four times. At the end of the league season, the top four teams go into a play off (semi final then final) to decide who the overall winner of the competition is.

I ended the season in 1st place in the league meaning I would play 4th place in my play off semi-final. Unfortunately I was missing two very crucial players for my semi-final fixture due to international call ups for the Canadian National Team. I decided to look into it to see if this was maybe just a bug within the FM scheduling... unbelievably it was not! It appears that the Canadian Premier League play offs do tend to take place around the same time as International match dates. I guess they don't expect to see a lot of domestic players called up but regardless, it seems a crazy way to schedule such important fixtures.

In addition to the Canadian Premier League, there is a domestic cup - the Canadian Championship. This cup includes all Canadian Premier League teams, the Canadian teams representing in MLS and a few lower level Canadian sides.

If you're looking for a new challenge in a totally new environment, I can highly recommend Canada. It's a very competitive league with not much between the 8 teams, so expect to see teams taking points each other all over the league. My suggestion of a club would naturally be Atlético Ottawa - a good chance to make use of Atlético Madrid as a senior affiliate, can you bring in a few young Spanish stars to lead Ottawa to glory? While no official agreement exists for the transfer of players, Ottawa do have a young Atlético defender on loan and they are open to the idea of accepting loan offers with no or minimal financial contribution as I did for young Giuliano Simeone! The Atlético link promises to be a major benefit to all merchandising sales and the clubs will share scouting knowledge - that can only be massive benefit to a smaller club with more limited resources like Ottawa.



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## Elsewhere on FM...

I'm not a fan of "5 teams to manage" posts or videos - so instead I'm going to give you 3! In addition to Atlético Ottawa in Canada, why not consider...

### Latvia

The Latvian Higher League (Virsliga) is another one that I honestly had no idea was a licensed league within FM22! For the 2021 Season there are 7 teams in the league (this is due to the withdrawal of 2 teams from the league during the season). Each team plays each other four times which makes for a full league season of just 24 games. A club can register a maximum of 15 foreign players with a minimum of 14 club trained players required in the squad. At least 3 players in each match's starting XI must be trained by a club in Latvia. In addition to the Latvian Higher League, there is the domestic Latvian Cup which begins with a total of 24 clubs.

As far as a team suggestion goes, look no further than Riga FC. Skonto FC were the dominant side in Latvia until their bankruptcy in 2016. Step forward Riga FC who were formed in 2014 and play in the Skonto Stadium. They have quickly become the side to beat having won the Latvian Higher League in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

### Ireland

The Lol Premier Division is one of those leagues I would say that most people are aware of but I don't see too many FM saves from it. It is a 10 team league meaning a league season lasts 36 games with each team playing each other four times. As with most countries, it has its own domestic cup - the FAI Cup - and a super cup - known as the President's Cup.

The fashionable club suggestion here would probably be Derry City - given they are a Northern Irish club playing in the League of Ireland. However, my suggestion would be that of Sligo Rovers. Sligo are a great community run club situated in a beautiful part of Ireland. Sligo has a great footballing heritage being the home of Brother Walfrid (the founder of Celtic Football Club) and the O'Higgins family (Bernardo O'Higgins was the founding father of Chile and the person after whom O'Higgins FC is named).

### Step out of the comfort leagues

It's easy to fall back on the European Big Five every year in FM, I know I do! Though maybe it's time to have a look at some lesser loved leagues. Smaller leagues are often frowned upon because some think it becomes stale and boring to play the same teams so often - this is a point I entirely disagree on. Meeting the same teams so quickly in succession can help build up a better rivalry and that will only increase the enjoyment of your save.

So why not have a look at Canada, Latvia and Ireland? Perhaps it'll be Malaysia for FM23...



## The International Game

FM Rensie + Rock's End FM + Guido Merry

English is the 'lingua franca' of the World, often a bridge language between two vastly different ones to help facilitate things like global trade and aviation. To an extent, this also creeps into Football Manager circles and the English writing community (and its readers) are lucky to have some fabulous foreign writers who write in English.

We perhaps take them for granted, especially when Bloggers are largely hidden behind a pseudonym and/or social avatar. But we are fortunate to have them with us. For Issue 12, we wanted to invite a trio of the community's favourites into LQ Towers in order to ask them a few questions.

Three cheers to the global game, and the writers it brings us!

**Ondrej (FM Rensie) - [www.coffeehousefm.com/fmrensie](http://www.coffeehousefm.com/fmrensie)**

### 1. What motivated you to write about FM in English?

I'm not sure if it was some kind of 'motivation' but I would say the main reason was a desire to try something new. I wrote about FM for about nine or ten years in my native language, mainly just save updates, and I published these posts on the old forum website with a couple of thousands of users. It was a great time when this website was active for almost 24 hours per 7 days a week and we were struggling to read all the new posts. It reminded me of when FMSamo started the FMSlack. But it was around the end of 2014 when the website was almost dead, I was almost the only one who wrote something here and I decided to call the day, and set up my WordPress blog. I remember I didn't know what to write about at the beginning but I also remember that I was already within the FM Twitter (English/Worldwide) bubble and a few people asked me if my guides are also available in English instead of only in the Czech language. That was a big factor in why I started writing in English. And I know I will never regret this decision due to a couple of reasons.

### 2. You make it look easy, is it?

It probably only seems so at first glance. I still remember the beginnings when I spent tens of minutes thinking about the right word to finish the sentence despite I would already be on the next page in my native language. When we moved to the CoffeehouseFM website recently, it was a good reflection as I moved some old posts there from my website. And I was able to spot the mistakes at the first sight. The progress between 2015 and now is huge. It's also thanks to reading a lot in English too. The main change is that I'm able to think about the writing text in English at first in comparison with the past when I created the text in my language first before I translated it.

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**3. What one piece of advice would you give to a non-native English person looking to write about FM in English?**

Don't be afraid of mistakes and don't overthink the English text by the words from your native language. English is a quite simple language, for example in comparison with my language. And I know my biggest 'mistake' was that I wanted to find or use the as nicest and most useful words as possible to make my posts nice and curly. But as time went on and I saw how English people are writing in their native language...

**4. Is there a favourite football term in English you've enjoyed learning?**

There are too many English words used within the football world that have different or unexpected translations in our language that's hard to pick something. It doesn't matter if it's my native language or English, but I hate phrases and cliches. Unfortunately, sometimes I feel that the football world/clubs/national teams are using the same amount of universal words within their social media and it all feels the same. For me, it's more about some words overall. I know I like to use words like prior, penultimate or I like to write he scored 'a brace' instead of he scored two goals. I think it's connected with reading a lot and searching and selecting favourite words no matter the language.

**5. Do you have a favourite football term you can teach us from your language?**

'Šajtle'. Do you remember Tomáš Rosický and his great way how to use the outer part of the instep to pass or shoot? Many people used it before him and many people will use it in the future. But instead of writing 'he scored one of the greatest goals with his famous outer part of the instep', we will use the 'šajtle' word. And don't forget, I can teach you all the Czech 'f' words that are more fun in our language in comparison with 'fuck' everything...



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**Fernando (RocksEnd FM) - [www.rocksendfm.com](http://www.rocksendfm.com)**

## **1. What motivated you to write about FM in English?**

I think it was about a couple of things. It's a bigger audience for one, and you always want people more to read what you write. But there's also the bit about most of my favourite FM creators being English-written bloggers and being part of that community was a big draw.

## **2. How do the Spanish writing community and English writing community differ? Also, is there a South American / Mainland Spain split?**

It's very different. Size-wise, it's hard to compare. You have a million writers in the English-speaking community, and nowhere near as many in the Spanish community. It's also built differently. In the English-speaking community most of the time you have individual bloggers (or groups) with their own sites. The Spanish-speaking community is mostly centered around two or three big sites, which are forums where users create their stories. There isn't a big split between Spanish and LatAm writers really. That's more of a YT/streamers creators, and even then people like Regista13 or FM Carrilero have followers on either side of the pond.

## **3. What one piece of advice would you give to a non-native English person looking to write about FM in English?**

Don't be afraid to make mistakes. I'm sure there's a grammar or spelling mistake in every single one of my posts. There will continue to be one in every new post until I close down the site. I probably made one in this text too. Most of the time, what feels like awful mistakes for you will go unnoticed or are quickly dispelled by native readers. They're used to their language not being perfect, same as you're used to people making mistakes in your own language. If it sounds odd, change it; if you don't know how to spell it, mangle it on google and you'll get the right way. Go for it, and fix it along the way.

## **4. Is there a favourite football term in English you've enjoyed learning?**

I've been reading and writing about football in English for so long it took me a while to think of one, but I think it's probably "cap". Bit of an unglamorous pick, but the truth is there is no equivalent in Spanish (other than the very long phrasing "partidos con la selección") so I kind of miss it when I'm communicating in Spanish. The "hairdryer treatment" is an interesting one and it's fun you guys have a specific term for getting yelled at in a dressing room, but it's a far easier concept to explain in Spanish. I love "wheeler dealer" but it has no use here as managers don't control transfers.

## **5. Do you have a favourite football term you can teach us from your language?**

A few... I think the Spanish (particularly Latin American Spanish) "hinchas" conveys a very different meaning than the English "fans". However probably my favourite is "vende humo", which literally means "smoke salesman" and could be translated as "swindler" or a "shyster",

but more closely applies to those in football that talk pretty and too much but then have nothing to show for it. Wenger's "4th is a trophy" or Mourinho's "respect" rants would've been improved by being tagged "vende humo" claims haha

**Guido Merry - [www.strikerless.com](http://www.strikerless.com)**

## **1. What motivated you to write about FM in English?**

I tried to write in my native language at first. However, I soon realized nobody was interested in what I intended to write. The Dutch sites I propositioned wanted me to write club and league guides, the occasional scouting list, and if I wanted to write about tactics, they favoured a downloadable tactic with an image and a short summary of how it worked, nothing too detailed.

Frustrated with the process, I turned to Twitter, where I discovered a number of other FM-players. The decision to begin blogging in English came naturally, though I was concerned about my ability to communicate my ideas to potential readers. I was worried about my fluency in English.

## **2. You've been blogging longer than most people, have your strikerless blogs ever been translated?**

I'm not counting the ones I translated myself into Dutch, or wrote in Dutch and translated into halfway decent English. Several of the blog posts have been translated into French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese. Maybe there are other translations, but none that I am aware of.

## **3. What one piece of advice would you give to a non-native English person looking to write about FM in English?**

My main bit of wisdom would be to have someone proofread your text to ensure that it actually means what you intended. Many members of the community are eager to assist you in a constructive manner. Aside from that, I believe a tool like Grammarly is immensely helpful. I also have Merriam-Webster as a dictionary and thesaurus bookmarked.



**4. Is there a favourite football term in English you've enjoyed learning?**

I tremendously enjoyed learning about all the different ways to describe a shot on goal depending on the trajectory of the ball and the power behind the shot. A daisy cutter, an angled drive, curving it in, slotting it home, powering it in, smashing it in, volleying, smashing it in, toepoking it, blasting it, scoring a scorcher... I probably forgot many a phrase as well but I really enjoyed finding out about all these and the sometimes subtle differences between them.

**5. Do you have a favourite football term you can teach us from your language?**

Restverdediging; protecting the balance between offense and defence. I could not find the English equivalent of this phrase, so I will try to explain. Restverdediging means the remaining defenders when you translate it literally. When your team is transitioning from the defensive phase of play to the offensive phase, you want to ensure that enough players remain behind the ball to snuff out counter-attacks when your team loses the ball; how many players do you keep at the back while there is an attack.



## The MLS Save FM Eadster & FM Grasshopper

"The MLS save" was a two season network save (in Major League Soccer) streamed three nights a week on Twitch from November 2021 to April 2022 between FM Eadster and FM Grasshopper. It was an instant virtual success for both bloggers, because in those two seasons eleven trophies were won live on air including multiple CONCACAF Champions Leagues and Supporters' Shields and one MLS Cup.

After streaming hundreds of hours, what are our thoughts about streaming Football Manager on Twitch? What did we like about the save/streaming, and what did we dislike? Would we do it again?

If any of this interests you, then read on to find out.

### Our expectations going in

*FM Eadster* - I'm fairly laid back when it comes to FM, it is a game after all. I do know I play slowly and I actually enjoy watching the games in the match engine, an element of the game that I see so many content creators actually try and skip through which I don't understand at all. So initially I was concerned Tony would be constantly waiting on me to click continue and that I would end up feeling rushed and consequently I wouldn't enjoy the whole thing. Thankfully Tony and I play the game at almost exactly the same speed, in fact Tony plays the matches at a slower speed setting than I do.

In terms of the streams themselves I was adamant that we were not in this to become wildly popular or get loads of hits and subs (or whatever they are called). Given Tony's relatively large following I did think we would get decent viewer numbers, more on that later.

I wanted to make sure that our stream offered something different to what was already out there, stay true to ourselves if you will, and not just chase the hits. We tried to do this in a number of ways but mainly by having a nightly chat on a subject chosen by one of us in rotation. We called this "Diaper Chat", but in the end talking to Tony was so easy I often felt the entire stream was one big chat about football, life, politics, history - we covered it all.

# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

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*FM Grasshopper* - My aim was to not negotiate how I play my save, which became 'our' save once Chris worked out how to log-in each evening. We wanted an alternative Twitch Stream, where we called the shots...not 'the chat'. Of course, we encouraged interaction (who wouldn't?)...after all, these were streams in dark nights after two years of a global pandemic. We had a plan: a 10-15-minute break between the two hours of stream to talk nonsense (Diaper Chat). It would be the thinking man's stream, because they'd have to think about why they're wasting their evenings watching us...as opposed to, you know, real-life.

But. Do I play too slow? What if he doesn't like the match speed I play on? Would he get annoyed with my outbursts of songs/melodies? These were also the kind of questions I had going into the network save with Chris. These worries were, luckily, put to bed early on. Chris and I took to a network save, like an fmadventure takes to water. It was awesome.

From that initial worry, the expectation was just to have a laugh. Over time I expected this to become the best FM22 streamed network save on Twitch. High aspirations, but I was confident we had the right setting (MLS), the presence of comedy (Chris) and the flashy stream overlay (that's me).

## **Our time during**

*FM Eadster* - We agreed a schedule of three nights per week, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8.00pm to 10.00pm (although we often went later). I was expecting real life commitments to mean this would very often change but to be honest it didn't.

By streaming three nights and having four off it meant I was always excited to fire up the save and get logged into the stream. Every Tuesday I was excited to get going again and every Thursday I was disappointed to leave it for four days. I think we found a perfect balance. I never once referred to any of it as "the grind" again something I see other content creators refer to. If you ever find playing a game a grind, my advice is to have a break, life is too short for that.

As time went on it was clear our viewer numbers were lower than I had expected, but I must stress I couldn't care less. But I did find myself drawn to the chat more and more, we had our own core of viewers and I can see how bigger streamers might become focused on their 'community', there is something empowering about knowing that these (few) people have given up their time to sit and watch you play a game and talk nonsense.

*FM Grasshopper* - Reserving three nights a week to do anything takes commitment, we had an infamous 'stream schedule' that rarely changed. I never once powered up the game and jumped into the shared Discord call feeling laboured or not willing to stream. I think a big part of that was having Chris there, otherwise streaming feels a bit lonely.

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We alternated the Diaper Chats between us, a little bit of homework to do on the day pre-stream. Find a topic that naturally sparked a conversation. To be honest, it's easy with Chris. He's a clever guy and has an opinion, a bit like my podding co-host Dan Gear. I knew his personality would always deliver, and we had some amazing discussions. From history, geography, rating MLS kits and yum-yums. There was always a frequent and audible laugh to be heard from either of us.

## What we liked

*FM Eadster* - As I have gotten older (I'm now 41) I have grown to like actual humans less and less. I just can't stand bullshit and people are full of it these days. My wife does worry that I have withdrawn myself too much from family and friends and it is something I have become conscious of. Without boring you with details I had a tough start to life in 2021, in fact at one point I did consider telling Tony I wouldn't be able to do the network save. I'm so glad I didn't, talking three times a week to Tony really helped pass the long winter nights and I class him as a close friend despite only meeting him in real life once. Having played this game for twenty odd years, virtually always in isolation, it was so much fun to share the save with someone like Tony.

By playing alongside someone and chatting the whole time it was great to discuss tactical issues or ideas we were having. At one point I decided I wanted to change my system and the discussion on stream around this was brilliant and my tactic emerged organically as we talked. This sort of interaction is something we miss when playing alone and Tony was always there challenging why I was, or wasn't, doing something.

I really enjoyed fully embracing the idiosyncrasies of Major League Soccer. I see too many MLS saves that are just played in the same manner as any other save. I think everyone should try MLS at least once and just roll with it and have fun, you will make mistakes, and you will miss out on certain signings but that's the challenge, and the fun, of it.

Making a monumental big deal out of any of our finals and playing them over the full 90 minutes. I had seen Tony do this before and I was intrigued how I would cope with seeing every piece of action during a match. Playing the full 90 was fun and a different sort of challenge but I would keep it for special occasions only.

Also a little nod here to SI, the network experience was fantastic. I can't remember any of the old divergence or connection issues that I've heard about in previous FMs, it was also super simple to connect every night. Although we did manage to turn the password off at one point which led to a few extra players joining lol.



*FM Grasshopper* - Winning? It's got to be one of the most successful two-season saves ever, hasn't it? We shared the spoils of the CONCACAF Champions League and took turns to top the MLS Supporters' Shield. It was competitive between us; we had some amazing clashes that produced great memories.

It wasn't just winning though. Chris and I both learned a new league system, which is unlike anything else on Football Manager. I really enjoyed the mental challenge of it all and it sparked new interest into FM for us. A few other people in the chat seemed to be interested in the mechanics too, which made for some good discussion during the streams.

Kudos to Chris too, for putting together his findings into bite-size blog posts. They'll act as a good reference for anybody looking into trying Major League Soccer for the first time. It's a league that can't really be played with no prior research.

## What we didn't like

*FM Eadster* - With this being a network save it meant that I couldn't log on and play at random times like I normally would, to combat this Tony would share the file on a Friday and we could both do some scouting over the weekend if we liked.

I hated it when Tony left me alone to go get a drink or have a wee. With someone there I was able to talk almost constantly, maybe too much at times! But as soon as it was just me, I didn't know what to say. In the end if Tony left the steam I did too, even if I didn't need to.

# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

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We had a fairytale ending to season one, both Tony and I made the MLS Cup final. A one game showdown to decide the overall MLS champion. I couldn't wait for it. Unfortunately some scheduling bug meant that the final was moved due to the 2021 Club World Cup (that I actually finished third at). But, the new date was close to the Charlotte Expansion Draft. The game forced us to register 12 players to protect in that expansion draft, but instead of keeping this separate the game now only recognised these 12 players as being registered for the rearranged MLS Cup final. In the end the final was a bit of a damp squib as neither of us could really select our preferred side or make any subs. I'm sure Tony took no joy in his 1-0 win.

Oh and the weather! It became a running joke on stream but the weather in our save was always listed as some variant of windy.

*FM Grasshopper* - The squad registration screen appears a bit buggy at times, and the game could do a lot more in terms of UI and Tooltips to guide the player. We also had scheduling issues, where the game could not really cope with the 2021 Club World Cup...despite having enough time to schedule the big MLS Cup Final of 2021 between Chris and I...it didn't. We played the climatic 2021 league match and MLS Cup decider without our best squads (due to a glitch with Charlotte's Expansion draft, only 12 players in each side were eligible to play).

I also disliked 'Raiding'. I'm obviously thankful to the Swedish and German FM communities for raiding us, but the process itself is haphazard. I found it buggy/temperamental with no real clue what I was doing. It made me feel old and, believe me, I hate feeling old.

So, if anybody streaming is feeling hurt that The MLS Save didn't swoop in and boost your stream by 10 or so viewers...it's not that we were playing hard to get. It's that it was hard to get a raid going in the first place. So we stopped all of that nonsense and just cut the majority of our streams when we stopped playing.

## Looking back, 6 months later

*FM Eadster* - I have a newly found respect for the guys that actually do this day in day out as a source of income. I know I couldn't do it. I do worry that some people want to make it so badly that they are literally working themselves to the bone at the expense of physical and mental health, you can actually see this from some of their tweets. Guys with young families working a job then streaming for 5 or 6 hours every single day, to less than 15 viewers, in the hope they can one day do this full time is folly in my opinion. Fine if you want to do that as a hobby, but if your motivation is money I'd suggest the market is already saturated.

As I mentioned I did think we would attract larger viewers than we did, one of the biggest reasons for this I think is our lack of webcams and relatively basic overlays and all the other great stuff people do on their streams. The quality of most people's setups is fantastic to be fair, and goes well beyond what was possible even 5 years ago. I think Tony and I, along with many other FMers of a certain age, are being left behind, that is fine it is the natural order of things.

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It didn't help our cause that a certain time Tony basically left the overlay on whilst we were both talking about the match we could see and the viewers could not!

Overall and surprisingly, for me at least, I definitely would stream again. However, I would keep it short, a bit like the two season MLS save, maybe play one competition like a World Cup or a two season rebuild or something like that.

I look back at the MLS save and have very fond memories of the 'craic' we had together, and that is perfect for me as this is only a game after all.

*FM Grasshopper* - We 'made' an astronomical \$25 through streaming, I guess from the few Amazon Prime subscriptions that people used on us (thank you). It was never our intention to profit from this, and the Twitch payout threshold of \$100 prevents us from doing so anyway.

However, we never became the popular stream that people wanted to tune into. I think a lot of that is that we're older guys, playing FM in a much slower way to most streamers. You're in it for the long haul with us...6 months of watching to only see two seasons. We also didn't use webcams, which oddly I think affects peoples' willingness to watch. But we stayed true to the process and principle of The MLS Save, and this pleases me.

It's hard to stay if I would stream in this way again. I personally feel streaming FM is mentally exhausting and there are probably a lot of guys and girls looking to do this for income that have no idea how hard it is. Fair fucks to the people that make a living from it, but it's really not for me.

Laughing my way through the Winter with Chris made it all worthwhile though. The social element of the network save is what made it special, and I'm definitely now closer to him as a friend.

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Whilst the save is now over, both FM Eadster's and FM Grasshopper's time in MLS was also documented as blog posts over on [coffeehousefm.com](http://coffeehousefm.com).



## LQ Book Reviews – FM Stag

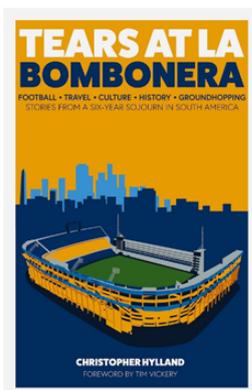
*"In history, a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind."*

While Edmund Burke undoubtedly meant this as a philosophical ideal and absolutely nothing to do with winning football matches, this is a pertinent quote. There are many ways in which the rich past of innovative historic tacticians can inspire and motivate us to think differently about the chess match that is every football match we may (virtually) manage in future.

A wonderful way to investigate this past is by reading some of the excellent books written on the history of football, and the iconic and influential figures within it.

In a semi-regular feature for Latte Quarterly, an FM blogger will tell us about a football book from their collection. They will let us know a little about the content and its key themes, but most importantly; how a deeper understanding of football or at least how unique lessons picked up from this title influenced how they play Football Manager, and the lessons you could learn too.

Sports, Hobbies & Games › Football



Tears at La Bombonera: Stories from a Six-Year Sojourn in South America Hardcover – Illustrated, 1 Mar. 2021

Follow the author



Christopher Hylland

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Print length



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Language



English

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Pitch Publishing Ltd

Publication date



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14.61 x 3.3 x 22.23 cm

ISBN-10



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# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

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## **"Tears at La Bombonera" by Christopher Hylland**

Tears at La Bombonera is self-described as a collection of "stories from a six-year sojourn in South America." Writer Christopher Hylland is keen to point out from the beginning that the title is indicative of the anecdotal overwhelming emotion he felt in the famous football stadium at a specific moment in his incredible journey (which is beautifully delved into in the book), and not solely a volume about Boca Juniors and their iconic blue and gold ground in Buenos Aires.

'Sojourn' is such an interesting choice of word here. Deriving from the Latin sub-diurnum, effectively meaning 'to dwell for around a day', it perfectly captures Hylland's approach to his travels. The pattern goes something like - arrival in a fresh part of South America, absorption of local football culture while recording the trials and joys of constant travel before moving on to experience something equally new and exciting. The writer didn't go as far as to quote Ferris Bueller's famous "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it," but perhaps it would have been fitting. The English-Norwegian with the pen in hand experiences more joy, fear and football in six years than most of us have had all our lives.

From playing fútbol with the locals and sharing hostels with awkwardly over-amorous fellow travellers in Peru, to basking in the intensity of the shaking stadium during a Superclásico in Argentina. From exploring Patagonia in a terrifying thunderstorm, to experiencing intense matches in Lima and La Paz, Hylland details every experience with immersive detail, but crucially as a down-to-earth, relatable narrator with a litre of cold Quilmes in hand. Free from snobbishness and open and honest throughout, Tears at La Bombonera is equal parts fascinating travel diary and an engaging treasure trove of South American football knowledge.

Whether you plan to pick up the book for its authentic and engaging appraisal of the rich culture of South America as Christopher records his travels, or you'd simply like a book bursting at the seams with history, information and insight into the continent's love of football and all its foibles, then the book delivers both sides of that brief in equal measure. Reading it is a must.

## **The impact on playing Football Manager**

Managing in South America is often seen as a daunting experience for many Football Managers. Whether it's the apertura / clausura setup of the Colombian league or the pairing of minnows and giants in the Brazilian state championships, league formats may differ from what the regular FMer is used to.

Much like recognising which attributes correlate to positive performances on the pitch in each position or understanding how the team training schedule works, it's simply another quick learn that can have a massively satisfying payoff.

Some of my favourite saves have been in South America. Argentina as Boca Juniors, Chile as Colo-Colo. Even in Bolivia as The Strongest via a custom database edit. You should give it a go.

# Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training... Everything FM

In *Tears at La Bombonera*, you are introduced to the 'other Arsenal' in Argentina, Racing Club's fascinating bad luck curse or mufa, the 'other Everton' in Chile, Peñarol, Deportivo Cali, Melgar and many other iconic footballing names of South America.

If you can't find an interesting historical nuance, narrative angle, or iconic player at any of the clubs discussed and documented in Christopher Hylland's book, then I'd be astonished. It's an excellent source of inspiration for even the most jaded late-cycle FM22 player.

Whether you plan to revive the iconic number 10 fantasista role behind the strikers while playing in stadiums with the ferocity of an Old Firm derby but the beauty and trickery of the finest dribbling and playmaking you'd see at the top level in Europe, or just fancy a fresh challenge; South America is a wonderfully complex yet rewarding place to play.

Hugely experienced and respected South American football journalist Tim Vickery provides the foreword for *Tears at La Bombonera*. I'll close off this review with a very fitting quote of his...

"Christopher Hylland has ridden the bus, has drunk at the bar, has got close enough to the coal face to see whether those tears in La Bombonera are shed in triumph or sadness, in joy or in despair. Welcome to a land of a thousand stories."



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Our back catalogue of Latte Quarterly issues sit side-by-side one another on **CoffeehouseFM**.

Visit: [coffeehousefm.com/lattequarterly](https://coffeehousefm.com/lattequarterly)

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Launched in September 2019, Latte Quarterly is a quarterly Football Manager e-magazine collated, edited and published by AccordingtoFM, Insubordinate, FMGrasshopper, FMSamo and Ted Redwood. LQ covers a wide range of Football Manager topics including Leagues, Analysis, Tactics, Training & Everything FM (hence the name: 'latte').

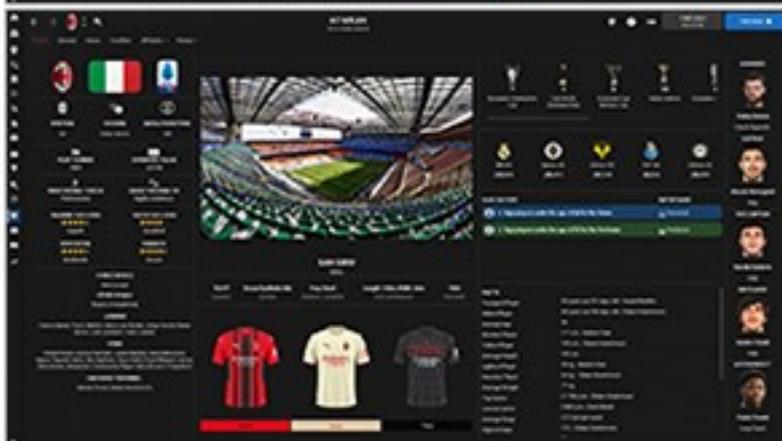
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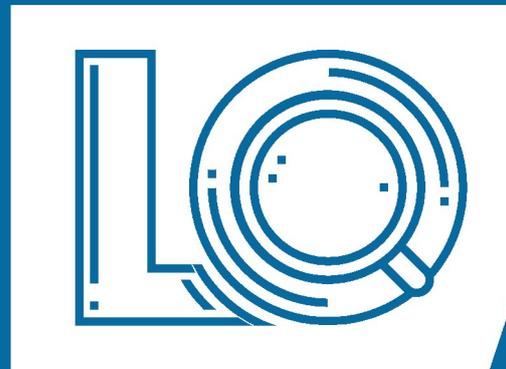
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