

# THE LEAGUE

THE ONLY FOOTBALL MAGAZINE DELIVERING THE BIGGER PICTURE

**NEW  
LOOK**

REPORTS FROM EVERY  
**PREMIER LEAGUE**  
FOOTBALL CLUB

**INTERVIEWS**

- JAVIER ZANETTI
- CARLOS BOCANEGRA
- AARON MOKOENA

**EXCLUSIVE**

# STEVEN GERRARD

**"IT'S NOW OR NEVER FOR MY ENGLAND DREAMS"**



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## WELCOME

# EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome back to the latest edition of THE League – and a warm welcome to all of our new readers

**W**elcome back to the latest edition of THE League – and a warm welcome to all of our new readers.

As those of you who have been with us for some time will notice, we have given the magazine a whole new look this month. Whilst retaining many of the features that have proved so popular among our readers, we have increased the number of pages, added a number of new features and generally (we believe) improved the look and feel of the mag.

We still have bring you the biggest names in the game – as evidenced by our exclusive interviews this month with no less than four national team captains: Steven Gerrard current (albeit perhaps only temporarily) captain of England, Javier Zanetti, captain of Argentina, Carlos Bocanegra, captain of the United States and Aaron Mokoena, cap-

tain of South Africa, have all spoken to us about leading their country as well as discussing their personal and club life. We have also unearthed an unlikely Arsenal fan in NBA basketball star Luol Deng of the Chicago Bulls and we aim to continue asking non-football people about their love of the game in a new regular feature.

We have a report on the growth of the game in fabulous Dubai, a look at the National Coaches Convention that recently took place in the US and all of the regular features that make THE League, to "Go-To" magazine for all your football needs.

Over the coming months we will be adding yet more fabulous articles and regular features, and kept tuned for our exclusive special competitions and prizes.

THE League – The football mag you just can't do without!





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THE TEAMS

## 63. THE TEAMS

Kevin Keegan returns to St James's Park, Nicolas Anelka arrives at Stamford Bridge, Harry Redknapp brings in new faces at Fratton Park, a record signing arrives at the Riverside - and this and more in a big month for the big boys

## 91. INS & OUTS

Every Premier club's transfer window moves analysed - How did your team do in the January sales?

## SECOND HALF

### 96. THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Forget about England, Chelsea might not even be the richest club in West London anymore after it emerged that the World's fifth richest man has bought a stake in Queens Park Rangers

### 100. COACHES CONVENE

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America held their 61st Convention, and some of the biggest names in the game were there - along with THE League

### 104. SOCCEREX BUSINESS NEWS

Man United regained their title as the country's biggest club, the G14 has been disbanded and Charlton are on the lookout for a sponsor - again

### 108. LUOL DENG

Luol Deng is probably the most famous English sportsman you've never heard of. But, as the Chicago Bulls basketball star has revealed to THE League, his real passion is Football - and Arsenal.

### 101. PREDICTIONS

Our experts take a close look at every Premier League game in March, with titles and survival on the line as the going gets tough.

### 114. FOOTBALL CARES

UNICEF ambassador David Beckham made a ground-breaking visit to Sierra Leone, Barcelona again showed why they are football's most compassionate club and African stars set about encouraging kids to study.



unicef



## EXTRA TIME



**119** KIT

### 119. KIT

This month we have a selection of great new boots from Nike, Umbro, adidas and Mitre. There is also Italy's classy new kit from Puma, a new version of the FIFA Street game from Electronic Arts, and the re-release of a book about the Busby Babes.

### 122. THE A-Z OF

The life and times of Fabio Cannavaro of Real Madrid and Italy - the man who lifted the last World Cup and was the 2006 World Footballer of the Year. Our in-depth look at the defender's life and times reveals a number of interesting facts, including a look back at the time when one of footballs all-time greats encouraged a young Fabio to kick him!

### 126. WORLD CUP DRAW 2010

Want to know when Malta are playing Albania? OK, how about when England are playing Croatia? Your complete guide to the Euro qualifying games for South Africa.

### 130. THE LAST WORD

How long should a manager have to prove himself? Well, it seems in the Premier League, the time is getting shorter and the rewards get bigger.



**122**  
THE A-Z OF  
FABIO CANNAVARO

# COACHES OF THE WORLD CONVENE

Maryland Hosts NSCAA's 61st Annual Convention

**B**altimore was the home of "Star Spangled Soccer" between 16 and 20 January, when the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) hosted its 61st Annual Convention there. The convention, which is the largest gathering for soccer coaches in the United States, and also the nation's largest soccer

country and beyond, descended on Baltimore's Convention Center, which is only a few blocks away from the city's renowned Inner Harbor, to participate in events that sparked an exciting atmosphere, embracing networking and learning opportunities amid chilly weather. With several clinics and lectures sched-

"I talked in there about having passion for the game and all the coaches are showing that passion by attending"

**FACT FILE**

**EVENT:**  
NATIONAL SOCCER COACHES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA CONVENTION

**DATE:**  
16-20 JANUARY 2008

**PLACE:**  
BALTIMORE CONVENTION CENTER, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND USA

trade show, returned to Baltimore, Maryland for the first time in 3 years.

The theme of this year's event, "Star Spangled Soccer," reflects the historical importance of Baltimore, Fort Sumter, the United States National Anthem and the growth of soccer in the country.

Thousands of coaches from all over the

uled for the convention, outgoing NSCAA President Steve Malone opened the event by welcoming thousands of coaches from all walks of life. His opening remarks were immediately followed by the first clinic session, "Scoring Exercises" presented by the NSCAA Director of Coaching Education and Development, Jeff Tipping.

The excitement was unparalleled, as soccer enthusiasts and coaches from all levels of the game mingled and shared their experiences and new techniques in soccer.

Prominent names such as former England Coach Steve McClaren, England National Team Psychologist Bill Beswick and former Liverpool and Olympique Lyonnais coach Gerard Houllier were all present, and all made significant contributions to proceedings through clinics and lectures.

"I'm very impressed, first of all, by the number of people here and also the quality of the talks and the demonstration which is given to the coaches," said Houllier.

The France National Technical Director said such a gathering of coaches from all over the world is instrumental in reinforcing the ideas and training techniques for coaches.

"Because coaching, you are a student of the youth development, or student of the preparation for the training," said Houllier, who presented lecture and clinic sessions on "Key Ingredients for a Winning Team" and "French Player Development."

"If players can be students of the game, we [coaches] are students of the preparation to the game. And when you are a student, you learn everyday, and of course, that type of exchange brings a lot to everyone," he added. The friendly atmosphere and passion for the game are other aspects that captured the attention of attendees.

Steve McClaren believes the convention was a wonderful experience, and the passion people have for the game is an essential element that makes such events a success.



ABOVE: Bill Beswick explains his methods



ABOVE RIGHT: The author flanked by Beswick and Steve McLaren



RIGHT: McLaren gets down to some coaching



The Baltimore skyline

"It's a great experience," admitted McClaren. "The people are so nice, so friendly, and so enthusiastic. I talked in there about having passion for the game and all the coaches are showing that passion by attending, by coming to things like this. It can only be good for the game in the U.S., and in the world."

The former England boss believes he has a fundamental role to play in sharing his experiences with other coaches, not only at the convention through a workshop and clinic, but onward whenever the need arises.

"I think it is my responsibility to do that, not to hide away," said McClaren. "The same way I've had these experiences, I would have sat exactly where these coaches sat many years ago, aspiring to be a better coach."

"And through my experiences, if I can pass on some kind of advice tips, then I am delighted to do that. That is my responsibility onward." McClaren said the importance of coaches coming together to participate can only be beneficial to the development of game, and he also believes the example of the NSCAA should be emulated elsewhere, including in his home country England.

"It's great, it's very important," he said. "It should be more worldwide and [I am] certainly looking to England to develop some kind of convention when coaches get to-

**"If players can be students of the game, we [coaches] are students of the preparation to the game"**

gether over there. It can only help the game in general."

Reflecting on his career, the former Middlesbrough coach acknowledged that working with great players has been phenomenal to his career.

"I have been coaching great players, and it's been one of the best achievements of my career," said McClaren, who led Boro to their first major honour, the League Cup in 2004.

"I enjoy working with players, but then managing, winning a trophy; it was a great breakthrough to get to UEFA Cup final [in 2006] and then ultimately getting the England job."

"I've had many ups, and many downs and you have to deal with each with the same kind of respect. Just get on with it, don't get overjoyed and not get too depressed."

Another of those attending who was delighted to share his own innovative ideas with coaches was Bill Beswick. ▶

No wonder he is recognized as a leader in the field of applied sports psychology. His lectures raised eyebrows, with hundreds of coaches who apart from learning a lot on topics entailing Motivation and Team Cohesion, were also enthralled by some of his inspiring jokes.

Beswick said he is lucky to work at a top level in his career, but while he credits much of his success to the mentorship he got during his early coaching days, he noted that he is happy to do likewise.

"Well, I think I am very lucky to work at a national team level, very lucky to work with great players," said Beswick, who apart from his involvement in football is former Head Coach of England Men's Basketball team.

**"It should be more worldwide and [I am] certainly looking to England to develop some kind of convention when coaches get together over there"**

RIGHT: Former Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier with Ibrahim Dabo

BELOW: A packed hall at the Convention Center



"I remember when I started I was a very, very lonely coach and I was so appreciative for the help I got. So I'm happy to extend my help to all coaches."

Talking about some of the aspects coaches should consider as key ingredients to team success, Beswick advised that one has to be very dynamic both on and off the pitch.

"You have to start with ability; you have to try and get the best players, but then you need to work very hard with them on coaching them to play the game the right way. And also, you have to work hard with them on making them happy and keen to play for your team," he said.

"So coaching is a Science and an Art. The science means getting the things right which is from the field and the art means making those players enthusiastic and motivated to play for you."

Apart from mingling among prominent names in the game, as well as among officials from the English FA, clubs such as Arsenal and Man Utd, AC Milan and David Beckham Academy, the convention had more to offer. More than 500 players who had been named NSCAA/adidas All-America were honored at a special luncheon ceremony, while National Coaches of the Year for youth, high school and college were also honored at a very colorful event, the Convention's Annual Awards Banquet.

Among those honored at the luncheon was U.S. Women's National Team veteran, Kristine Lilly, who received the NSCAA's Honorary All-America award for her remarkable achievement in the game.

The 36-year-old midfielder has a record of 340 national team appearances, more than any player in the history of the game (man or woman), and has also played in every FIFA Women's World Cup finals staged.

If ever attendees became worn out by the many clinics, lectures, and meetings, then the Convention's red carpet Exhibit, which featured approximately 300 companies, surely triggered some excitement.

Participants were handed the opportunity to explore firsthand some of the latest equipment, as well as relevant resources and information in the game.

Next year's NSCAA convention will be held in St. Louis, and many of those present this time are already looking forward to it.

"Next year should be great, as it will be 23 years since it's been in St. Louis, and this city has a long, great history of soccer," said Kenneth Newman, a Soccer Consultant and Goalkeeping Coach.

And what does the convention as a whole mean to Kenneth, who has missed the annual event only once since 1986 when he first joined the association?

"It's a place to renew old friendships, and make new ones," he said. "It's a place to develop new soccer contacts, and to learn about new leagues, new tactics on the field, and to see what else is new in both American and foreign soccer.

"I think that I look at it also in a growth context, as I have always been interested in the growth of the game. I've seen the convention grow more than 10 times in size since my first one.

"It's almost a vacation for me, except that it can be very tiring." ❖

ABOVE: Baltimore Convention Center, location of this year's event.