

THE GOONER GAZETTE

www.arsenalfcblog.com

ISSUE 2 DECEMBER 2007



THE ARSENAL FC BLOG MONTHLY REVIEW

All the games, all
the stats...

The Month in Review

Read some pearls
of wisdom in...

The Month in Quotes

ALSO INCLUDES...

**Good Month, Bad Month
The Fans' View
Reader Profiles**

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Spanish Fry's Editorial

It's been a brilliant couple of months to be an Arsenal supporter. Unbeaten and top of the Premiership; through the Champions League second round and playing some beautiful to boot.



At the start of the season I don't think any Arsenal supporter could have predicted that the side would be top of the Premiership at this stage so full credit has to go to Arsene Wenger and his troops for some excellent results.

The big tests of late have been the clashes with Liverpool and Manchester United and it's safe to say that Arsenal have performed admirably. Fabregas' and Gallas' late equalisers in both games are arguably the highlights of the seasons so far and if Arsenal do go on to win the title then I think many people will point to those results as being crucial to the success.

The club did suffer their first loss of the season in the final game in November, against a very talented Sevilla side. It was going to happen at some stage and to lose to one of the Primera Liga's best sides away from home is no disgrace. Let's just hope Wenger and the team can bounce back from the loss and get back to winning ways.

I have to apologise for the lengthy delay between the first issue and this second one. The life of a blogger is highly dependent on the life of their internet connection and when the time came for me to pen the November edition of The Gooner Gazette that connection was nowhere to be seen. Never fear though because I've packed this edition with two months worth of fun.

Extended versions of 'The Month in Pictures' and 'The Month in Quotes' are included and there is also the usual Arseshirts Giveaway and some more 'Reader Profiles'. This issue I speak to two regular commentators, '433' and 'knightman'.

Enjoy!

Spanish Fry - Editor

About



What is The Gooner Gazette?

The Gooner Gazette is an online magazine released monthly which focuses on the English Premier League football club Arsenal in a light-hearted manner. This is the second issue.

The author of The Gooner Gazette is Spanish Fry, who also runs the Arsenal FC Blog, an Arsenal blog that is updated daily and provides news, opinions and discussion about the club. The content of the The Gooner Gazette is very much dependent on the input of the readers from the Arsenal FC Blog.

What is the Arsenal FC Blog and who is Spanish Fry?

The Arsenal FC Blog is the brainchild of myself, Spanish Fry, a 21-year-old football fan from Brisbane, Australia with a lot to say about the world's greatest game. I am currently studying to be a Sport Psychologist and hope to move to Europe and work with a big club in the future. I also play football in my home city with University of Queensland Football Club, where I have been a member for the past five years.

I started supporting Arsenal after watching Dennis Bergkamp in the 1998 World Cup and finding out who he played for. Since then I've watched them win the double (twice), make the Champions League Final and go through an entire English Premier League season undefeated. But more than this, I've watched them thrill the world with their brilliant style of play and determination to remain true to the beautiful aspects of the game.

The purpose of this blog is simple: to be the most interesting, unique and thorough source of fun for everything related to Arsenal. Too many blogs and sites out there provide biased insights into football opinions and I want to provide a forum for anyone to have their say on anything. Blogs like this should challenge your mind and give you the opportunity to share your insights and opinions about the things you love; and in this case I of course mean football.

Contact Spanish Fry

To contact me about anything you can do so via email at admin@arsenalclub.com

Subscribe to the Arsenal FC Blog

If you want the Arsenal FC Blog delivered to you each day by email you just need to go to <http://arsenalclub.com/subscribe> and fill out the form to sign up. I promise there will be absolutely no spam - just the latest daily post from Spanish Fry.

The Month in Review (Part 1)



Steaua Bucharest 0-1 Arsenal

Champions League Group Stages
October 2007 – Stadionul Ghencea

Goalscorers

Arsenal: van Persie
Steaua Bucharest: None

In short...

Arsenal need some luck to ensure before van Persie's late strike steals three points from the very competitive Romanian champions.

Arsenal 7-0 Slavia Prague

Champions League Group Stages
October 23, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Fabregas 5, 58, Hubacek (og) 25, Walcott 41, 54, Hleb 50, Bendtner 88

In short...

Theo Walcott scored twice as Arsenal produced a scintillating attacking performance to equal the record for biggest win in the Champions League ever.

Arsenal 3-2 Sunderland

English Premier League
October 7, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: van Persie 7, 81, Senderos 14
Sunderland: Wallace 25, Jones 49

In short...

Arsenal race to a 2-0 lead through van Persie's thunderbolt free-kick and Senderos' scuffed finish. Sunderland fights back before Van Persie's toe-poke wins it.

Liverpool 1-1 Arsenal

English Premier League
October 28, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Fabregas 80
Liverpool: Gerrard 8

In short...

Fabregas' late equaliser gives Arsenal a deserved point after dominating the game despite Gerrard's early free-kick.

Arsenal 2-0 Bolton

English Premier League
October 20, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Arsenal Goalscorers

Arsenal: Toure 67, Rosicky 81
Bolton: None

In short...

A resilient Bolton scrap hard and make life very difficult for Arsenal before Toure and Rosicky ensure the three points.

Sheffield United 0-3 Arsenal

Carling Cup
October 31, 2007 - Bramall Lane

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Eduardo 8, 50, Denilson 69
Sheffield United: None

In short...

Eduardo's dominant display ensures a much-changed side progress to the fifth round of the Carling Cup.

The Month in Review (Part 2)



Arsenal 2-2 Manchester Utd

English Premier League
November 3, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Fabregas 48, Gallas 92
Portsmouth: Gallas (og) 45, Ronaldo 83

In short...

Gallas dramatic late goal ensures that Arsenal remain on top of the table despite going behind late to a Ronaldo strike with less than 10 minutes to go.

Reading 1-3

English Premier League
November 12 - Madejski Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Flamini 44, Adebayor 52, Hleb 78
Derby: Shorey 87

In short...

Arsenal break down a very defensive Reading side and cruise to victory through two great team goals and an excellent dribbling effort by Hleb.



Gallas celebrates his goal against Wigan

Arsenal 2-0 Wigan

English Premier League
November 24, 2007 - Emirates Stadium

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Gallas 83, Rosicky 85
Newcastle: None

In short...

A resilient Wigan side are finally broken down by Gallas' late header while Rosicky adds the icing on the cake..

Slavia Prague 0-0 Arsenal

Champions League Group Stages
November 7 - Evzena Rosickeho Stadium

Arsenal Goalscorers

Arsenal: None
Sevilla: None

In short...

A virtual Carling Cup side struggles in the rain in Prague, but do enough to ensure Arsenal qualifies for the Round of 16.

Sevilla 3-1 Arsenal

Champions League Group Stages
November 27 - Estadio Ramon Sanchez

Goalscorers

Arsenal: Eduardo 11
West Ham: Keita 24, Luis Fabiano 34, Kanoute (pen) 89

In short...

A slightly understrength Arsenal side are played off the park in Seville despite taking an early lead through Eduardo's clever goal.

The Month in Pictures



Cesc Fabregas slots home against Manchester United...



...and then wheels away in delight!



Robin van Persie salutes the crowd following his match-winning performance in the Champions League away clash against Steaua Bucharest.





An Arsenal supporter makes a very big claim about Alexander Hleb.



Fabregas stretches to poke home his clever equaliser against Liverpool at Anfield...



...while Nicklas Bendtner can't believe he wasted the chance to win it for Arsenal late in the same game.



William Gallas and Theo Walcott trudge off a soaked pitch after the disappointing draw with Slavia Prague.



Emmanuel Adebayor can't believe his early effort against Reading has struck the post.

Theo Walcott slots home an 'Henry-esque' effort in the 7-0 demolition of Slavia Prague at Emirates Stadium.





Gallas and Sagna celebrate the captain's wonderful late header against Wigan.



Walcott and Rosicky celebrate the Czech midfielder's neat goal against Bolton. Walcott set him up with some wonderful dribbling.

Adebayor tries to pull Kolo Toure away from the crowd after the defender's opening goal against Bolton.



Good Month, Bad Month



It's been a good couple of month for...

Mathieu Flamini

Noone would ever have predicted that Flamini would become such an important part of the Arsenal midfield before the start of this season, but the Frenchman gives a reminder of his value in every game he plays. Has struck up a wonderful partnership with Cesc Fabregas and capped a lovely couple of months with the first goal against Reading. Flamini has become as irreplaceable as his midfield partner in crime.

William Gallas

The French defender has justified his appointment as Arsenal captain in the past two months. He has looked a better leader than Thierry Henry ever was and his drive and determination has twice saved Arsenal late in games; first through his late equaliser against Manchester United and second through his opening goal against Wigan. Although the side coped reasonably well without Gallas during his absence through injury his return to the team has undoubtedly improved the side as a whole.



Alexander Hleb

Before his injury, Hleb was in the best form of his Arsenal career. Fabregas may be the one getting the goals but I they wouldn't be possible without the Belurussian's assistance. Hleb has always been a marvellous dribbler of the football but this season he has developed a directness to his game that has aided his side in matches where space has been hard to find.

Manuel Almunia

While he may have some firmer competition for the goalkeeping position if Jens Lehmann moves on in January, Wenger will be pleased to know that the more games Almunia plays, the safer he looks. Observers may question the Spaniard's role in both Cristiano Ronaldo and Kenwyne Jones' efforts at the Emirates, but the simple fact is that since replacing Lehmann in the side, Almunia cannot be held directly responsible for any of the goals he has conceded.

...and a bad couple of months for...

Philippe Senderos

The big Swiss centre-back was pushed out of the side due to injury and the return of William Gallas and the only match he has played in of late was an error-riddled performance against Sevilla. Most Arsenal fans want to like Senderos, but the defence continues to look distinctly ordinary whenever he is on the pitch.

Eduardo da Silva

Of the four players in the first team squad that were transferred in over the summer break, Eduardo has so far been the most disappointing. Bacary Sagna has slotted into the starting team as if he has been there for years, Lassana Diarra is pushing hard for first-team spot and has looked good when given the chance and Lukasz Fabianski is yet to concede a goal for the Carling Cup side. Eduardo, on the other hand, seems to be struggling. Wenger brought the Brazilian-born Croatian to the club seemingly with the intention to add the only type of forward his squad did not previously possess, a penalty-area goal-poacher. And while Eduardo has been doing the trick on international duty for Croatia his continual exclusion from Arsenal's squad for Premiership matches suggests that Wenger feels he is not quite acclimatised to the game in England yet. There's little doubt that Eduardo will come good at some stage but in the meantime, Arsenal fans will just have to wait a little longer.

Arseshirts Giveaway

Win a free shirt compliments of **ARSESHIRTS.COM**

The good people at Arseshirts have given me a free shirt to give away every month in The Gooner Gazette. If you check out some of the shirts on the right you'll realise they are top quality and look awesome as well. Be sure to check out their website for even more designs.

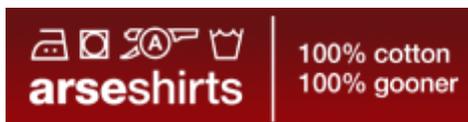
To be in with a chance this month, all you have to do is answer the following question:

Who scored Arsenal's second goal in the 2-2 draw against Man United?

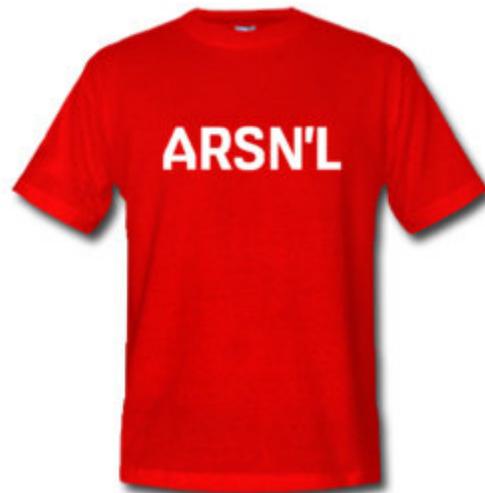
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Good Luck!

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The Month in Quotes (Part 1)



"Becali should say to Mourinho: 'You are coach of Steaua, you have three matches. You win them, you stay. You lose one of them, you go'. And he also should tell him that one of these matches is against Arsenal. Even Mourinho would have big problems. Nobody can perform miracles."

Steaua Bucharest manager **Massimo Pedrazzini** aims a shot at the club's president after he is given an impossible ultimatum.

"At the end of the day you can only select 11 players to start a football game. It's not because you don't select a player that you don't respect him. You feel sorry but you have as well to be realistic."

Arsene Wenger gives his view on leaving Gilberto out of the starting team

"I like the fact that we play together week in, week out. Some teams switch - for example Liverpool - that is OK if they choose that. But when Cesc gets the ball I know what he is thinking about. When Ade gets the ball I know what I can do for him. Everybody knows their part."

Robin van Persie on the benefits of playing a consistent side

"The understanding between us is magnificent. He likes to have the ball at his feet more than I do. He likes to get off the front line and he has the technical skills to do that. I am tall, I can climb high and I can go deep. I am more of a pivot for the team."

Emmanuel Adebayor on his partnership with van Persie



"I first started just with Theo [in June] and then the other lads joined. What I saw was a great togetherness, a great belief and a great, great quality. It was early but I told you at the Amsterdam Tournament this is what I felt. However when I spoke, everyone was laughing."

Robin van Persie on the potential he saw very early on in the Arsenal squad

"He does such a huge job in midfield. Thanks to him, in defence we are rarely put in trouble. He has a fantastic heart and fights for everyone. He is involved in any clash, but only for the good of the team. That is why we call him Gattuso."

Kolo Toure gives Mathieu Flamini (and Gattuso) a big wrap

"I think - and this is directed towards my dear coach - that you should not humiliate players for too long. I am an Arsenal player and I will not just fade away quietly. I am convinced I will soon be playing again. Almunia hasn't shown that he can win us matches just yet."

Jens Lehmann has a swipe at Wenger and Almunia about being on the bench

The Month in Quotes (Part 2)



"People are going to compare the second goal to Thierry but it was my own goal. People are always going to compare me to Thierry - the way I run and everything - but as I keep saying I will be my own player."

Theo Walcott attempts to distance himself from comparisons to Thierry Henry

"If I read the papers and listen to what other people say about me and all these things I will turn crazy. I don't want that. When I'm playing well I honestly don't mind other things. Now for me life is fantastic and I want to take my chance."

Manuel Almunia refuses to let Jens Lehmann get to him

"I think it is a point gained because they were the better side. We tried to fight and to keep our level as high as we could but they were one of the best sides I have ever seen."

Liverpool goalkeeper **Pepe Reina** compliments Arsenal on their performance at Anfield



"At the end of the Arsenal game, our players were in the dressing room feeling absolutely sick. That's twice in two years they've turned the game around and got something in the last minute, so we were definitely disappointed to come away with a draw. Meanwhile, their dressing room was elated."

Manchester United manager **Sir Alex Ferguson** on Arsenal's ability to find a late goal to deny his side

"I had not scored for a while and, yes, that was on my mind. As a striker it is important to score. That is what you are judged on."

Emmanuel Adebayor is happy to break an eight-game scoring drought against Reading

Before, I used to keep to myself. But I like those new responsibilities. I really have fun with the talks I have with Arsene Wenger."

William Gallas loves being Arsenal captain...

"It needed something special, and some patience, to find an opening, and Gallas found it. He's a forgotten centre-forward because he knows where to be in the box and he can turn up with a goal always when you need it."

...while **Arsene Wenger** is happy to have him on board as an extra goalscorer

Reader Profiles



Learn a bit more about the people you probably argue with...

Arsenal FC Blog alias? Knightman

Age? Sex? Location? 23 years old, male from Kenya (It's a beautiful country!)

How long have you been reading the Arsenal FC Blog? I've been reading the blog for the last 6 months.

How long have you been supporting Arsenal? Arsenal first got my attention in 1999.

Have you ever seen an Arsenal game live? Details? Have never attended any Arsenal games (England is quite far from Africa you know). I'll watch one someday.

Who is your favourite Arsenal player of all time? I'd say Thierry Henry, with Bergkamp coming in second and Vieira third.

Who is your current favourite Arsenal player? Currently my favourite is Emmanuel 'Sheyi' Adebayor. This reason is that I can identify myself with him. He is so human in his game, he makes mistakes but keeps on making up for those mistakes and learns from them, then surprises you with unexpected goals. I also think he's got great skill and if he boosts his confidence higher, he'll be a great player. Plus he is a team player and looks friendly.



What is your favourite ever moment as an Arsenal supporter? My greatest moment? The last-minute Thierry Henry goal when we played United at the Emirates last season. I screamed my head off that day.

Where will Arsenal finish the current season? Arsenal is finishing first in the Premiership this season, no doubt about that.

How many goals will Fabregas score this season? I'd say Fabregas will give us around 26 goals in all competitions this season.

Lehmann or Almunia? Definitely Almunia.

If you could get rid of one Arsenal player, who would it be? Sadly it would be Hoyte and it's only because it would do him good to go somewhere else with Sagna, Diarra and Eboue around. Wenger would even play Flamini ahead of him in the right back position.

If you could sign one player to Arsenal, who would it be? Lionel Messi! That kid is good!

Reader Profiles



Learn a bit more about the people you probably argue with...

Arsenal FC Blog alias? 433, the suggestion being all out attack - three up front. Curiously, a formation Arsenal rarely play, if ever. The 4-5-1 used in the run to the 2006 Champions League final really didn't look much like a 4-3-3 at all. If Walcott gets some starts as a wide midfielder, then it'll look a fair bit like three forwards, and I'd expect at least a goal from each of them in a lop-sided Arsenal victory.

Age? Sex? Location? 30-something male, New England, US.

How long have you been reading the Arsenal FC Blog? As much as a year or so, maybe off and on, but regularly, and as a commenter for a few months.



How long have you been supporting Arsenal? Since 2000. Being American, there's very little exposure to football. The cable package we ordered in 2000 included what was then called Fox Sports World. I was already terribly hooked on the French National Team having been married to my French wife in Southern France in the summer of 1998, the summer that les Bleus won the World Cup quite convincingly on home soil. At that time Arsenal had Vieira, Pires, Henry, Wiltord, and of course, the Grimster, and I couldn't get enough.

Have you ever seen an Arsenal game live? Details? I never have, sadly. I'm looking into possibly trying to make it to the Bolton game on October 20th as I'm scheduled to be flying to France around that time. I'm supposed to be meeting a colleague in Paris on Sunday morning, the 21st. I'm thinking I'll catch a red-eye to London, get there Saturday morning, take in the game, drink in celebration through the night, and catch the connecting flight to Paris Sunday morning. Among the many problems with this plan is that I don't have a ticket for the game, and I'm a bit cash poor for the moment.*

Who is your favourite Arsenal player of all time? Probably Vieira - goodness me, he could control a game.

Who is your current favourite Arsenal player? Cesc. I can't get over how good he is. If he never scored, he'd still be my favourite player. I love his work in the midfield. Van Persie is right there too, an incredible talent - those two should be finishing first and second in the FIFA player of the year voting for several years on the trot, starting very soon. And of course I love the French boys - Sagna has been a fantastic signing.

What is your favourite ever moment as an Arsenal supporter? Maybe Wiltord scoring the winner at Old Trafford that won the league title, in 2002 I think it was.

Where will Arsenal finish the current season? Top.

How many goals will Fabregas score this season? Around 15.

Lehmann or Almunia? Almunia.

If you could get rid of one Arsenal player, who would it be? Lehmann.

If you could sign one player to Arsenal, who would it be? Petr Cech.

The Back Page



Your ideas please!

The Gooner Gazette is by no means a finished article. I am hoping to improve on every issue by including new sections and that is where you, as a reader, can help out dramatically.

If you have an idea that you would like to see included in The Gooner Gazette then get in touch with me via email at admin@arsenalfcblog.com and we'll see if we can make it happen.

Of course, the best way you can contribute is to get onto the Arsenal FC Blog and have your say.

The Arsenal FC Blog has readers from all over the world, stretching from Kenya to India and of course, Australia, and it has made for some great debates in the past. I hope this will continue.

All the best, and up the Gooners!

Other Arsenal blogs

You've probably already realised that the Arsenal FC Blog is not the only Arsenal blog out there. Be sure to check out some of these other great blogs and sites:

- Arseblog
- Arsenal et Les Bleus
- The Cannon
- Goodplaya
- Third Gen
- Gunnerblog
- A Cultured Left Foot
- Arsenal Vision
- Ole! Ole!



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THIS MONTH

Aston Villa v Arsenal
English Premier League
December 1, 2007

Newcastle v Arsenal
English Premier League
December 5, 2007

Middlesbrough v Arsenal
English Premier League
December 9, 2007

Arsenal v S. Bucharest
Champions League
December 12, 2007

Arsenal v Chelsea
English Premier League
December 16, 2007

Blackburn v Arsenal
Carling Cup
December 18, 2007

Arsenal v Tottenham
English Premier League
December 22, 2007

Portsmouth v Arsenal
English Premier League
December 26, 2007

Everton v Arsenal
English Premier League
December 29, 2007