

These game hints were previously included on various recent print outs. As promised at the time, here they are all together in a single resource that new managers and perhaps even some experienced ones may find useful.....

Hints / Tips: Although non playing staff can retire from the game at any time without warning it is highly unusual for a player to do so. Really the only time that this might happen is if you have a very small squad and a player is having to play or be named on the bench even though he is injured. If you are in this unfortunate position the number of weeks that the player is out for will increase until at a certain level he will be forced to retire. Older players DO have a ratings drop at the end of each season depending upon age and if as a result of that ratings drop they drop below a certain level then they will disappear from your squad and will be regarded as retired.

Continuing the 'useful game tips' theme, this turn concerns that odd figure that you see on the match report sheet... the MPR. Just what IS it? Mostly called Match Performance Rating, it would probably be more accurate to call it MAXIMUM Performance Rating. Basically it's an indication of how close a player is playing to his skill rating. Ranging from 0 (lowest) to 9 (highest) the skill rating for the player in the 'play match' routine will be reduced by around 1% for each point lower than 9. So, a 10 rated player with an MPR of 0 would actually play as a 9.1 rated player since his rating would be reduced by the max 9%. Generally a player's MPR will gradually rise as he plays games but will plummet if he gets injured or suspended. Having a team full of players with high MPR's could just give you the edge in a closely matched game

Useful games tips no.3, looks at directors and what they do. Your club directors will have the final say on everything that goes on at your club. Although they won't interfere in team selection they CAN block transfer deals if they feel that the deal isn't in the best interests of your club. They also keep a tight reign on finances and although they won't stop you spending money you don't have they WILL do something about it to put the situation right if you don't yourself which will normally involve auctioning players at random. If you're overdrawn at the bank you really need to take action quickly to get back in the black. Ultimately directors can sack you as manager if they're not happy with the way that you run the club either on or off the field.

Hints / Tips: Useful games tips no.4 concerns attendances and ticket prices. Match attendances depend on your home following. The actual attendance will be your home following plus a percentage of the away teams following. Having a full house increases your home advantage so don't build a huge stadium if you don't have the following to fill it. Your home following goes up and down dependant upon match results. It is also affected primarily by facilities (upgrading a facility 1 level increases it by 0.5%) and ticket prices. Although you can in theory increase ticket prices as much as you like be VERY careful. You can lose following dramatically and there will come a point where the fans will just boycott your matches. If that happens all you can do is reduce prices, probably for several turns in a row until they are happy again but it may take a long time to get them all back.

Game Tip No 5 this turn concerns non playing staff and more specifically training them. The only way to increase staff ratings is to send them to college however once they get to around a 15 rating they think they know everything already and can be very upset at being trained. The trick is to only train them for a small number of turns at a time, then bring them back to work. Keep them at college for too many turns in a row and they are likely to simply walk out on your club, don't expect any loyalty from non playing staff!

Useful Game Tips no 6: there has been some confusion about aggression levels and what it does. The answer is that after the skill ratings of the teams (obviously), aggression is probably THE most important factor affecting match results. Levels range from 1 (hardly make a tackle or challenge) to 9 (telling your players to go out and get stuck in). Playing a higher aggression than the opposition gives you an immediate advantage but also increases the chance of injuries and bookings (these are also influenced by the refs rating shown on the weekly fixture list). Taking an aggression level of 5 as the mid way you have about a 50/50 chance of picking up an injury. If you have a small squad it isn't a good idea to play high aggression. It's up to you to get the balance right, you might want to drop the level when you know you are much better than the opposition or when you have loan players in the team (if they get injured they will return to the lending club with no refund) or when you have an important cup tie the following turn to reduce the risk of an injury.

The way that substitutions are handled in the PBM game is not really ideal but until version 2 of the software is ready there are unlikely to be any changes. No. 7 in the Game Tips series explains how subs work and how to get the best out of the system. If you get an injury in a game then the first sub (no.12) will come on as a replacement. That player will play in his OWN position, not the position of the player he is replacing. Effectively then this could mean a change of formation. For example if you get a defender injured and you have an attacker at no.12 then the rating of the defender is deducted from the defence total and the rating of the attacker is added to the attack total. With players that play in more than one position they play in the most defensive position that they can. The exception is a GK who if called upon will play in defence at only 20% of his rating. It goes without saying then that it isn't a good idea to put a GK at number 12.

Useful Game Tips continued... are we really on number 8 already? Something that does tend to confuse newer managers is the maximum size of the squad you can have at your club. The maximum is 21 players but what happens if you go over that number? Well basically the directors will step in and auction a player at random to bring the squad size down but you can prevent that by issuing a TRAN2 order yourself to get rid of a player. How soon the directors will step in to take action with an oversized squad varies so its better to issue enough TRAN2 orders to get back to 21 players on the first week that you are over the limit. Putting down an order to sell a player to another club may not be enough, even if the deal goes through. ONLY a TRAN2 order which effectively sacks the player guarantees no random sackings by your Directors.