



Free Lions

THE ENGLAND FANZINE FROM THE FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS' FEDERATION

ISSUE 164



SPAIN V ENGLAND
15TH OCTOBER 2018

8th
November
2018



The Football Supporters' Federation is giving its backing to the Games of Remembrance in Nottingham this year to mark the centenary of the Armistice.



Find out more



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WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF FREE LIONS 164



...the **free** England fanzine produced and distributed by the **Football Supporters' Federation (FSF)** as part of our **Fans' Embassy** service.

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Spain v England

Estadio Benito Villamarin, Seville
Monday, 15th October 2018
Kick-off 20:45, local time
England will probably play in WHITE



AND welcome to Seville for our Nations League away game against Spain, a proper competitive fixture played for real points, and definitely not another meaningless friendly. They are a thing of the past.

That's what the proponents of UEFA's new national team competition have claimed, at least, and in this first ever Nations League edition of Free Lions, in among all the usual features and guide material, we have included our own explanation of the Nations League tournament structure, as we try to unravel exactly why we're here.

It's the first Nations League Free Lions only because the Croatia away game was played behind closed doors, a strange situation where the entirely innocent supporters of an away team end up being punished for offences committed by fans of the home

side. For what it's worth, we at Free Lions have no problem at all with firm action being taken against those guilty of racism, but we're far from convinced that collective punishments that impact on the innocent as much as on the guilty are an effective way of pursuing the anti-racist cause, and that's a case we'll be continuing to press with UEFA in future.

We do however have tickets for the game here in Seville – not as many as we'd like, but in a way it's an encouraging sign to see a game over-subscribed – and so the FSF fans' embassy team is here to offer information, advice and support to any England fans, ESTC members and ticket holders or not.

As always we can be contacted around-the-clock on our helpline (+44 7956 121314), and our service is entirely confidential. Here's hoping you don't need it – have fun!

Useful Numbers

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COVER STORY

Injury kept him out of the World Cup squad in Russia this summer, but **Joe Gomez** is now back to full fitness and top form, and at just 21 years of age is one of the stars of Gareth Southgate's new generation, having played for England at Under-16, Under-17, Under-19 and Under-21 levels.



IT WASN'T ME

The Free Lions fanzine is produced by the Football Supporters' Federation (FSF), the national membership-based organisation for fans. We have tried to ensure the accuracy of all the information provided in this fanzine, but can accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience suffered by any one relying on its contents. None

of the financial support we have received to produce Free Lions impacts on what we put in it. Consequently, none of our supporters can be held in any way responsible for the contents of, nor the views expressed in, this fanzine

THANK YOU

We are grateful to PA Images for the cover photo.

As ever, this fanzine has been a team effort. This edition was edited by Kevin Miles, and thanks are due to Phil Rowley; Clive Hetherington, Joe Hetherington; Harpreet Robertson, Tony Conniford; Adrian Roberts, Paul Foley; Garreth Cummins, Liam Thompson; Will Branton and Helen Precious.



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SENSITIVE SOUTHGATE

BY CLIVE HETHERINGTON

GARETH SOUTHGATE was lauded for many things during this summer's World Cup, including his "emotional intelligence".

Praise was lavished on the level-headed England boss for introducing a more relaxed mood into the camp, which clearly paid dividends as the Three Lions reached a World Cup semi-final for only the third time.

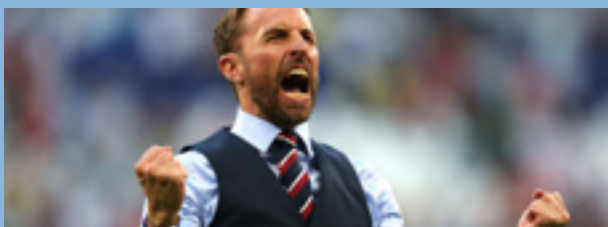
On the eve of the tournament, there was support from Southgate and the FA for Raheem Sterling after he came in for criticism over a controversial tattoo of an assault rifle on his right leg.

The Manchester City forward insisted it had "deeper meaning" in relation to the gun death of his father when he was aged only two.

Then Tottenham left-back Danny Rose spoke candidly about his struggle with depression, which he said had been caused by injury and a family tragedy.

At one time, discussing such issues would have been taboo in the world of football and viewed by old-school managers as a sign of weakness.

But Southgate acknowledged Rose's bravery for speaking out, underlining a move towards more sensitivity and empathy from the management.



Southgate is perhaps better placed than any manager England have had to recognise the psychological pressure that players can endure. After all, he had to suffer the torment of crucially failing to score in the shoot-out at Wembley as England lost to Germany in the semi-finals of Euro '96.

The former central defender is acutely aware of the additional scrutiny top-level players now face in an age of saturation television coverage and social media.

Southgate said: "There are far more TV channels and there's more social media interaction, so there's more instantaneous response. I think the pressure from that is all about what you put on yourself. I'm not certain that it's greater than it was before in that respect.

"But there is more of a spotlight on what the modern player does and more analysis of it than there has been in the past.

"I think mental strength and resilience are key to success at the highest level of every sport. If you look at those at the very top, it's

probably the distinguishing feature because, generally, players have good technique and there is very little to separate them.

"Physically, everybody is pretty fit and the psychological area is key and in the biggest matches – against the best teams, under pressure – is where the very best stand up and are ready to perform."

Luke Shaw has needed to draw on powers of recovery both physically and mentally to force his way back into the England fold.

The Manchester United left-back is a player Southgate knows well from his days as England Under-21 coach and Shaw was rewarded for his impressive start to the season with United.

A member of Roy Hodgson's squad at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, Shaw made one appearance in the tournament – a start in the goalless draw with Costa Rica – which followed shortly after his £27million move to Old Trafford from Southampton.

But a double fracture sustained against PSV Eindhoven in the

Champions League in September 2015 – the worst of a series of injuries and one that Shaw revealed almost led to him losing his right leg – derailed his career. Last month saw his first involvement with England for around 18 months.

United teammate Ashley Young made way for Shaw's re-introduction to the international scene, as the old guard continued to step aside for the younger generation.

But Shaw's jinx struck again in the Nations League opener with Spain as he was carried off after a worrying blow to the head in the 2-1 defeat at Wembley.

Southgate said: "He's had a difficult period, adapting to a new club and suffering an horrendous injury that he had to overcome.

"I was really impressed with the physical condition he was in early season and he showed an extra edge to his game in a couple of matches I watched.

"He's shown an aggression and a desire not to lose. He's been looking like he's back to his powerful best, going past people, which is something we feel can add to the team to give us that extra penetration in wide areas.

"I'm really pleased for him that he looks like he's playing with confidence. He's always been a

AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH CLIVE HETHERINGTON?

CONTACT CLIVE VIA FREELIONS@FSF.ORG.UK

player we've liked – I worked with him with the Under-21s and, of course, he moved up to the seniors when he was very young."

Returning to the theme of Southgate's management style, since his early days as a boss at Middlesbrough he has demonstrated a measured approach.

But don't be completely taken in by the Mr Nice Guy image. Like all managers, he can adopt a hard line, but he believes there is a time and a place to get tough.

Without mentioning names, 48-year-old Southgate – who began his playing career at Crystal Palace before moving on to Aston Villa and Boro – recalled: "When I was very young, I played for managers who used to throw things – but I'm not so sure that has a very big effect now!

"As a younger player, that had quite an impact on me, but as an older player I would have thought, 'You're an idiot, what are you doing?' It's a question of what's the right approach for that particular moment to get a reaction from your team.

"At times, it might be to go in firm and at others it's to be very calm and have a very clear picture of what is needed.

"I think there are only so many times in a season when you can

get a reaction by being aggressive, but every coach will be different."

Southgate has shown he will do the job his way and the aim now is qualification for the pan-European staging of Euro 2020.

He said: "When you become England manager, the profile of the role is what it is. You have the opportunity to make a difference and you're leading your country into an important situation in a sporting context.

"I understand what goes with it and I love the role, it's a privilege to be in it, and hopefully we can continue to improve. We're on a cycle now which takes us into two years where it could be even more exciting and bigger because matches in the finals could be at home."

ENGLAND stars of the Seventies, Paul Madeley and Kevin Beattie, have died in recent months.

The defenders were immensely strong and versatile. Madeley, who won 24 caps, was a member of Don Revie's famed Leeds United side. He passed away in July, aged 73.

Beattie, once described by Sir Bobby Robson as the best English player he had seen, played under the former England boss at Ipswich and picked up nine caps. Beattie died last month at 64.

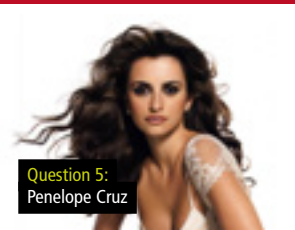


SCOUSE PHIL'S FREE LIONS SPAIN MUSIC QUIZ

For your entertainment ahead of our UEFA Nations League game with Spain, Scouse Phil has kindly provided us with a music quiz themed loosely around our host country; every question, or answer, has some connection to Spain, or something Spanish.

1 Which punk band fronted by Joe Strummer, recorded the song, 'Spanish Bombs'?

2 Why don't any of the Spanish national anthem when it is played before a game?



Question 5:
Penelope Cruz

3 Which Spanish painter is mentioned in the lyrics of the Peter Sarstedt song, 'Where Do You Go To My Lovely'?

4 The Spanish city Bilbao is used as a setting in the Bond film 'The World is Not Enough', but which band fronted by Shirley Manson sang the theme tune for the film?

5 Spanish actress Penelope Cruz starred in the 2013 film, 'I'm So Excited', but which American all-female group recorded a song of the same name in 1982?

6 Have Spain won the Eurovision Song Contest more or less often than they've finished last?

7 The song 'Barcelona' appears on the Deluxe edition of the 2017 album 'Divide' by which English singer?



Question 4:
Shirley Manson

8 Which Spanish island is mentioned in the title of the 1999 Number One hit by The Vengaboys?

9 Las Ketchup had a Europe-wide hit with 'The Ketchup Song' in 2002, but from which Spanish city does the band originate: Cordoba, Granada or San Sebastian?

10 Born Reginald Kenneth Dwight in 1947, he released a song called 'A Word in Spanish' in 1988, but how is this English singer-songwriter better

Answers can be found on [page 12](#)

FSF FANS' EMBASSY

The FSF's Fans' Embassy will be at your service in Seville, offering our usual blend of information, advice and practical support to all travelling England fans.

We will be operating on the afternoon of Sunday, 14th October between 13:00 and 17:00, and on Monday 15th October (that's match day) between 10:00 and 17:00. We will be based down by the river on the edge of the old town, on **Paseo de Cristobal Colon**, near to **O'Neill's**

Irish pub (that's the one on Calle Adriano, not the one next to the ticket collection point).

As usual, we are also available around the clock via the helpline, the number for which is +44 7956 121314.



WELCOME TO SEVILLE

THE FREE LIONS GUIDE TO THE CAPITAL OF ANDALUCIA

WELCOME to Seville, capital of Andalusia and fourth-largest city in Spain, for England's second appearance here, albeit this time at the home of Real Betis, and not that of their local rivals, Sevilla.



Seville is often said to be the city that most closely corresponds to a foreigner's idea of "typical Spain", famous for its bullfights, flamenco and fiestas. Anyone sufficiently impressed by the beauty of the place to be tempted to come back might want to consider visiting during the **Feria de Abril** or April Fair, a week-long street festival that commences two weeks after Easter.

It's a very welcoming tourist destination, and the weather even in October is likely to be warm and sunny, contributing to a relaxed atmosphere. A word of caution however: the experience of English football fans here, particularly following their clubs in the Champions League, has not always been easy, and the local

police have a bit of a reputation for, let's call it a robust policing style (they might be reading this and we don't want to be rude, but we're pretty sure that tactics of wielding batons first, asking questions later if at all will not be unfamiliar to many of us). More advice on this issue is to be found in later pages.

TICKET COLLECTION

As is now standard practice for England away games, all tickets purchased through the England Supporters Travel Club (ESTC) have to be collected in person by each individual member from the ticket collection point in **Seville**.

The ticket collection point is located in the business area of the city at the **NH Viapol Hotel**, which is at **Balbino Marron 9**, at the junction of that street with **Calle Enramadilla** and **Av. de Ramon y Cajal**.

This is about fifteen to twenty minutes' walk from the Cathedral

and the old town centre, and maybe 30 minutes' walk from the **O'Neills** by the river. It is very close to the **San Bernardo** Metro station, and there are a number of buses that stop nearby (routes 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 38, 38A, A7, C1, EA...). It is conveniently also very close to the second **O'Neills pub**, on **Calle Enramadilla**.

The ticket collection point will be open between 14:00 and 20:00 on Sunday, and between 10:00 and 18:00 on Monday. There will also be another ticket collection opportunity for latecomers at the

stadium between 19:00 and kick-off at 20:45.

Please remember that each member must collect their own ticket in person and must bring photo ID with them (ideally your ESTC membership card, but your passport will do). Note too that the FA staff store the tickets under the name of the lead applicant for your group, so it'd be useful to remember who it was who applied for your tickets. Lead members cannot however collect tickets for any other members of their group but themselves.

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THE FREE LIONS GUIDE TO THE CAPITAL OF ANDALUCIA



THE STADIUM



The Estadio Benito Villamarín is home to La Liga side Real Betis Balompie and is situated about three kilometres to the south of the old city centre, in a mainly residential area. The most recent redevelopment of the all-seater ground, completed in the summer of last year, raised the capacity to 60,720. There are now three tiers of seating on all four sides, with only the one main stand covered. The record attendance recorded here is 55,453, for the Seville derby in May of this year.

The history of the stadium goes back to 1929 when it was built for a trade Expo, and the first football match it hosted was an international between Spain and neighbours Portugal on 17th March of that year. Soon afterwards, Real Betis started

playing occasional games there. The ground was bought by the club in 1961, underwent a few changes in the 1970s, and was then further redeveloped in preparation for the 1982 World Cup. The then 47,500-capacity venue hosted two first round group 6 matches: Brazil's 4-1 victory over Scotland, and their 4-0 victory over New Zealand.

The next re-building programme started in 1998, with three-tiered stands erected on the north and eastern sides of the ground to accompany the similar pre-existing west stand; the new south stand was opened in time for the start of last season.

Our game will be the 15th time the Spanish national team have played here; the last time however was as far back as June 1995, a Euro 96 qualifier against Armenia.

GETTING TO THE GROUND

THE stadium lies to the south of the old town, which is where most of the bars and restaurants are to be found and therefore likely to be where most England fans are congregated on the afternoon before the game.

It's a good four kilometres away, but it's pretty much a straight road and can comfortably be walked in under an hour. The road along the river from outside O'Neil's is called Paseo de Cristobal Colon; head south along there, and stick with it as the road becomes Paseo de las Delicias, and then after the park Avenida de la Palmera, and you'll come straight to the ground. A bit of fresh air and exercise might do you good.

For those less keen on a good pre-match walk, there isn't a Metro station near the ground, so it'll have to be road transport of one form or another. Bus routes 1, 2, 3, 6, 34 and 37 all serve the stadium from various parts of the old town. A single fare is €1.40, payable on board the bus. Buses run between about 06:00 and 23:30, and the journey from the old town to the stadium should take about 40 minutes, traffic permitting.

GROUND RULES



The official England sector is located on the top tier at the north-east corner of the ground. Despite the best efforts of the FA to get the number of tickets increased, we have been allocated 3,000 tickets, which is the capacity of the standard segregated away section for Real Betis matches. This ticket allocation was over-subscribed, went to a ballot, and all tickets were sold out; the FA are operating a waiting list for ESTC members without tickets on 15 caps or more in case of any returned tickets.

England supporters will access this sector through Gate 17V, which has eight turnstiles, and gate 19, which has four turnstiles. Note that Gate 17A is for home supporters. Gates will open two hours before kick-off, at 18:45.

There will no doubt be some England fans – including from among the local expat community – who have purchased tickets in home sectors of the ground. The Spanish authorities advise that these ticket holders will not be relocated into the England sector (not least because it's already full, and relocation would inevitably lead to overcrowding). Any problems arising from their presence in home sectors would lead to ejection from the ground, but being an England supporter in a home area would not in and of itself necessarily be grounds for ejection.

The now customary search procedures will be conducted on entry, including the use of search dogs, and the usual list of prohibited items applies. As always, these searches will take

time, so it is recommended to turn up early if you want to be sure of seeing the kick-off.

Only small bags will be allowed in, and there are no storage facilities available at the ground, so leave larger bags and rucksacks elsewhere.

We are not aware of any arrangements for early access to the ground to hang flags, so to be sure of getting a decent spot, it'd be worth being there when the turnstiles open. The same rules on flag size (a maximum of 2m x 1.5m) as in Russia will apply; larger flags may be allowed in but must be accompanied by a fire safety certificate. Flags will be checked for their content; the FA's own stewards will be present to help avoid misunderstandings (as in Alicante in 2015, where West Ham flags were confiscated because local stewards thought the crossed hammers were some sort of fascist symbol!).

In line with Spanish legislation, there will be no alcohol available inside the ground.

At the end of the game, England fans will be held back in the ground for about 20 minutes, to "let the traffic clear". Announcements about exact arrangements for this will be made in English, and we've been promised access to toilet and refreshment facilities during the holdback.



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WELCOME TO SEVILLE

THE FREE LIONS GUIDE TO THE CAPITAL OF ANDALUCIA



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The social heart of Seville is in the old town, and particularly in the Barrio de Santa Cruz, a tourist-orientated area near the cathedral with a lot of pubs, restaurants and tapas bars. In typical Spanish style, many of them are quite small and unlikely to host large numbers of England fans (or of anybody else, for that matter), but they're lovely nonetheless, and offer excellent food and drink.



Bull Ring

Recent experience with English clubs playing here in Seville however dictates that the likeliest congregations of large numbers will be at the two O'Neill's Irish pubs. One of these is next to the ticket collection point in the business district of the town, on Calle Enramadilla, and will inevitably attract all those for whom picking up a ticket is exhausting and thirsty work.

The other O'Neill's is down towards the river, beside the Bull

Ring (this is an actual bull-fighting arena, not a shopping centre), on Calle Adriano, and this has been the place where the biggest groups of English club fans have ended up in the past (which may make it a great place to head for, or somewhere to avoid at all costs, depending on your tastes). Both of these O'Neill's pubs are open until 01:30 or 02:00. Also on Calle Adriano is a self-styled 'Scottish' pub called The Clan (don't judge us, we're just sharing

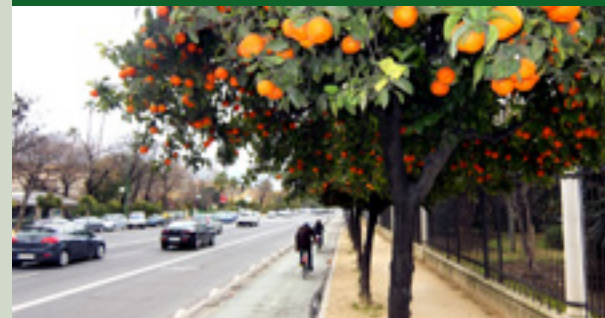
information), which compensates for its association with one of the world's worst football nations by the fact that it stays open until 04:00 every night.

Other pubs possibly worth a visit include The Merchant at Calle Canalejas 12, and if you end up on the other side of the San Telmo bridge, the Phoenix Pub at Plaza de Cuba 2.

Those requiring food will find an absolute abundance of local restaurants and tapas bars in the narrow streets of the old town offering Andalusian specialities. Reassuringly though for those whose stomachs don't acclimatise easily to foreign food, Seville also has a plethora of McDonalds, Burger King, Pizza Hut and KFC, and for that select bunch of dedicated pilgrims, the Seville Hard Rock Cafe is at Calle San Fernando 3.



POLICE AND ORANGES



We've often said that you don't have to travel far from home to begin to realise how reasonable English football policing is, and if recent experiences are anything to go by, then Spain in general, and Seville in particular, are ideal destinations to learn that lesson fast. Fans of English clubs who've played here have found themselves on the wrong end of police batons, and clearly they do things differently here; before we start to feel too victimised though it's worth remembering that they treat their own supporters in exactly the same way. Note that if and when the Spanish police are deployed in riot gear, then it is a legal requirement to obey their instructions: refusal to comply constitutes an offence of mutiny and is itself arrestable (although in practice they don't often stop to discuss the legal niceties).

So if you're after a trouble-free trip with a few drinks and a good match, it's probably best to keep your contact with the local police to a minimum, and avoid situations that seem likely to become confrontational. And in that context, there are two things you should remember not to do with the famous Seville oranges that can be seen growing on trees all around the city. Firstly, don't eat them: they're very bitter, and have been sprayed with chemicals to discourage birds from eating them. Secondly, don't throw them; it was exactly that kind of citrus-based tomfoolery last time we were here that the local constabulary took as a reason to start hitting us with sticks.

ID

It is a legal requirement to be able to prove your identity to a Spanish police officer, so carry at least a copy of your passport's personal information page with you at all times.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO



Plaza de Espana

Seville is steeped in history, reflected in many outstanding monuments and buildings, some of which date back to the Moorish conquest in the eighth century. Even the famous Cathedral began life as a mosque in the 12th century, and has grown to be the biggest Gothic church in the world – in fact depending on whose claims you believe, it is either surpassed in size only by St Peter's in Rome and St Paul's in London, or has outgrown even those two to become the world's biggest Cathedral.

One way to see a lot of the city quickly is to climb to the observation deck at the top of La Giralda, the tower that adjoins the cathedral. A slightly more leisurely alternative is the excellent open-topped tourist bus – hop on and off at four points round the city. The buses run every twenty minutes between 10.00am and 6.00pm. If you fancy the idea of a leisurely walk, you could do a lot worse than stroll through Maria Luisa Park to the spectacular Plaza de Espana, built for the Ibero-American Exposition of 1929.

THE NATIONS LEAGUE EXPLAINED

YOUR FREE LIONS GUIDE



How is it set up?

The Nations League is a league of four leagues, each split into four groups, in which you play two teams home and away to avoid relegation to the league below, or gain promotion to the league above. The exception to this is that the top teams in the top league in the Nations League compete in a knockout cup to win the Nations League, but those who are top of the groups in the other leagues of the Nations League all compete in their own knockout games for qualification to Euro 2020, unless they've already qualified for Euro 2020 through the qualifiers.

Simple enough?

We're not surprised if you're a little confused, but while the structure of the new Nations League is a bit complex, it's not actually that complicated, and if you take five minutes to try and understand it then a lot of the changes actually make a small amount of sense.



So if you want to know a little more, let's explore.

The Thinking Behind it

The idea behind the Nations League was largely twofold – firstly, to create evenly matched competitive football, with sides of similar ability playing each other in meaningful games rather than mismatched friendlies which one or both sides didn't take seriously.

The second was a revamped approach to qualifying for a 24 team European Championship, which guaranteed the participation of some of the continent's smaller nations.

So what does this mean for those involved? Let's take a look through the example of two countries – for purely arbitrary reasons we'll choose one in the top tier of European nations (England) and some unfortunate minnow from the lower reaches of the European game (Scotland).

The top tier nations

As one of the top ranked countries, England were placed into League A, the top tier of the Nations League.

League A features 12 teams, the European heavyweights, split into four groups of three. England find themselves in League A4, along with Croatia and Spain. League A1, for instance, features the tasty trio of Holland, France and Germany.

The teams in each of these four groups will play each other home and away over the typical international friendly slots in the autumn of 2018.

The four teams that top these groups will then compete in a

semi-final and final in summer 2019 for the overall title of Nations League champion.

The sides that finish bottom of Leagues A1 to A4, however, will find themselves relegated into League B, replaced by the four sides who topped the groups in the tier below. So one of England, Spain and Croatia, and one of Holland, France and Germany will be relegated by Christmas. Exciting, eh?

The lower nations

With a much more modest ranking, Scotland were thrust into League C, for teams ranked 25 through 39 in Europe. Scotland find themselves in League C1 alongside Albania and Israel. Some of the groups in Leagues C and D are comprised of four teams, rather than three, but otherwise it's the same drill of home and away fixtures with each team playing the others in their group between now and Christmas.

While sides in Leagues B, C and D don't have the Nations League title to compete for, those who finish top of their groups will be rewarded not only with promotion into the next tier to face stiffer competition in the next Nations League, but also with a chance to appear in a play-off to qualify for Euro 2020.

Those who finish bottom in B and C will find themselves moving down a tier to face competition more to their level.

It remains to be seen whether sides who are looking unlikely to win their groups will deliberately look to achieve relegation, to improve their chances of a play-off spot in future years.

What about qualification for the Euros?

Qualifying for Euro 2020 will now begin in spring 2019, rather than immediately following the World Cup as it had done previously. There will be 10 groups, with the winner and runner-up in each group qualifying for the Euros, which gives us 20 teams via something we'll refer to as the traditional route.

Does that mean the end of the dreaded play-off? No.

The remaining four teams in the Euros will be made up from the best performing teams in each tier of the Nations League not to have qualified through the traditional route.

The group winners from League A (or the highest ranked sides who have not already qualified through the traditional route) will play in a single-leg knock-out semi-final and final for one of the four remaining spots, as will the four winners/best runners-up in League B, League C and League D.

Should more than eight of the 12 League A teams qualify through the traditional route, then the remaining spot(s) in their play-off



path will go to the next best-placed team(s) in League B, and so on down the tiers.

It also guarantees that there will be a play-off between the four winners in League D, meaning one of the likes of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Belarus, Armenia or Macedonia will make their debut in Euro 2020.

So what does this mean for England and the other home nations?

What this all but guarantees in practice is that all League A and B teams (which includes Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland) will, at the very least, have a play-off for qualification for Euro 2020.

With 16 playoff teams to find, and with the majority (if not all) of the 20 qualifiers via the traditional route to come from Leagues A and B, it means that should England somehow conspire to not only mess up their Nations League group but also fail to finish as runners-up in the qualifiers, they'd still face a play-off, likely against a League B side.

In short, the new setup makes it harder for the top sides to miss out on qualification.

Quiz Answers

1. Seville 2. Russia on penalties in the last 16 match
3. 17 4. Slovakia 5. Marcus Rashford 6. Shrewsbury Town
7. Germany 8. Ivan Perisic and Mario Mandzukic of Croatia
9. Southern United 10. James Beattie
Music Quiz
1. The Clash 2. Because it hasn't got any words 3. Pablo Picasso
(and the painting you stole from Picasso, your loveliness goes on
'and the painting you stole from Picasso, your loveliness goes on
and on, yes it does') 4. Garbage 5. The Pointer Sisters 6. Less –
they have won it twice but finished last five times. 7. Ed Sheeran
8. Ibiza ('We're Going to Ibiza') 9. Cordoba 10. Elton John



UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

BY CLIVE HETHERINGTON

THE FOOTBALL grapevine was abuzz last season – and even as late as June – that Luis Enrique was bound for Chelsea.

Well-informed, high-profile sources within the game, some speaking publicly and others privately, were adamant that Enrique was lined up to replace Antonio Conte at Stamford Bridge.

Former Barcelona boss Enrique was also heavily linked with the Arsenal job as the clock ran down on Arsene Wenger's 22-year reign in North London.

But, as we all now know, Maurizio Sarri became Chelsea boss, Unai Emery joined Arsenal, and Enrique ended up taking charge of Spain, answering his nation's distress call after a turbulent summer for La Roja.

The sacking of head coach Julen Lopetegui, only two days ahead of their World Cup opener against Portugal, sent a seismic shockwave through the global game.

Lopetegui had kept quiet about his decision to succeed Zinedine Zidane at Real Madrid after the tournament and when all was revealed, the Spanish federation wielded the axe.

It was a gamble – and one that ultimately backfired. Spain legend Fernando Hierro stepped in to replace Lopetegui, but after a

thrilling 3-3 duel with Portugal, Spain could only beat Iran 1-0 and needed an Iago Aspas' stoppage-time equaliser to draw 2-2 with Morocco and finish top of their group – and the goal was disallowed before a VAR review.

The world champions of 2010 then crashed out to hosts Russia in the last 16 in a penalty shoot-out.

So enter Enrique post-tournament and what a start he made to his time in office. Well, to be strictly accurate, the start could have been better as Spain fell behind to England at Wembley through Marcus Rashford's goal in only the 11th minute of the sides' UEFA Nations League opener.

But Spain soon turned the game on its head and England were cruelly denied a draw in added time when keeper David de Gea dropped the ball under pressure from Danny Welbeck, the substitute smartly netting only to see what looked a perfectly

legitimate goal ruled out by Dutch referee Danny Makkelie.

Spain then put themselves firmly in pole position in Group Four of League A with a 6-0 annihilation of visitors Croatia, England's World Cup conquerors and tournament runners-up in Russia.

Saul Niguez headed the opener, Marco Asensio cracked in a goal of supreme quality and then saw another attempt hit the bar – and keeper Lovre Kalinic – on the way in, to give Spain a lead which they doubled after the break through Rodrigo Moreno, Sergio Ramos and Isco.

Although Croatia only included four who started the World Cup final defeat by France – defender Domagoj Vida and midfielders Luka Modric, Ivan Rakitic and Ivan Perisic – it was, nevertheless, a highly impressive display from Spain and underlined the immediate impact of Enrique.

progressed to the same stage of Euro '96. But though Gareth Southgate's side were very unlucky not to draw, Spain reminded England that they still have some way to go before they are among the best. Expect another tough night.

England now face the return fixture at the home of Real Betis and former Three Lions defender and Sky Sports pundit Jamie Carragher highlighted an issue over sticking with three centre-backs against high-class opponents employing a 4-3-3 formation.

Gareth Southgate rightly felt his side were robbed of a point first time around, but Carragher said: "We loved playing three at the back at the World Cup and doing so well, but there are problems with that system, as we saw when we lost to Croatia. When the wing-backs get dragged back, who closes down the full-backs in those wide areas?"

"Dani Carvajal and Marcos Alonso are always the get-out ball – and we can't get out, we're locked in! That's the problem against quality opposition with that system.

"More often than not, the big teams play 4-3-3. For most teams in the world now, that's the system and it counter-acts three at the back. If England are going to beat big teams, they have to find a way to deal with the full-back."

Ex-England striker Jermain Defoe also reflected on the Wembley encounter, saying: "If you look at it in terms of possession, in the first half, Spain moved the ball so well. They pick up little pockets of space with their movement and show how to receive the ball. They're a top team."

AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH CLIVE HETHERINGTON?

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>> SPAIN – THE KEY THREE BY JOE HETHERINGTON



DAVID DE GEA

He has his critics, but

it is difficult to

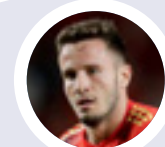
comprehend that some people considered him a liability in his first few months at Old Trafford. Seven years on, the keeper is one of the best in the world in his position. The 27-year-old cost Manchester United around £19million in 2011, signing from Atletico Madrid following just two seasons in their first team. He has won all available domestic honours at United during his time there, as well as the Europa League, but a Champions League medal has so far eluded him. Known for his unorthodox saving style, occasionally making blocks using his feet.



SERGIO RAMOS

Few players can match the competitiveness

of the centre-back, who looks destined to overtake Iker Casillas in becoming Spain's most-capped player of all-time – alongside the notoriety of holding the record for the most red cards in La Liga.



SAUL

Following the retirements of Xabi, David

Silva and Andres Iniesta, Spain now have the complicated task of finding suitable replacements for such colossal talents, and in recent games Saul has seemed the most likely candidate to fill the void. The Atletico Madrid midfielder, whose full name is Saul Niguez Esclapez, scored his first international goal against England in September and did not have to wait long for his second, finding the net three days later against Croatia in Spain's 6-0 win. The 23-year-old made his debut for Atletico in 2012 and was on the books of Real Madrid as a youngster.

>> CLIVE'S VERDICT

Prediction: Spain 3 England 1

England's 2-1 defeat by Spain at Wembley in their first game since the World Cup was somewhat sobering. Reaching the semi-finals in Russia this summer brought the nation a level of excitement not experienced since England



SPAIN SQUAD WORDSEARCH

Print and shipping deadlines to get this edition of Free Lions out to Seville in time for the game have meant that we've had to use the Spain squad from last month's game at Wembley for our Wordsearch. The challenge remains the same though – find the players' names hidden in the grid (that's the names in capitals and in bold: it seems not all of them can afford two names, and then there's Kepa...).

David KEPA	DE GEA Arrizabalaga PAU LOPEZ	Manchester United Chelsea Real Betis
Dani Raúl	CARVAJAL ALBIOL NACHO	Real Madrid Napoli Real Madrid
Iñigo Marcos César	MARTINEZ ALONSO AZPILICUETA	Athletic Bilbao Chelsea Chelsea
Sergio José Luis	RAMOS GAYA	Real Madrid Valencia
Sergio	BUSQUETS SAUL THIAGO SUSO RODRI	Barcelona Atlético Madrid Bayern Munich Everton Atlético Madrid
Sergi Marco Dani	ROBERTO ASENSIO CEBALLOS ISCO	Barcelona Real Madrid Real Madrid Real Madrid
Álvaro Iago	MORATA RODRIGO ASPAS	Chelsea Valencia Celta Vigo

N U F C I R D O R O B E R T O
S Q A S H L E Y O U T T X S H
O L Z C A E G E D V J O N H C
M O R A T A F S R X K O C E A
A I K R A T R I I C L N L A N
R B W V S E A R G A E A A R T
P L N A E U N B O W O R R E O
Z A R J N C K O Y M G M K R S
E E U A S I E B F G A Y E N T
N E B L I L A B T H I S A Z E
I L L E O I A Y A G H I P O U
T B I L E P R J K L T D E A Q
R O M Y U Z E N M P L R K E S
A R L A L A S Z I S C O E G U
M C A B Q H S X B O S U S M B

Scouse Phil's Free Lions Football Quiz (answers on page 12)

- In which Spanish city do Real Betis play their home games?
- Which country knocked Spain out of the 2018 World Cup?
- How many of this season's 24 Championship clubs have a betting company as their shirt sponsor?
- Sam Allardyce won his only game as England manager thanks to an injury time goal by Adam Lallana, but which country was this against?
- Who scored England's goal in the recent Nations league game v Spain in September?
- Which Football League team this season became the first professional club in England and Wales to introduce a rail seating section at their ground?
- Which country recently won the right to stage Euro 2024?
- Which two players scored in both the semi-final and final of the 2018 World Cup?
- Roots Hall is the home ground of which Football League team?
- I was born in Lancaster in 1978 and played for various clubs including Blackburn, Southampton, Everton and Accrington Stanley. I won a total of five England caps, all in 2003. Who am I?



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